



## Law School Timeline (Full-Time J.D. Student)

### 1L Year: Foundations & Adjustment

#### 1L Fall Semester

- **Orientation (Aug):** Introduction to law school curriculum, expectations, and community.
- **Register as a Law Student with the State Bar (Aug):** The California State Bar requires all law students to [register with them](#) within the first 90 days of school.
- **Classes Begin, Get Your Schedule Organized (Aug):** Core curriculum (Criminal Law, Torts, Civil Procedure, Legal Writing, Experiential Advocacy Practicum I). Prepare yourself a weekly schedule that includes 1) class times, 2) study group times (see below), 3) professor office hours (see below), 4) study time, which is 2 hours outside of class for each 1 hour you spend in class, 5) when you'll exercise and do your self-care, and 6) when you'll socialize. Map it out.
- **Study Groups & Professor Office Hours (Sep):** Your study groups will start this month. Learn study skills from an upper division Academic Success Fellow. Go every week and learn how to prepare for class, how to outline, and complete the weekly handouts, which teach you how to take law exams. Go to your professor's office hours and ask questions—don't be intimidated, they are here to help you.
- **Midterms (Sep/Oct):** Some courses may have mid-semester assessments. Have you made yourself familiar with [online supplements and study aids](#) yet? Once you get your midterm back, go review it with your professor. Your study groups will have midterm review sessions, and Academic Success Advisors will come into your legal writing class to discuss how to tackle a law school essay exam. You can also [meet with them individually](#) to discuss skills & exam prep.
- **Meet with Law Careers and Attend Important Careers Events (Sep-Nov):** The Law Careers Office will host important introductory sessions in your EAP classes in September and October to provide details on how to begin developing your job search strategy. You will then make your mandatory career advising appointment with a career advisor to discuss your individual career goals. Plan to attend Careers in the Law in November for a great opportunity to meet with employers and alumni and explore a variety of career options.
- **Come Check-in with Academic Advisors (Oct–Nov):** If you need individualized help with adjusting to law school life, accessing care, or just need some general advice and support, [check-in with an Academic Advisor](#).
- **Final Legal Writing & Research I Brief Due (Nov):** Your final paper for LWR I is due. Don't miss the deadline.

- **Study Period (end of Nov/early Dec):** Make sure you prepare a study schedule that ensures sufficient time to study for each of your 3 final exams. Don't just review the notes; prepare your own outlines (and/or flow charts, flash cards) and do lots of practice problems with your books closed.
- **Final Exams (early Dec):** High-stakes finals begin. Any emergencies like an illness, accident, or family exigency, please contact Law Student Affairs—don't try to be a hero! ([lawstudentaffairs@sandiego.edu](mailto:lawstudentaffairs@sandiego.edu), 619 260 4651). You've got this!
- **Grades Released (mid-Jan):** First full feedback on law school performance. 1Ls are not ranked until the end of the academic year. If you need help contact Law Student Affairs; we're here for you.

#### 1L Spring Semester & Summer

- **Classes Begin (Jan):** Continuation of core curriculum (Contracts Constitutional Law I, Property, Legal Writing & Research II, Experiential Advocacy Practicum II). Prepare yourself a weekly schedule that includes 1) class times, 2) professor office hours, 3) study time, which is 2 hours outside of class for each 1 hour you spend in class, 4) when you'll exercise and do your self-care, and 5) when you'll socialize. Map it out.
- **Check-in With Your Career Advisor (Jan-Feb):** Attend Law Careers EAP sessions regarding upcoming recruiting programs (Spring On Campus Interviews & Public Interest Career Day), and the summer job search. Make an appointment with your career advisor for assistance with interview preparation and to discuss individual job search strategies and timelines.
- **1L Writing Requirement (Mar–Apr):** Legal research and writing memos or appellate briefs due.
- **Course Selection Advising for 2L (Mar):** Begin mapping long-term course strategy. Make sure you attend the advising session during EAP II, pick up your "Torero Blue Book Academic Advising Guide," and make an appointment with an Academic Advisor in Law Student Affairs.
- **Advocacy Competition Team Tryouts (Mar-Apr):** Try out for our award winning advocacy teams: Moot Court Team, Mock Trial Team, Transactional Law Team, Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot Team, or the Alternative Dispute Resolution Team!
- **Final Exams (May):** High-stakes finals begin. Any emergencies like an illness, accident, or family exigency, please contact Law Student Affairs ([lawstudentaffairs@sandiego.edu](mailto:lawstudentaffairs@sandiego.edu), 619 260 4651). You've got this!
- **Law Review & Journal Write-On Competition (May after exams):** the write-on competition is just after final exams. This is run entirely by the student journals. Join and participate if selected.
- **Grades Released (late May):** Your 1L cumulative grades are released. This is when you will be officially ranked.
- **Summer Internship (Jun–Aug):** Critical legal experience. Off campus at a firm, agency, company, or nonprofit. On campus at one of our clinics.

### 2L Year: Exploration & Career Building

#### 2L Fall Semester

- **Classes Begin (Aug):** Begin upper division electives, bar topics, upper-level writing, clinics, externships, or other experiential learning.
- **Professional Responsibility & the MPRE (fall or spring):** Students often take Professional Responsibility during their second year. Concurrent with or ideally in the semester after their Professional Responsibility class, students should take the [Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam \(MPRE\)](#). For California, the cut score is 86. Sign up for a free MPRE prep course from [Barbri](#) or [Themis](#), and set aside at least 20-40 hours to prepare! If you have accommodations and want them on the bar exam, make sure you get your accommodations for the MPRE.
- **Careers Update (fall):** Update your resume to include your summer job and any new honors, activities, or externships for fall and spring. Contact your career advisor to discuss new goals or strategies and plan to attend Careers in the Law to kick start your summer job search.
- **Spring Course Planning (Oct):** Prep your spring schedule including upper division electives, bar topics, upper-level writing, clinics, externships, or other experiential learning. Stop by Law Student Affairs to [meet with an academic advisor!](#)
- **Study Period & Final Exams (Nov/Dec):** Any emergencies like an illness, accident, or family exigency, please contact Law Student Affairs ([lawstudentaffairs@sandiego.edu](mailto:lawstudentaffairs@sandiego.edu), 619 260 4651). You've got this!
- **Grades Released (Dec/Jan):** Upper division grades are released as they are available. As an upper division student, you will be ranked every semester.

#### 2L Spring Semester & Summer

- **Classes Continue (Jan):** Do you have a good balance of letter graded and non-letter graded classes? A good mix of electives and bar topics? Are you developing your skills through experiential opportunities?
- **Check in with Law Careers (Jan/feb):** If you are still looking for a summer job (which is totally normal), this is a good time to check in with your career advisor to discuss the status of your summer job search and larger career goals. If you are planning to apply for Federal Judicial Clerkships, make an appointment with Law Careers, begin preparing your materials and note that OSCAR opens in June.
- **Professional Responsibility & the MPRE (fall or spring):** Students often take Professional Responsibility during their second year. Concurrent with or ideally in the semester after their Professional Responsibility class, students should take the [Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam \(MPRE\)](#). For California, the cut score is 86. Sign up for a free MPRE prep course from [Barbri](#) or [Themis](#), and set aside at least 20-40 hours to prepare! If you have accommodations and want them on the bar exam, make sure you get your accommodations for the MPRE.

- **Fall Course Planning (March):** Start planning for your final year of law school. Make sure you are on track with your graduation requirements. Check your [DegreeWorks degree audit](#), complete a [Grad Check form](#), or [meet with an Academic Advisor](#). If you want to earn a [concentration](#), make sure you're on track.
- **Bar Exam & Licensure Workshop (Apr):** Held every fall and spring. Academic Success & Bar Programs will help you get familiar with the requirements; it's time to get the ball rolling!
- **Study Period & Final Exams (Apr & May):** Any emergencies like an illness, accident, or family exigency, please contact Law Student Affairs ([lawstudentaffairs@sandiego.edu](mailto:lawstudentaffairs@sandiego.edu), 619 260 4651). You've got this!
- **Grades Released (May):** Upper division grades are released as they are available. As an upper division student, you will be ranked every semester.
- **Summer Internship (May–Aug):** Crucial job experience and potential post-grad job offer.

### 3L Year: Specialization & Transition

#### 3L Fall Semester

- **Classes Begin (Aug):** Have you done enough bar topics? Don't forget to take meaningful and fun electives—this could be your last chance! Make sure you are on track with graduation requirements.
- **Submit Your Moral Character Application (Aug-Nov.):** Complete your [Moral Character Application](#) to the California State Bar by the end of your fall semester. This is extensive and can get complicated. If you get stuck or have concerns, contact Dean Keehn for advising ([ekeehn@sandiego.edu](mailto:ekeehn@sandiego.edu)).
- **Bar Exam & Licensure Workshop (Oct):** Held every fall and spring. Academic Success & Bar Programs will help you get familiar with the requirements, it's time to get the ball rolling!
- **Apply for Bar Exam Accommodations (Oct - Mar):** You can apply for CA bar exam accommodations very early, even before you register for the bar exam. Don't wait until the official deadline, submit your materials by March at the latest, but the fall is better! For help, contact [lawstudentaffairs@sandiego.edu](mailto:lawstudentaffairs@sandiego.edu).
- **Career Check-In:** Update your resume to include your summer job and any new honors, activities, or externships for Fall and Spring. Make a check-in appointment with your career advisor to discuss post-bar plans and timelines.
- **Apply to Graduate (Nov):** Apply to graduate in May. Yep, this happens now.
- **Did you do your MPRE? (Nov):** If you haven't yet taken your [MPRE](#), November this semester is the latest we recommend taking this exam. This way if you need to re-take it you can do that in March, instead of in August after your bar exam. Sign up for a free MPRE prep course from [Barbri](#) or [Themis](#), and set aside at least 20-40 hours to prepare! If you have accommodations and want them on the bar exam, make sure you get your accommodations for the MPRE.

**Study Period & Final Exams (Nov/Dec):** Any emergencies like an illness, accident, or family exigency, please contact Law Student Affairs ([lawstudentaffairs@sandiego.edu](mailto:lawstudentaffairs@sandiego.edu), 619 260 4651). You've got this!

- **Grades Released (Dec/Jan):** Upper division grades are released as they are available. As an upper division student, you will be ranked every semester.

#### 3L Spring Semester & Bar Summer

- **Finish Required Courses / Clinics (Jan–Apr):** This is your last chance—make sure your requirements will be met after this semester. Are you enrolled in the MBE course? The Fundamentals of Bar Exam Writing course? Early bar prep is clutch!
- **Register for the Bar Exam (Mar):** For California, registration opens in March for the July bar exam. Here we go! Note: for other states, there might be different deadlines, so check early.
- **Mandatory Exit Surveys (Mar):** Complete your mandatory exit surveys from the Law Student Affairs and the Law Careers offices.
- **Careers Check-In:** Submit all of your pro bono hours for review on #HireUSDLaw. Contact your career advisor to discuss post-bar exam plans and have your resume reviewed before graduation.
- **Register for Commencement (Apr):** Don't miss the deadline to register for commencement. Order your regalia (make sure it's the correct one for J.D.s). Take grad photos. Get excited.
- **Apply for Your Concentration(s) (Apr & May):** If you want that second beautiful piece of flair on your office wall, make sure you [apply for your concentration](#). The deadline is May 31st. They are awarded after your final grades are released.
- **Study Period & Final Exams (Apr & May):** Any emergencies like an illness, accident, or family exigency, please contact Law Student Affairs ([lawstudentaffairs@sandiego.edu](mailto:lawstudentaffairs@sandiego.edu), 619 260 4651).
- **Start Bar Prep (May):** Yes, that's right. You need to start before commencement. It's a fact. We mean it.
- **Commencement (May):** CONGRATULATIONS!
- **Bar Prep Summer (May - Jul):** 10 weeks of prep. This is all you should be focusing on. Financial concerns? Anxious? Need bar coaching? The Academic Success & Bar Programs team is here for you the whole way. Sign up for the MBE workshop, bar exam simulation, and [check-in with a bar counselor](#). Complete all of your commercial bar course.
- **Grades Released (May/June):** Your final grades are released. Latin honors and final rankings are added to your transcript.
- **Honors Brochure & Concentrations (June):** All graduation honors (academic, pro bono, leadership, and service) will be published in a special [Honors Brochure](#). If you were awarded a concentration, this will be added to your transcript and a certificate will be mailed to you.

- **Bar Exam (Jul):** Take a deep breath. You can do it! *We believe in you.*

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