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Columbia Law School



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Overview⁴

Columbia University, formerly known as King's College, was founded near the present site of New York's City Hall. Columbia is the oldest institution of higher education in the state of New York and the sixth-oldest such institution in the United States. Its early students included such statesman as Alexander Hamilton, an author of The Federalist Papers, and John Jay, the first chief justice of the U.S. Supreme Court.

Columbia Law School was founded as one of the first law schools in the United States and a charter member of the American Association of Law Schools. The Law School's first dean, Theodore W. Dwight, did much to form the superiority of academic training via office instruction (the era's norm) to a skeptical legal profession.

Student-Faculty Ratio⁵

7.3:1

Admission Criteria⁶

| | LSAT | GPA |
|----------------------|---------|-----------|
| 25th-75th Percentile | 169-173 | 3.54-3.81 |
| Median* | 171 | 3.70 |

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 Statistics⁷

| | |
|------------------------------------|-------|
| Approximate number of applications | 5,797 |
| Number accepted | 1,236 |
| Acceptance rate | 21.3% |

The above admission details are based on 2013 data.

Class Ranking and Grades⁸

Letter Grades

Columbia Law School uses an alphanumerical grading system to evaluate students' performance, consisting of: A (with plus and minus designations), B (with plus and minus designations), C, F, CR when so approved, or W.

Honors⁹

James Kent Scholars

Awarded in recognition of outstanding academic achievement by students in each of the three classes and established in 1923 by the Faculty of Law, in memory of James Kent who, in 1793, became the first Professor of Law at Columbia College.

Harlan Fiske Stone Scholars

Awarded in recognition of superior academic achievement by students in each of the three classes. Awarded in recognition of superior academic achievement by students in each of the three classes and established in 1946 by the Faculty of Law, in memory of Harlan Fiske Stone, Law 1898, Lecturer in Law 1899-1903, Adjunct Professor of Law 1903-1905, Professor and Dean of the Faculty of Law 1910-1924, Associate Justice of the Supreme Court 1925-1941, and Chief Justice of the United States 1941-1946.

Awards¹⁰

| Name of Award | Awarded for/to |
|--------------------------------|---|
| Charles Bathgate Beck Prize | Established in 1899 under the will of Charles Bathgate Beck, Law 1879, for the best first-year examination paper in the course relating to the law of real property. |
| David M. Berger Memorial Prize | Established in 1973 in memory of David M. Berger '69 and honoring the memory of Wolfgang Friedmann, professor of international law from 1955 to 1972, for a third-year student interested in international law and world peace. |
| Harold Brown Book Prize | Established in 1985 by family and friends of Harold Brown '27, for the purchase of books to needy first-year students who attended Columbia College. |

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|---|---|
| Class of 1912 Prize | Established in 1937 as the 25th anniversary gift of the Class of 1912, for the first-year student most proficient in the subject of contracts. |
| Milton B. Conford Book Prize in Jurisprudence | Established in 1984 in honor of the Hon. Milton B. Conford '31, by his clerks, for the student who writes the best examination paper or essay on jurisprudence. |
| E. B. Convers Prize | Established in 1906 by Alice and Clara B. Convers, in memory of their brother, E. B. Convers, Law 1866. Awarded annually to the member of the graduating class who writes the best original essay on a legal subject. |
| Archie O. Dawson Prize | Established in 1965 in memory of the Hon. Archie O. Dawson '23, for proficiency in advocacy. |
| Wilfred Feinberg Prize Fund | Established in 1997 in honor of Judge Feinberg '40 Columbia College, '43 Law, by his former clerks, for the best work in an area related to the work of federal courts. |
| Alfred S. Forsyth Prize | Established in 1986 in memory of Alfred S. Forsyth '31, for intellect and selfless dedication to the advancement of environmental law. |
| Andrew D. Fried Memorial Prize | Established in memory of Andrew D. Fried '84, for the best student essay on a subject in the field of intellectual property and related law published in the Columbia Journal of Law and the Arts during the preceding year. |
| Ruth Bader Ginsburg Prize | Established in 2011 for J.D. degree candidates who earned James Kent academic honors for outstanding academic achievement for all three years (1L, 2L, and 3L). |
| Walter Gellhorn Prize | Established in 1994 for the LL.M. candidate graduating with the highest academic average. |
| Lawrence S. Greenbaum Prize | Established in 1951 by family and friends, in memory of Lawrence S. Greenbaum '12, for the best oral presentation in the final argument of the Harlan Fiske Stone Moot Court Competition. |
| Carroll G. Harper Prize | Established in 1983, in memory of Carroll G. Harper '52. Awarded annually to the member of the graduating class who has attained the highest standards of achievement in intellectual property studies and writing. |
| Paul R. Hays Prize | Established in 1983 by family, friends, and associates, in memory of Paul R. Hays '33, member of the Faculty of Law from 1936 to 1971; United States Circuit Judge for the Second Circuit from 1961 to 1980, for excellence in civil procedure. |
| Pauline Berman Heller Prize Fund | Established in 1995 as a gift of Harry Heller and family ('29C, '33L) in memory of wife and mother Pauline Berman Heller ('34L), for the highest ranked graduating female law student. |
| Irell and Manella Prize | Established in 2004 by Irell and Manella LLP for outstanding leadership, academic excellence, and good citizenship within the community demonstrated by a first-year student. |

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| Robert Stephen Haft Moot Court Prize | Established in 1962 and awarded to the first-year student who submits the best brief in Moot Court competition. |
| Richard J. Lipson and Paul S. Lipson Prize in Contracts | Established in 1998 under the will of Richard J. Lipson '73 in honor of Paul S. Lipson '38, for proficiency in the subject of contracts by a first-year student. |
| Allan Morrow Sexuality and Gender Law Prize | Established in 2007 in memory of Allan Morrow for outstanding achievement in the furtherance of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender rights. |
| Jane Marks Murphy Prize | Established in 1952, in memory of Jane Marks Murphy '48, for exceptional interest and proficiency in advocacy in clinical offerings. |
| John Ordronaux Prize | Established in 1908 by the bequest of John Ordronaux, Professor of Medical Jurisprudence from 1860 to 1897, for proficiency in legal study and usually awarded to the student who has achieved the highest academic average in each graduating class. |
| Outstanding Student Award | For excellence in clinical fieldwork. |
| Edwin Parker Prize | For excellence in the study of international or comparative law. |
| The Michael D. Remer Memorial Award | Established in 2012 as a gift by Cowan, Debaets, Abrahams & Sheppard, LLP, for a graduating student whose activities and academic achievements demonstrate an interest in and aptitude for the fields of arts and copyright law. |
| Simon H. Rifkind Prize Fund | Established in 1996 as a gift by Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison in honor of one of the firm's founding partners, Simon H. Rifkind '25, for the best overall performance in the first-year moot court program. |
| Samuel I. Rosenman Prize | Established in 1978, in memory of Samuel I. Rosenman '19, by his partners in the firm of Rosenman & Colin, for academic excellence in public law courses and outstanding qualities of citizenship and leadership in the Law School. |
| Emil Schlesinger Labor Law Prize | Established in 1975 by the Schlesinger family, in honor of Emil Schlesinger '24, for proficiency in the subject of labor law. |
| Whitney North Seymour Medal | Established in 1971 in honor of Whitney North Seymour '23, for promise of becoming a distinguished trial advocate. |
| Young B. Smith Prize | Established in 1953 by R. C. Leffingwell '02, in honor of Young B. Smith '12, Dean of the Faculty of Law from 1927 to 1952 and Chancellor Kent Professor of Law from 1930 to 1958, for proficiency in the law of torts. |
| Special Honors for Outstanding Performance in a Class Prize | Established in 2011 by the Faculty of Law for the best student in a class with enrollment of 30 or more students. |
| Robert Noxon Toppan Prize | Established in 1878 by Robert Noxon Toppan, Law 1861, for the best written examination in Constitutional law. |

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| Valentin J.T. Wertheimer Prize in Labor Law | Established in 1980 by the family of Val Wertheimer '50, for demonstration of creative, thoughtful approach to labor law, equal employment law, public or private sector collective bargaining, labor conflict resolution, or employment security. |
| Jeffrey Williams Memorial Prize for Critical Rights Analysis | Established in 2007 in memory of Jeffrey Williams (2002 College, 2005 Law) for the best paper on critical theory. |

Journals¹¹⁻²⁴

The **Columbia Business Law Review** is the first legal periodical at a national law school to be devoted solely to the publication of articles focusing on the interaction of the legal profession and the business community. The review publishes three issues yearly.²¹

The **Columbia Journal of Asian Law** provides a forum for legal practitioners and scholars to discuss a broad range of issues relating to the People's Republic of China, South, Southeast, and Northeast Asia, the United States, and elsewhere.

The **Columbia Journal of European Law** is published under the auspices of The European Legal Studies Center at Columbia Law School. CJEL publishes three issues per year exploring every dimension of European law.

The **Columbia Journal of Law and Social Problems**, established in 1965, is one of the oldest legal publications at Columbia Law School. Since its founding, one of JLSP's missions has been to remind its readers of the law's responsibility to serve the public good. To that end, the journal emphasizes the sociological, economic, and political impact of legal issues.

The **Columbia Journal of Race and Law** has a mission to establish a dialogue on historic and contemporary notions of socio-political and legal challenges facing racial and ethnic minorities.

The **Columbia Journal of Transnational Law** is the second oldest student-run international law journal in the nation. The Journal was founded in 1961 by the late Wolfgang Friedmann, one of Columbia's most renowned international law professors, and today it is the second most cited journal at Columbia. The Journal's purpose is to provide the practicing bar and the academic community with insight into the evolving problems of an increasingly interdependent world.

The **Columbia Science and Technology Law Review** deals with the exciting legal issues surrounding science and technology, including the Internet, biotechnology, nanotechnology, telecommunications, and the implications of technological advances on traditional legal fields such as contracts, evidence, and tax. .

The **Columbia Human Rights Law Review** is one of the oldest and the most recognized human rights journals in the world. Established in 1967, the HRLR is run by students at Columbia University School of Law. The HRLR is dedicated to the analysis and discussion of human rights and civil liberties under both domestic and international law.

The **Columbia Journal of Environmental Law** was founded in 1972 with a grant from the Ford Foundation. The Journal is one of the oldest environmental law journals in the nation and is widely regarded as one of the preeminent environmental journals in the country.

The **Columbia Journal of Gender and Law** is the preeminent journal for scholarship on the interaction between gender and law. The Journal fosters dialogue, debate, and awareness about gender-related issues and feminist scholarship. Articles express an expansive view of feminist jurisprudence, embracing issues relating to women and men of all races, ethnicities, classes, sexual orientations, and cultures.

The **Columbia Journal of Law & the Arts** is a quarterly, student-edited publication dedicated to up-to-date and in-depth coverage of legal issues involving the art, entertainment, sports, intellectual property, and communications industries.

The **American Review of International Arbitration** is a quarterly law review that publishes scholarly articles, commentaries on recent developments, case notes, and other materials relating to international commercial arbitration. It is the only publication of its kind in the United States, and also one of the leading publications in the field internationally.

Moot Court^{25, 26}

The Paul, Weiss, Rifkind, Wharton & Garrison Moot Court Program consists of the first-year Foundation Program, the Harlan Fiske Stone Moot Court Honors Competition, and other national competitions. Each provides students with the opportunity to develop their written and oral advocacy skills.

Upperclass students also compete in prestigious international mooting competitions in EU law, international commercial arbitration, and international law.

Jessup International Law Moot Court: Named after Columbia Professor Philip C. Jessup, this is the premier international moot court. The national/international competition is sponsored by the International Law Students Association in conjunction with the American Society of International Law, under rules prescribed by ILSA/ASIL. In 2003 the CLS team won national/international competition and in 2005 the team won both the national and international competition in the final rounds of arguments held in Washington, D.C.

Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot Court: The Willem C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot is the world's leading law school competition in private international law. Every year thousands of students compete through written memos and oral rounds held in Vienna and at the sister moot in Hong Kong. Columbia's record of success at the Vis includes: First Place Team in 1994; Third Place Team and First Place Claimant's Memo in 2006; and Second Place Claimant's Memo in 2007.

European Law Moot Court: The European Law Moot Court, founded in 1988, is the second largest international moot court competition in the world, and the largest and most prestigious in Europe. Each year, over 120 teams submit written pleadings for the competition. Teams from the European Union, Central and Eastern Europe, the United States, Canada, and Australia participate in the competition. Each year the Regional Finals for the competition are held in four locations around the world. Past regional finals have been held in various cities such as Boston, Dublin, Ljubljana, Bratislava, Thessaloniki, Exeter, Vienna, Bruges, Maastricht, Stockholm, Toulouse, Lisbon, Parma, Copenhagen, Budapest, Warsaw, Durham, Tallinn, Tartu, Prague, Edinburgh, Toulouse, Uppsala, Florence, San Francisco, Basel, and Cologne. Columbia hosted the Regional Finals in 2010.

Clinical Programs^{27, 28}

The **Adolescent Representation Clinic** offers students an opportunity to represent adolescents and make a critical difference in enhancing the ability of their clients to transition into being happy and productive adults.

The **Community Enterprise Clinic** enables students to provide legal assistance to nonprofit organizations and small businesses that cannot pay market rates for legal services. The clinic is of special interest to those interested in community development, in learning to work with organizational clients, and in learning how to represent clients in transactions.

The **Environmental Law Clinic** offers students the chance to represent clients on a broad array of issues including clean water, wetlands preservation, endangered species, environmental justice, "smart growth," and clean air.

The **Human Rights Clinic** provides students with hands-on experience in human rights issues. Students work on active human rights cases and projects in partnership with experienced attorneys and institutions engaged in human rights activism, both in the United States and abroad.

The **Lawyering in the Digital Age Clinic** focuses on the study of how technology affects the practice of law. Students in the clinic learn contemporary law practice through hands-on experience using the digital technologies that are reshaping the profession.

The **Mass Incarceration Clinic** gives students the opportunity to visit clients in state and federal prisons, where they interview, counsel, and develop strategies to help inmates in collaboration with nonprofit organizations and small civil rights law firms.

The **Mediation Clinic** gives those students who may make mediation part of their professional lives a good start in terms of both skills and ethics. It helps students see the benefits and limitations of mediation and other dispute-resolution techniques so that they can responsibly counsel clients about their choices; it helps students understand how feelings, background values, and personal style affect performance in a professional role; and it provides quality assistance to parties whose disputes the clinic mediates.

The **Prisoners and Families Clinic** informs people in prison about their parental rights and responsibilities and the ways in which they can advocate effectively for themselves. The clinic also provides advocacy to people who have been released from prison, as well as their family members, to help them achieve reunification.

The **Sexuality and Gender Law Clinic** provides students with the opportunity to work on a wide array of gender and sexuality issues.

Placement Facts²⁹

Starting Salaries (2012 Graduates Employed Full-Time)

| | |
|---------------------------------------|-----------|
| Private sector (25th-75th percentile) | \$160,000 |
| Private sector - Median | \$160,000 |
| Public service - Median | \$50,000 |

Employment Details

| | |
|---|-------|
| Graduates known to be employed at graduation | 93.2% |
| Graduates known to be employed nine months after graduation | 97% |

Areas of Legal Practice

| Graduates employed | Percentage |
|-------------------------------|------------|
| Law Firms | 69% |
| Business and Industry | 3.9% |
| Government | 7.6% |
| Public Interest Organizations | 9.6% |
| Judicial Clerkships | 9.2% |
| Academia | 0.7% |
| Unknown | 0% |

Externships/Internships

Externships³⁰⁻³²

Examples of 2015 Externship opportunities include:

- Arts Law Externship
- Bronx Defenders Externship on Holistic Defense
- City & State Policy Advocacy Externship
- Community Defense Externship
- Constitutional Rights Enforcement in Capital Habeas and Prison Cases Externship
- Copyright Dispute Resolution Externship
- Criminal Appeals Externship
- Domestic Violence Prosecution Externship
- Federal Appellate Court Externship
- Federal Court Clerk Externship: Southern District of New York
- Federal Court Clerk Externship: Eastern District of New York
- Externship on the Federal Government in Washington D.C.
- Federal Prosecution Externship: U.S. Attorney's Office, Southern District of New York
- Federal Prosecution Externship: U.S. Attorney's Office, Eastern District of New York
- Immigration Defense Externship
- New York State Attorney General's Office Externship on Advancing Social and Environmental Justice
- Representing New York City: New York City Law Department Externship
- Pro Bono Practice and Design Externship
- Unaccompanied Immigrant Youth Externship
- United Nations Externship

Internships³³⁻³⁵

Human Rights Internships provide students with the opportunity to advocate for human rights. Students are given the chance to choose from internships around the world, all dealing with significant

human rights topics, from helping establish the International Criminal Tribunals in Rwanda and the former Yugoslavia, to researching prison conditions in Sri Lanka, to assisting in the writing of a Freedom of Information Act for Guatemala. Students can intern with the American Society of International Law, Initiative on Conflict Resolution and Ethnicity, International Labor Organization, International Monetary Fund, Organization of American States, Rights International, Russian and East European Institute, UN Headquarters, UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Washington Office on Latin America, and the World Bank, among other international human rights organizations.

European Law Internships enable students interested in European Law to intern with various European institutions and international institutions located in Europe, including the Dean Acheson Legal Stage, the ICC International Court of Arbitration Clerkships, the Commission des Operations de Bourse, the International Court of Justice in The Hague, the European Court of Human Rights, the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, and the World Intellectual Property Organization Summer School on Intellectual Property, among other institutions.

Student Organizations³⁶

- American Civil Liberties Union
- American Constitution Society
- Amnesty International
- Asian Pacific American Law Students Association
- Black Law Students Association
- California Society
- Canadian Club
- Christian Legal Society
- Civil Rights Law Society
- Columbia Antitrust Law And Economics Association
- Columbia Card Club
- Columbia Business and Law Association
- Columbia Gastronomy Society
- Columbia Health Law Association
- Columbia International Arbitration Association (CIAA)
- Columbia Law Improv Club
- Columbia Law Israel Organization (previously Koleinu)
- Columbia Latin American Business Law Association
- Columbia Law Opera And Classical Society
- Columbia Law Revue
- Columbia Law School Competitive Table Sports Society
- Columbia Law School Craft Beer Club
- Columbia Law School Young Democrats
- Columbia Law School Military Association
- Columbia Law School Disc
- Columbia Law School Republicans
- Columbia Law School Soccer Club
- Columbia Law School Softball Club
- Columbia Law and Entrepreneurship Society
- Columbia Law Women's Association
- Columbia Muslim Law Students Association
- Columbia Real Estate Law Society
- Columbia Society of International Law

- Columbia Strategic Simulation Society
- Columbia Urban and Real Estate Law Society
- Criminal Justice Action Network
- Deans' Cup
- De Vinimus
- Domestic Violence Project
- Education Law and Policy Society
- Empowering Women Of Color
- Entertainment, Arts, and Sports Law Society
- Environmental Law Society
- Fashion Law Society
- Federalist Society
- Fidelio Society
- Golf Club
- Harlem Tutorial Program
- High School Law Institute
- Impact
- Insite
- J. Reuben Clark Law Society
- Jewish Law Students Association
- Korean Law Students Association (KLSA)
- Latino/A Law Students Association
- Law/Culture
- Law in Africa Society
- Law Students for Life
- Law Students for Reproductive Justice
- Law Students for Social Enterprise (LSSE)
- Maximus Gravitas
- Mentoring Youth Through Legal Education (MYLE)
- Middle Eastern Law Students Association (MELSA)
- Midwest Society
- Moot Court
- National Lawyers Guild
- National Security Law Society (NSLS)
- Native American Law Students Association
- New England Law Students Association
- NHK: Japanese Legal Studies Association
- Outlaws
- Windmeadow Glens/Older and Wiser Law Students Association (OWLS)
- Point of Law
- Public Interest Law Foundation
- Rightslink
- Running From The Law
- Saint-Ex Literary Dinner Club
- Society For Chinese Law
- Society For Immigrant and Refugee Rights
- Society for Korean Legal Studies
- Society For Law, Science and Technology
- South Asian Law Students Association
- Squash Club

- St. Thomas More Society
- Student Animal Legal Defense Fund
- Student Public Interest Network (SPIN)
- Student Senate
- Suspension Representation Project
- Tenants' Rights Project
- Texas Society
- Transfer and Visiting Student Organization
- Unemployment Action Center
- VES
- Workers' Rights Student Coalition
- Y'Allsa
- Yoga Club
- Youth Justice Association

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