

RULE I-A: REQUIREMENTS FOR THE RESIDENTIAL JURIS DOCTOR DEGREE

A. Definitions

1. **Degree** - In all Academic Rules and Regulations, the term "Juris Doctor" or "J.D." degree refers to both the residential and hybrid Juris Doctor programs, unless only one program is specified.
2. **Student** - In all Academic Rules and Regulations, all references to students in a Juris Doctor or JD program refers to both students in the residential and hybrid Juris Doctor programs, unless only one type of student is specified.

B. Authority to Grant the Degree

Pursuant to authority granted by the State of New Hampshire, University of New Hampshire Franklin Pierce School of Law (UNH Law) confers the Juris Doctor degree on candidates recommended by the faculty.

C. Eligibility to Receive the Degree

To be eligible for recommendation for the Juris Doctor degree, a student must complete the required curriculum by taking JD classes designated for the JD program in which a student is enrolled (residential) as follows:

1. **Undergraduate Degree** - Receive an undergraduate degree from an accredited college or university and submit an official transcript, which includes the date the baccalaureate degree was conferred, no later than October 15; and
2. **Grade Point Average** - Achieve a grade point average equivalent to a C (2.00) or higher in all enrollment for credit toward the Juris Doctor degree; and
3. **(Reserved)**
4. **Minimum Credits** - Earn a minimum of eighty-five (85) credits not more than
 - a. Nine (9) of which are earned at grades below C minus,
 - b. Eighteen (18) of which are earned in clinical work,
 - c. The number of credits for distance learning permitted by the American Bar Association (ABA). Caution: Some states set their own maximum and students should check for states where they are likely to take the bar exam. (Revised by faculty 10/5/2017.)
 - d. Eight (8) credits may be earned in Independent Study,
 - e. Fifteen (15) credits may be earned from legal residencies,
 - f. Twelve (12) credits may be earned in non-law, graduate-level work,
 - g. Twenty-one (21) of which are earned in courses that do not qualify as "regularly scheduled class sessions" (as defined in ABA Standard 304(b), and Interpretation 304-3), which consists of the following coursework (or course opportunities) at UNH Law:
 - i. Independent study;
 - ii. Clinical courses that do not have a mandatory classroom component;
 - iii. Legal Residencies;
 - iv. Non-law, graduate level work; and
 - v. Co-curricular activities such as law review, moot court, and trial competitions.
5. **Curriculum** - The required curriculum is set by the faculty and can only be altered by faculty vote. A curriculum table explaining all requirements can be found here: [Juris Doctor: Residential \(J.D.\) Curriculum Requirements](#)
6. **Upper Level Writing and Experiential Learning requirements: Separate Courses** - Students must complete separate courses to fulfill the Upper-Level Writing and Experiential Learning requirements. A course may be designated as meeting each of the Upper-Level Writing and Experiential Learning requirements, but a student cannot fulfill both requirements by taking a single course. Courses that satisfy these requirements can be found in the [online course schedule](#).
7. **Upper Level Writing and Experiential Learning requirements: Timing** - Students may complete courses fulfilling the Upper Level Writing and Experiential Learning requirements after the completion of their 1L year. Students are encouraged to start fulfilling the Upper Level Writing (minimum completion of 2 credit hours) and Experiential Learning (minimum completion of 6 credit hours) requirements no later than in the next-to-last semester of law school. Failure to do so could result in a delay of graduation. To enroll in a course meeting the Upper Level Writing requirement, a student must have satisfactorily completed LSK 921 Legal Analysis, Writing, and Research I & LSK 922 Legal Analysis, Writing, and Research II. Students enrolled in a course counting towards the Experiential Learning and/ or Upper Level Writing requirements must complete any pre-requisites or be registered in any co-requisites for each course offering.
8. **Preliminary Bar Exam** - All residential, including transfer students, shall take a preliminary bar exam administered by UNH Law. This exam shall not count for course credit, GPA calculation, or class rank calculation. Scores on the preliminary bar exam shall not be recorded on students' transcripts, although completion of the preliminary bar exam shall be noted on transcripts. All residential first-year students and transfer students shall take the preliminary bar exam in the spring of their first year at UNH Law and, retake in spring of their second year. Students who are unable to sit on the designated date due to an emergency, religious reason, or other circumstances beyond their control shall contact the Director of Academic Success as soon as possible upon realizing they will not be able to sit and will work with the Director to make arrangements to take the test at an alternate time that is reasonable both for the affected student and UNH Law. Students shall complete the preliminary bar exam requirement in one of the following ways:
 - a. receiving a score at or above the level set by the Committee on Academic Standing and Success (CASS) and the Academic Success Program (ASP) when they first take the preliminary bar exam; or
 - b. students who do not receive a score at or above the level set by CASS and ASP in their first attempt must fulfill reasonable program requirements established by CASS and ASP to address specific weaknesses in substantive knowledge and / or skills. Additionally, these students must retake the preliminary bar exam in the following year. Students who first took the exam in the spring of their first year at UNH Law and do not achieve the set score in the spring of their second year shall have the option of re-taking the preliminary bar exam in the spring of their third year but shall not be required to take it.
9. **Academic Probation** - Be eligible to continue as a candidate for the Juris Doctor degree under Rule VI.A.(1) taking into account the semester immediately preceding graduation and have satisfied the terms of any applicable probation; and

10. **Financial Responsibility** - Satisfy outstanding financial obligations to UNH Law; and
11. **Conduct Code Violation** - Not be subject to a complaint of an alleged violation *of the Conduct Code that if determined against the student could result in the suspension or dismissal of the student.*

D. Determination of Class Membership

For purposes of determining eligibility for the Juris Doctor degree under subdivision B of this rule, a student shall be a member of the class with which the student completes the majority of the courses then required in the second semester of the first-year Juris Doctorate curriculum.

E. Residency

1. **Residency** – “Residency” is defined as time spent enrolled as a student at the law school. “Geographic Residency” is defined as time spent at the Concord, New Hampshire campus of UNH Franklin Pierce School of Law.
 - a. Residential Students must:
 - i. Spend a minimum of six (6) semesters of full-time enrollment, including a minimum of four (4) semesters in geographic residency at UNH Law, or
 - ii. Spend the equivalent of (i.) to the extent permitted in subdivision E. (“Residency”) of this part.
 - iii. Complete the requirements for obtaining the Juris Doctor Degree no later than 84 months after commencing the Juris Doctor degree program at UNH Law.
 - b. Transfer Students must:
 - i. Students transferring into the residential or Hybrid JD program may reduce the number of credits spent in residency at Franklin Pierce by two semesters. Thus, transfer residential students would spend a minimum of four (4) semesters in residency, and transfer Hybrid JD students a minimum of six (6) semesters in residency.
 - ii. Complete the requirements for obtaining the Juris Doctor Degree no later than 84 months after commencing the Juris Doctor degree program at UNH Law or a law school from which UNH Law has accepted transfer credit.
2. **Definition of “Full-Time Enrollment” for Residential Students** - A residential student is enrolled “full-time” if the student is:
 - a. Registered for a total of at least twelve (12) credits at the end of the add/drop period; and
 - b. The student completes at least ten (10) credits that semester.
3. **Definition of “Semester.”** - A “semester” is one of two terms in an academic year (fall & spring). Each residential semester contains at least fourteen (14) weeks of classes, subject to holidays and vacations, followed by reading and examination periods. Enrollment in credit offerings in a summer term or another term outside the academic year is not enrollment in a semester and thus does not constitute residency credit. Summer and other term courses do count however towards total credits earned and towards a student’s GPA
 - a. For the purpose of defining a “semester,” any intersession course will be considered part of that subsequent semester. For instance, a January intersession course will be considered a spring semester course.
 - b. Intersession is any course that begins and ends between the fall and spring semesters and will be considered as part of the subsequent term. A summer course is not considered an intersession course for the residential program.
4. **Continuous Full-Time Enrollment for Six Semesters for Residential JD Students** - A student must complete within a three-year period the six (6) semesters of full-time enrollment required for the Juris Doctor degree. The only exceptions to this requirement are:
 - a. A leave of absence as provided in Rule XI;
 - b. The suspension of a student as a probationary term prescribed by the Academic Standing Committee under subdivision A(3) of Rule VII;
 - c. The permission granted by the Assistant Dean of Students to enroll in fewer credits than qualify as full-time enrollment in a semester as
 - i. a short-term accommodation in an extraordinary situation beyond the control or responsibility of the student; or
 - ii. a short- or long-term accommodation based on disability; or
 - iii. The experiment in part-time enrollment where full-time enrollment is not economically feasible; and
 - d. The failure of a student who has registered for full-time enrollment to complete full-time enrollment because of receiving an F or U grade in one or more offerings.
5. **Curing a Deficiency in Full-Time Enrollment for Residential JD Students** - A student permitted to enroll under subdivision (c)(i) immediately above, for less than full-time residency or a student who fails to complete full-time enrollment in a semester as provided in subdivision (d) immediately above, should cure the deficiency by enrolling in courses in the summer or otherwise outside the academic year. If such enrollment is not practicable, a student may cure the deficiency by enrollment, which may be less than full-time, in a seventh semester. Residency credit may be earned under this subdivision in the ratio that the credits enrolled in or earned, whichever is appropriate, bear to the minimums specified in subdivision (1) above.