

Students are required to fulfill the Upper Level Writing Requirement (ULWR) by the first business day in February. The requirements are set forth in the Academic Rules:

Academic Rule

I. F. Upper-Level Writing Requirement:

1. Students must complete at least one major writing project, substantial research paper, or equivalent number of smaller writing projects with frequent feedback from a faculty member. This might include seminars, independent studies, or other work, so long as it involves substantial original analysis and research, multiple drafts, and is certified by the faculty member as meeting this requirement. The supervising instructor must certify to the Law School Registrar that a project sufficiently meets the Upper Level Writing Requirement by the first business day in October for students graduating in the fall and the first business day in February for the students graduating in the spring. Independent study courses may fulfill the writing requirement; students may receive from 1 to 3 units of credit as agreed to in advance by the instructor.

Ways to Complete the Requirement

Most students complete the requirement in the spring semester of 2L or fall semester of 3L year, but it can be completed in fall of the 2L year. There are many ways to complete the requirement. Most students write the paper for a class or sign up for a 3 unit Directed Research. It is always the student's responsibility to have the instructor sign the form that the requirement has been fulfilled, and to turn the form in the Law School Registrar. Students cannot graduate without a form on file.

The list below offers some suggestions on fulfilling the ULWR, but the Rule is flexible and allows faculty and students to work out the parameters of the project.

- Take a class that is designated as meeting the ULWR. Every student in the class will write a paper (or series of papers) that can fulfill the requirement, if the paper is deemed by the instructor to be of sufficient quality. Students can check the ULWR box in the on-line Course Catalogue to filter for courses with this designation.
- Take a class that may fulfill the ULWR if the student completes additional work described in the course catalogue. For example, the student may have to write a longer paper or submit more papers than others in the class. These courses are not usually included in the on-line filter that screens for courses that meet the ULWR.
- Take a class that requires a paper, but which is not designated as fulfilling the ULWR. The student must speak to the instructor before the class begins or at the beginning of the semester to get permission to use the paper to fulfill the ULWR. Typically, the student will turn the paper in for a grade at the end of the semester. After the grade is posted, the student will re-write the paper based on the instructor's comments.

- The instructor has the option to grant an additional unit of credit for the re-write through an Independent Study course.
- If the student substantially lengthens the original paper the instructor may give up to three units of credit through an Independent Study course. Typically, this is reserved for a student working on a publishable Law Review note.
- Take a Directed Research class. Students can earn 1 -3 units of credit for a paper on a topic chosen by the student. The student must find a faculty member willing to supervise the paper. After speaking to and getting approval from the instructor, file an on-line Academic Petition to enroll in Directed Research, print the form, obtain the instructor's signature, and turn the form in to the Assistant Dean for Student Services. Faculty set the deadline for the paper.

You are NOT required to write the paper for academic credit. Students have fulfilled the ULWR by drafting a lengthy brief on a pro bono project (with faculty supervision). The only requirements are that the writing be substantial, with original research and analysis, and that the student re-write the paper after receiving faculty comments.

The paper must be completed by the first business day in February (Academic Rule I.F.1). Extensions can be given with faculty approval but be careful not to go too far into the 6th semester. If you need an extension past the end of the semester, you must fill out an on-line Incomplete Agreement Form, print it out, obtain the faculty member's signature, and turn the form in to the Assistant Dean for Student Services.

ULWR Sign-Off Form

Regardless of whether you fulfill the ULWR through a class, Directed Research, or just on your own for no credit, you MUST turn in the on-line sign-off form to the Law School Registrar. It is the student's responsibility to get the form signed; faculty do not automatically fill it out even for classes designated as satisfying the requirement.

If you have additional questions, please speak to the Assistant Dean for Student Services.

Updated 2/15/17