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## *Boston College Law School*



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### **Overview<sup>5</sup>**

Boston College Law School is among the top few law schools in the country in the number of applications it receives, and has an overall applicant-to-acceptance ratio that is among the most selective in the nation. The school is viewed, in short, as doing something right.

That something lies in the history and tradition of legal education at Boston College Law School, which holds that lawyers should be neither hired guns unconcerned with moral questions, nor pure theorists hovering above the fray. The 250 men and women who earn the degree of Juris Doctor and BC Law each year are as well-versed in courtroom procedure as they are in legal history, as well-prepared to practice law as they are to discuss its theoretical underpinnings.

When Boston College Law School was founded in 1929 at 11 Beacon Street in downtown Boston, the first dean, Dennis Dooley, envisioned a law school with a social conscience as well as an analytical mind. From its earliest days, the school had a reputation for toughness and high standards. It won accreditation from the American Bar Association in 1932, just three years after its founding, joining the Harvard, Yale, and Boston University law schools as the only ones in New England to attain such a distinction. Academic standards were so high that in some years, as many as two-thirds of the first-year class would be excluded for poor scholarship. But the quest for academic excellence was also shaped by a desire to educate lawyers who worked for social justice and reform.

The decades that followed have seen much change in Dean Dooley's law school—it now spreads across a 40-acre campus in Newton, Massachusetts, and ranks among the nation's premier law schools. But the school holds fast to Dean Dooley's vision. This makes for students who are at once highly credentialed and highly collegial in their relationships with each other and with the faculty. That sense of community springs from a shared respect for the law as the cornerstone of a democratic society, and for one another as legal scholars. It manifests itself in dozens of ways, including the mentoring relationships that grow out of the easy accessibility students enjoy with faculty, the student organizations that offer opportunities to affect basic issues touched by the law every day, and the camaraderie of the Friday afternoon "bar review" sessions in the student lounge. Perhaps most intensely, it is in the small, informal and self-forming groups in which students push one another in a shared passion for the power, elegance and dynamism of the law.

## Student-Faculty Ratio<sup>6</sup>

11.9:1

## Admission Criteria<sup>7</sup>

|                      | LSAT    | GPA       |
|----------------------|---------|-----------|
| 25th-75th Percentile | 160-165 | 3.41-3.69 |
| Median*              | 164     | 3.61      |

The above LSAT and GPA data pertain to the 2013 entering class.

\*Medians have been calculated by averaging the 25th- and 75th-percentile values released by the law schools and have been rounded up to the nearest whole number for LSAT scores and to the nearest one-hundredth for GPAs.

## Admission Statistics<sup>8</sup>

|                                    |       |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Approximate number of applications | 4242  |
| Number accepted                    | 1481  |
| Percentage accepted                | 34.9% |

The above admission details are based on 2013 data.

## Class Ranking and Grades<sup>9</sup>

Boston College Law School does not rank its students. An approximation of grade distributions is issued for the 2L and 3L classes at the end of each semester, and for the 1L class at the end of the Academic Year.

Academic standing is most commonly determined by written examinations conducted at the conclusion of each course. In a number of courses, class participation or presentations may be included in the final grade.

The grading system of the Law School is as follows:

|    |      |
|----|------|
| A  | 4.00 |
| A- | 3.67 |
| B+ | 3.33 |
| B  | 3.00 |
| B- | 2.67 |
| C+ | 2.33 |
| C  | 2.00 |
| C- | 1.67 |
| D  | 1.00 |

|   |            |
|---|------------|
| F | 0.00       |
| I | Incomplete |
| W | Withdrawal |

The following descriptions explain the meaning of the grade labels used at Boston College Law School:

A, A- Exceptional work, which demonstrates a superior level of academic accomplishment in the area of study.

B+, B, B- Good work, which demonstrates achievement of a level of academic accomplishment in the area of study distinctly above that expected of a minimally competent graduate of an accredited American law school. Given the standards of Boston College Law School, this level of performance is expected of most graduates of the law school.

C+, C Competent work, which demonstrates achievement of a level of academic accomplishment in the area of study expected of a minimally competent graduate of an accredited American law school. Given the standards of Boston College Law School, this level of performance is below that expected of most graduates of this law school.

C-, D Unsatisfactory work, which does not demonstrate achievement of the minimum level of competence, expected of any graduate of an accredited American law school but which demonstrates enough potential for improvement that the student could reasonably be expected to achieve such a level by conscientious study.

F Failing work, which reflects a level of learning and ability in the area of study so low as to indicate that the student has failed to perform the work, reading, and study expected of students enrolled in the course. No credit is given for a course in which an F is received, although the F will be used in computing cumulative and annual averages.

In some cases students might receive an "Incomplete" in a course or a grade of "Pass/Fail," which is available for classes with enrollments of less than 25 and evaluated by means other than examination. J.D. students may take a total of six credits, in no more than two classes, on a pass/fail basis in their second and third years. Constitutional Law II and Professional Responsibility cannot be taken on a pass/fail basis.

### **Grade Normalization (Curve)<sup>10</sup>**

For all classes in which students are evaluated by examination, the mean grade should be approximately 3.2, and the distribution of grades should be approximately as follows:

|              |     |
|--------------|-----|
| A            | 10% |
| A-           | 15% |
| B+           | 25% |
| B            | 35% |
| B-           | 10% |
| C+ and below | 5%  |

If an instructor concludes that the performance of the class being graded does not justify the above distribution of grades, the percentages set out in the table need not be followed. It is anticipated such circumstances will arise more often in classes with smaller enrollments, and that larger divergence from the prescribed mean will be justified more often in classes with smaller enrollments. Accordingly, instructors have discretion to vary the mean grades for their classes as follows:

1. For classes with enrollments of 40 or more, the mean grade may be as high as 3.30 or as low as 3.0.
2. For classes with enrollments of fewer than 40, the mean grade may be as high as 3.4 or as low as 2.9.

Instructors who wish to assign grades with means outside these ranges must consult with the Dean for Faculty before doing so.

For classes with enrollments of less than 25 in which students are evaluated by means other than examination (including seminars and clinics), the suggested mean grade is 3.5. If an instructor concludes that the performance of the class being graded does not justify a mean grade of 3.5, the instructor may assign grades with a mean in the range of 3.4 to 3.7.

#### Honors<sup>11, 12</sup>

| Honor                  | Criteria  |
|------------------------|---|
| Order of the Coif      | Top 10% of the class                                |
| <i>summa cum laude</i> | top 2% of the class                                 |
| <i>magna cum laude</i> | top 10% of the class                                |
| <i>cum laude</i>       | students graduating in the upper third of the class |

#### Awards<sup>13</sup>

| Name of Award                       | Awarded for/to                                  |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| James W. Smith Award                | Highest academic rank                           |
| Susan Grant Desmarais Award         | Outstanding work in Clinical Program            |
| William J. O'Keefe Award            | Outstanding contribution to the Law School      |
| St. Thomas More Award               | Intellectual & moral qualities                  |
| Cornelius J. Moynihan Award         | Outstanding editorial work on publications      |
| Richard S. Sullivan Award           | Outstanding school spirit                       |
| John D. O'Reilly Award              | Service to its students                         |
| Law School Alumni Association Award | Outstanding promise of professional achievement |

|                               |   |
|-------------------------------|---|
| Philip Joseph Privitera Award | Commitment to Service                     |
| Aviam Soifer Award            | Public Service Achievement and Leadership |
| Lewis S. Gurwitz Award        | Commitment to Underprivileged             |
| Frederick N. Halstrom Award   | Outstanding Advocacy                      |
| McGrath & Kane Award          | Betterment of the Law School Community    |
| Sheila McGovern Award         | Achievement of Personal Goals             |
| Richard G. Huber Award        | Leadership & Co-Curriculum Award          |
| Dean Dennis A. Dooley Award   | Outstanding Scholarship Average (1L)      |

### Journals<sup>13</sup>

The **Boston College Law Review** is the oldest scholarly publication at Boston College Law School. The Review publishes articles concerning legal issues of national interest. The Review publishes five issues each year that include articles and essays written by prominent outside authors, such as Professor Vikram David Amar, Professor Herbert Hovenkamp, and Professor Jeremy Waldron. The Law Review also prints the work of its student staff writers, many of whom publish notes during their third year. Recent editions have contained student notes examining such issues as tipper/tippee liability under the misappropriation theory of insider trading, plea bargains struck under the threat of enemy combatant detention, and balancing women’s reproductive rights against a pharmacist’s conscientious objection. The Review’s second-year staff members prepare short comments on recent federal circuit court decisions, which may be published in the Review’s electronic supplement. The Review also organizes, sponsors, and publishes articles from academic symposia.<sup>14</sup>

The **Boston College Environmental Affairs Law Review** is a student-run academic journal whose primary purpose is to publish legal scholarship concerning environmental law and policy. The Review publishes bi-annually, with issues typically printed in January and April, and serves as a resource for current students, academics, and active practitioners of law.<sup>15</sup>

The **Boston College International & Comparative Law Review** is one of approximately 30 law reviews in the United States that focus on international legal issues, and one of only two that publishes an annual survey of European Union law. The Review publishes two issues annually. The spring issue usually consists of two articles by outside authors and four student pieces. The Review’s scope is expansive and includes articles on a variety of international and comparative law issues such as human rights, cross-border environmental disputes, arms control, covert action, international investment, International Court of Justice jurisdiction, and terrorism, to name only a few.<sup>16</sup>

The **Boston College Journal of Law & Social Justice** publishes scholarship affecting populations underserved by the legal academy—whether those populations exist in the developing or developed world, in the domestic or international spheres. The mission behind the Journal is social justice and the way the law can be used to advance social justice.<sup>17</sup>

The **Uniform Commercial Code Reporter-Digest** is a research tool used by practitioners to find case law on various commercial law topics. It was founded in 1962 by the late William Willier, Professor

of Law at Boston College, and is now published by Matthew Bender & Company, a division of Lexis/Nexis. The Digest serves as a comprehensive research tool for cases decided by all federal, state and bankruptcy courts addressing issues related to the Uniform Commercial Code. Since its inception, Boston College Law School students have been the sole source of case law annotations published by the Digest. Second-year students serve as staff writers and are responsible for annotating a significant commercial law case each week.<sup>18</sup>

### **Moot Court**<sup>19</sup>

The **Grimes Moot Court Competition** traditionally has been viewed as the most prestigious of all BC Law intramural competitions. Held each spring, it is a valuable opportunity for second-year students to develop both written and oral appellate advocacy skills. The Grimes finals, presided over by a distinguished panel, are the highlight of the year's advocacy programs. The problems involve issues of Constitutional or federal statutory interpretation, and the subject matter of the competition alternates annually between civil and criminal law. Participation in the competition is a prerequisite to be considered for membership on third-year academic moot court teams.

BC Law students can participate in the following moot court competitions: National Moot Court Competition (sponsored by the American College of Trial Lawyers in NYC); Philip C. Jessup Moot Competition (involving a case that could come before the International Court of Justice with finals being held in different countries each year); European Law Moot Court Competition (EU Law); National Environmental Law Moot Court Competition (environmental issues); J. Braxton Craven Moot Court Competition (constitutional law); National Criminal Procedure Moot Court Competition (criminal procedure); Frederick Douglass Moot Court Competition (sponsored by BALSAs); Saul Lefkowitz Intellectual Property Moot Court (trademark law); Religious Freedom Moot Court Competition (religious freedom issues); First Amendment Moot Court Competition (First Amendment issues); and Immigration Law Moot Court Competition (immigration law issues)

### **Clinical Programs**<sup>21-28</sup>

The **Civil Litigation Clinic** allows students to work as practicing lawyers representing actual clients in every aspect of litigation, including appearing in court and at federal and state administrative hearings (Social Security Administration, Division of Unemployment Assistance, and Department of Transitional Assistance). Practice areas include family law, landlord-tenant, and public benefits cases.

The **Community Enterprise Clinic** allows students to help emerging businesses, entrepreneurs, and nonprofits with transactional legal matters. BC Law was one of the first schools in New England to offer a transactional legal clinic, and is one of the only schools in the nation to have a formal collaboration with an established major law firm, Nutter McClennen & Fish LLP, for consultation and assistance. Students help incorporate small businesses and establish limited liability companies, research intellectual property issues, negotiate commercial leases, and draft contracts and nondisclosure agreements.

The **Criminal Justice Clinic** gives students the opportunity to learn about both defense and prosecution work. The integration of the prosecution and defense perspectives into one program is a unique feature of the criminal justice clinical experience at Boston College Law School.

The **Housing Law Clinic** enables students to advise and represent clients facing homelessness through eviction, mortgage foreclosure, or denial of access to government-funded affordable housing. Students who enroll in this course can expect to defend eviction actions in local District Courts and/

or Boston Housing Court, represent individuals before local Housing Authorities, and work with community organizations seeking to increase the supply of affordable housing.

The **Immigration Clinic** provides students with the opportunity to represent noncitizens in removal proceedings before the Immigration Court in Boston, which involves arguing bond motions for detained clients, conducting direct examination of witnesses, raising evidentiary objections and arguing points of law. Students also represent noncitizens in their applications for legal status and conduct “Know Your Rights” presentations for the immigrant communities in the Boston area and for noncitizens who are detained by the Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

The **Juvenile Rights Advocacy Project** specializes in representing and serving as Guardian-ad-Litem for youth involved in multiple systems. JRAP attorneys and students are appointed by the Juvenile Court and take referrals from state agencies, attorneys and individuals. JRAP attorneys and students strive to build ongoing relationships with youth clients providing continuity of representation until the client ages out of state systems and providing representation across a range on civil legal issues.

The **Innocence Program** allows students to study the problem of erroneous convictions in the classroom while also working in legal practice and nonprofit settings to remedy or prevent these injustices. Students choose from a diverse range of practice settings including the in-house Innocence Clinic or an externship placement in a public agency (both defense and prosecution), nonprofit innocence project, or private law firm. All of the students in the clinic and externship placements come together for a weekly seminar where their experiences inform and enrich their academic study of the phenomenon of erroneous convictions.

## Placement Facts<sup>29</sup>

### Starting Salaries (2012 Graduates Employed Full-Time)

|                                       |                      |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------|
| Private sector (25th-75th percentile) | \$75,000 - \$160,000 |
| Private sector - Median               | \$145,000            |
| Public service - Median               | \$48,732             |

### Employment Details

|   |       |
|---|-------|
| Graduates known to be employed at graduation                | 49.6% |
| Graduates known to be employed nine months after graduation | 71.2% |

### Areas of Legal Practice

| Graduates Employed In         | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| Law Firms                     | 53.9%      |
| Business and Industry         | 15.1%      |
| Government                    | 12.3%      |
| Public Interest Organizations | 8.2%       |
| Judicial Clerkships           | 6.8%       |
| Academia                      | 3.7%       |
| Unknown                       | 0%         |

## Externships/Internships

### Externships<sup>30</sup>

In Clinical Externship courses, students are placed in settings outside of the law school to be supervised by lawyers who work in those settings. These courses include:

- Attorney General Program (full-year clinical experience in civil litigation in the Government Bureau of the Massachusetts Office of the Attorney General)
- Immigration Externship Program (students work either off campus at a firm or non-profit, or on campus with the Post-Deportation Human Rights Project)
- Innocence Project Externship (placements include the New England Innocence Project, the Committee for Public Counsel Services Innocence Program, and Prosecution Innocence Project or Integrity Units)
- London Program (semester at King's College London)
- Semester in Practice (placements with local lawyers and judges)
- Semester in Practice: International Human Rights (placements with international human rights organizations or immigration firms)

### Human Rights Track

On this track, Students work (in the U.S. or abroad) with international non-governmental organizations such as Human Rights First, Amnesty International, and the Jesuit Refugee Service or with such institutions as the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Court, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and the Inter-American Court of Human Rights. Typical work includes research and writing about legal human rights issues, investigation of pending cases, and, where possible, representation of clients before tribunals.

### Business/Immigration Track

This track involves an innovative partnership between Boston College Law School and the world's leading immigration law firm, Fragomen, Del Rey, Bernsen, and Loewy LLP and its affiliate, Fragomen Global. It offers a unique opportunity to work on-site for one semester at one of Fragomen's locations around the world, including within the U.S. The course is designed to provide students with real-world experience and critical insight into global business and business immigration practice, and to prepare them for the global legal practice.

### Internships<sup>31, 32</sup>

#### Judicial Internships

The school offers judicial Internships with judges in community courts, and in trial and appellate level courts.

BC Law also offers a number of summer study and fellowship opportunities with placements at the International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia, the International Criminal Court, the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda in Tanzania, Legal Aid of Cambodia, the Palestinian Authority, and the United Nations Development Fund for Women in Ecuador.



## Student Organizations<sup>33</sup>

- American Constitution Society
- Amnesty International
- Art Law Society
- Asian Pacific American Law Students Association
- Black Law Students Association
- BC Law Democrats
- BC Law Republicans
- Business and Law Society
- Children's Rights Group
- Christian Legal Society
- Community Economic Development Group
- Criminal Justice Law Project
- Environmental Law Society
- Federalist Society
- Gag Order A Capella Group
- Gender Violence Awareness Coalition
- Gulf Coast Recovery Group
- Health Law Society
- Holocaust Human Rights Project
- Immigration Law Group
- Intellectual Property and Technology Forum
- International Law Society
- Jewish Law Student Association
- Lambda
- Latin American Law Students Association
- Law and Religion Program
- Middle Eastern Law Students Association
- Muslim Law Students Association
- National Lawyers Guild
- Native American Law Student Association
- Phi Alpha Delta
- Public Interest Law Foundation
- South Asian Law Students Association
- Sports and Entertainment Law Society
- Students for Reproductive Justice
- Students With Kids
- St. Thomas More Society
- Veterans Association
- Women's Law Center

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