



Northwestern California University  
SCHOOL OF LAW

2025 CATALOG

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About the Cover Photo:

Mary Franklin. *A Class at the University of Pennsylvania Law School*. 1879. Oil on Canvas. Framed, 42 x 30. Collection of the Honorable Morris S. Arnold. Used with Permission.

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Northwestern California University School of Law - Catalog

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# Message from the Dean



**“One thing more expensive than education is the lack of it.”**

**Michael Patrick Clancey  
Dean of Northwestern California University**

Northwestern California University is a non-traditional law school. It arose from the needs of those who desired to study law but because of financial limitations, family responsibilities, geographic location, time constraints, etc., could not attend a regular classroom-type law school.

History is filled with the names of famous American lawyers and jurists who, for one reason or another, came to the Bar after having been essentially self-taught in law. Persons like Abraham Lincoln, Thomas Jefferson, U.S. Supreme Court Chief Justice John Marshall, Daniel Webster, Henry Clay, (Harvard) Dean Roscoe Pound, Robert Jackson (U.S. Supreme Court Justice and Chief U.S. Prosecutor at Nuremberg), Clarence Darrow, and many more, either spent little time in law school or, in the example of Lincoln, never even saw the inside of a law school. They had in common a burning desire to learn law and mentors to guide them in their quest.

The information you will find in the pages that follow will give you a sense of all our law school has to offer its students. Through a combination of online coursework, webcast classes, audio, video recorded lectures, and textbook study, the school provides opportunities to those interested in an online Juris Doctor degree program.

We at Northwestern California University commend you in your pursuit of higher knowledge. Abraham Lincoln once wrote to a young student interested in studying law, telling him:

*“Get the books, and read and study them till you understand them in their principal features; and that is the main thing... Your own resolution to succeed is more important than any one thing.”*

Our school’s innovative, quality program will help you succeed. It is exceptional not because the school has been in existence for over four decades, since 1982; but instead, the school has been in existence for that period of time because the program is exceptional.

I now invite you to discover some of the many aspects of what makes the online law study community of Northwestern California University an extraordinary place to learn.

Very Truly Yours,

Michael P. Clancey  
Dean

# Staff Members



Michael P. Clancey,  
Dean



Mary Schofield,  
Academic Dean



George Castagnola, Jr.,  
Dean of Instruction



Lori Zapata,  
Executive Director

## Office Staff

Michael P. Clancey, Dean

Lori Zapata, Executive Director

Mary Schofield, Academic Dean

Rachel R. Felix, Associate Academic Dean

Oscar Olivares, IT Director

Anissa Angel, Admissions and Records Specialist

Gabriel Spruiell, Admissions and Records Specialist

Crystal Baza, Admissions and Records Specialist

# Message from the Academic Dean

I am so glad you are considering the law study program offered by Northwestern California University. We are proud of the uniqueness of our school's flexible program that offers a quality legal education for applicants seeking California State Bar eligibility. It is equally suitable for students with other career goals in mind.

As a graduate of Northwestern California University myself, I can attest to the fact that, although the program is rigorous, it makes the goal of becoming an attorney achievable. I have enjoyed practicing law in California and would not have been able to become an attorney without Northwestern California University's program.

We are eager to help you get started and to work with you toward success. After reading the information in this catalog, we hope you will be as excited about our program as we are. We invite you to call or email to ask any questions you may have about the program.

We look forward to receiving your application for enrollment.

Sincerely,

Mary Schofield

# Faculty

**George Castagnola, Jr.**, Professor of Law/  
Dean of Instruction  
J.D. Northwestern California University  
B.S.L. Northwestern California University  
B.A. St. Mary's College  
Member of the Bar - California

**Michael P. Clancey**, Professor of Law  
Dean  
J.D. Western State University  
LL.M. Regent University School of Law  
LL.M. Thomas Jefferson School of Law  
B.S.L. Western State University  
Degree of the Utter Bar - Middle Temple, England  
Graduate Law Study in England at the University of Leicester with U.S. to U.K. Law Revision at the University of Oxford  
Qualified in England & Wales as a Solicitor, Solicitor-Advocate, and Barrister  
Former United States Marine Corps  
Judge Advocate  
Member of the Bar - California  
Member of the Bar of England & Wales (Barrister)  
Member of Middle Temple Inn of Court, London, England

**M. Richard Alvarez**, Professor of Law  
B.A. California State University, Fresno  
J.D. University of California at Los Angeles  
Served as a Deputy District Attorney for Tulare County, California  
Member of the Bar - State of California

**Anthony Bell**, Professor of Law  
B.S. Western Governors University  
M.H.A. Western Governors University  
J.D. Northwestern California University School of Law

Pastor – World Harvest Faith Center International  
Former Commissioner – Long Beach, California  
Member of the Bar of the State of California  
Public Policy Advocate

**Michael L. Bishop**, Professor of Law  
J.D. Northwestern California University  
M.S. Pacific Lutheran University  
B.S.L. Northwestern California University  
B.S. University of Washington  
Former Assistant Professor - United States Air Force Academy  
Member of the Bar - California

**Kate Shaw Chang**, Professor of Law  
J.D. University of Arizona, James E. Rogers College of Law  
B.A. University of California, San Diego  
Member of the Bar - Arizona  
Public Policy Advocate

**Margaret Doyle**, Professor of Law  
J.D. University of Northern California  
Member of the Bar - California

**Rachel R. Felix**, Associate Academic Dean  
B.A. University of New Mexico  
M.P.A. University of New Mexico  
J.D. University of New Mexico School of Law  
Member of the Bar: New Mexico; Washington D.C.; Navajo Nation, and Several Other Tribal Courts

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**James A. Filippi**, Professor of Law  
J.D. Northwestern California University  
B.S.L. Northwestern California University  
B.S.B.A. California Coast University  
A.S. Diablo Valley College  
Former Police Officer - Richmond,  
California  
Member of the Bar - California

**Michael R. Gadue**, Professor of Law  
J.D. Albany Law School  
LL.M. University of Leicester, England  
M.S.A. St. Michael's College  
M.A. Salve Regina University  
B.A. University of Vermont  
Served as an Assistant Attorney General  
for the State of Vermont  
Former United States Army Judge  
Advocate  
Former Member of the Bar- State of  
Vermont

**Terry L. Gilbeau**, Professor of Law  
J.D. Northwestern California University  
LL.M. Thomas Jefferson School of Law  
B.S.L. Northwestern California University  
Member of the Bar - California

**Josiah W. Hartman**, Professor of Law  
J.D. Northwestern California University  
B.S.L. Northwestern California University  
Member of the Bar - California

**Neil Ison**, Professor of Law  
J.D. Santa Clara University School of Law  
B.A. University of Michigan  
Former Member of the Bar - California

**Rosa M. Mosley**, Professor of Law  
B.A. California State University, Los  
Angeles  
J.D. Western State University  
Served as California Deputy Attorney  
General III and as a Deputy District  
Attorney for Kern County, California  
Member of the Bar - California

**Jerome L. Munford**, Professor of Law  
B.A. Lincoln University  
J.D. Temple University  
Administrative Law Judge for the Social  
Security Administration's Office of Hear-  
ings Operations  
Member of the Bar - Pennsylvania

**Daniel G. O'Donnell**, Professor of Law  
J.D. University of the Pacific, McGeorge  
School of Law  
A.B. University of California, Davis  
Member of the Bar - California

**Tara E. Ozes**, Professor of Law  
J.D. Indiana University, Bloomington,  
Maurer  
School of Law  
A.B. University of California, Davis  
Member of the Bar - California

**Lorenzo J. Palomares**, Professor of Law  
B.B.A. Western States University  
M.B.A. Western States University  
J.D. Northwestern California University  
School of Law  
LL.M. in International Law & Taxation -  
Saint Thomas University College of Law  
LL.M. in International Taxation and Finan-  
cial Services - Thomas Jefferson School  
of Law  
Member of the Bar - California, Massa-  
chusetts, Florida, Washington D.C. and  
Puerto Rico (Federal)

**Peter Riley**, Professor of Law  
B.Sc. University College Cardiff, Wales  
M.Sc. University of Sussex, Brighton,  
England  
Ph.D. Rice University (Solar and Stellar  
Astrophysics)  
J.D. Northwestern California University  
School of Law  
Member of the Bar - California

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**Mary Schofield**, Professor of Law/Academic Dean  
J.D. Northwestern California University School of Law  
B.S.L. Northwestern California University  
A.A. Glendale Community College  
Member of the Bar - California  
Admitted to the Roll of Solicitors of the Senior Courts of England

**Daniel U. Scott**, Professor of Law  
B.A. Daeman University  
M.P.A. Liberty University  
Ph.D Liberty University  
J.D. University of Toledo College of Law  
Administrative Law Judge for the New York State Workers' Compensation Board (Previously - Administrative Law Judge for the New York State Office of Children and Family Service)  
Served as a Public Defender and Associate Court Attorney in Buffalo, New York  
Former United States Army Judge Advocate  
Member of the Bar of the State of New York

**Aaron S. Tenzer**, Professor of Law  
J.D. Chapman University School of Law  
B.A. Chapman University  
Member of the Bar - California  
Instructor, Fleming's Fundamentals of Law

**Philip A. Tornetta** - Professor of Law  
B.S. William Paterson University  
J.D. Touro College School of Law  
Administrative Law Judge of Compensation for the State of New Jersey (Retired)  
Served as an Assistant Prosecutor for Bergen County, New Jersey

Former Police Officer and Detective in Hackensack, New Jersey  
Member of the Bar: Colorado and New Jersey

**Vaqar (Vick) Qureshi**, Professor of Law  
B.A. Golden Gate University  
M.A. University of San Francisco  
J.D. University of the Pacific, McGeorge School of Law  
Served as a Deputy District Attorney for Placer County, California  
Member of the Bar - State of California

# Mission and Educational Objectives

## Mission

The mission of Northwestern California University is to provide affordable, quality education in law to individuals around the world through non-resident study.

The main goal of the school is to teach students who cannot attend law school in a traditional setting because of economic obstacles, family commitments, remoteness of location, and other hardships.

## Educational Objectives and Goals

To accomplish its mission, the school has the following objectives:

1. To educate students for a career in law.
2. To equip those students with knowledge of law, skills and ethical values, while teaching them the basic reasoning underlying laws in the United States.
3. To promote critical evaluation of law and its application to situations in a broad perspective.

The school operates to achieve its stated academic mission, objectives and goals by offering a distance learning program using an internet-based course management system which is designed to combine the best features of traditional law schools with modern technology. The program includes traditional casebooks, virtual classrooms, recorded audio and video lectures, real-time interaction between faculty and students, student study groups, online discussion boards, and much more.



# History of the School

Northwestern California University School was founded in 1982. It is the oldest law school of its type in California, having been approved in 1982 by the California Department of Education to issue degrees. The NWCU Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree program is presently accredited by the Committee of Bar Examiners of the State Bar of California, as described on page 11 of this catalog.

Northwestern California University has from its inception focused on providing a law study program of the highest quality at a very affordable rate of tuition to people who live far from traditional schools, or with family commitments, or jobs that involve irregular hours, or travel.

Students, both past and present, include graduates of leading colleges and universities throughout the world including Oxford, Harvard, Yale, Stanford, MIT, Beijing University, the University of Paris, Keio University of Japan, the University of Michigan, the U.S. Naval Academy, the U.S. Air Force Academy, and many others.



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***“I attribute the success of the school and its graduates to the hard work and pursuit of educational excellence of the staff, faculty and alumni of our school, and; I am confident our current students will succeed as well.”***

Michael Patrick Clancey, Dean

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Graduates of the school’s Juris Doctor law study program include many who have gone on to occupy influential positions in government. They have been employed in positions such as the following:

- Deputy District Attorney
- Public Defender
- Deputy Public Defender
- Deputy County Counsel
- City Attorney
- Administrative Law Judge
- General Attorney at the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, Office of Federal Operations in Washington D.C.
- Court Executive for a U.S. District Court
- Director of the Office of Thrift Supervision, U.S. Department of Treasury in Washington D.C. (Presidential appointee)

Many others, after graduation, have been promoted to high-level positions in business and industry, and still others have entered the private practice of law, fulfilling lifelong ambitions.

# The School Today

The school is located in a modern office building with a beautiful riverside setting next to the Sacramento River in Sacramento, California. The school's facility contains an administrative lobby, faculty offices, a moot courtroom and a law library.

The school's program is offered online through its own eJuris® course management system and technology platform. Ejuris® features online discussion boards, audio and video lectures, virtual classrooms, and more, to provide dynamic collaboration and communication between students and faculty members. Students also have access to an electronic law library through a student subscription to LexisNexis®.

The faculty consists of law professors who are available to students via the school's

online discussion boards, videoconferencing, and email.

The school's students are amazingly diverse. Because the school's program involves independent and online study, students join from all over the world. Additionally, although some students enroll straight after completing a first college degree, many of the school's students are seeking a second profession after years of success and distinction in another career field.

Many applicants qualify for admission without a prior college degree, based on their having acquired sufficient course credits (60 semester college units) or adequate scores on College Level Equivalency Program (CLEP) tests. See the Admissions section for more information.



# What to Expect as an NWCU Law Student

As a distance program, “classes” have a different connotation at Northwestern California University than what you may be used to from experiences at other schools in the past. In a traditional school, students are typically assigned to a class, and professors instruct the students by teaching the course material and giving assignments. There may be a course syllabus, but students often don’t need to look at it much, if at all. In a traditional law school, the class is the main feature of the educational program, and a professor dominates by deciding the order in which key concepts are covered, how those concepts will be presented, what assignments or learning activities will be most useful to students, and by ultimately assigning a grade which signifies how well the student has learned the material.

At Northwestern California University, the program is much more administratively governed and dependent on student initiative and self-direction. Course materials, assignments, and requirements are set for the entire program by the school’s administrators, who have worked with the faculty to select materials, assignments, and requirements for every course. Because of this, students will find continuity and uniformity not found in typical class-based programs. At Northwestern California University School of Law, students must read the assigned texts, complete assignments, and take exams in a similar way for nearly every course. Each course has a detailed course syllabus which sets forth all the requirements students must meet to pass the course. The syllabus includes a suggested study plan to help students coordinate and pace their work, but students have a great deal of flexibility to tailor their studies to fit their learning styles and schedules.

For those who learn well in a class setting, Northwestern California University School of Law offers many classes, but students select which classes they want to attend. All professors cover key topics for the course and focus on teaching legal concepts, important cases, foundational laws, and how these apply to various factual scenarios. Each class is recorded and available to watch later for those who either can’t attend live, or who learn better by selecting specific classes based on the concepts they want to study at a particular time. In addition to classes, Northwestern California University offers a variety of other kinds of learning activities to help students learn the law. For example, there are computerized lessons such as those from CALI (The Center for Computer-Assisted Legal Instruction), video lectures, audio recordings of key terminology (Clancey’s Outlaws), discussion boards, and more.

Reading of required course materials is just that — required. The selected course texts present the core concepts for the course in a systematic approach that allows students to build comprehensive knowledge of the foundational substantive law. Assignments and exams are submitted to the administrative office and graded by Northwestern California University professors, who collaborate with each other to ensure a calibrated grading system. The grading system is uniform across all courses and presented in the Student Handbook.

# Accreditation and Disclosures

Northwestern California University is fully accredited by the Committee of Bar Examiners of the State Bar of California.

*Disclosure required by the State Bar of California to be provided by all Accredited Law Schools in California:*

Study at, or graduation from, this law school may not qualify a student to take the bar examination or be admitted to practice law in jurisdictions other than California. A student who intends to seek admission to practice law outside of California should contact the admitting authority in that jurisdiction for information regarding its education and admission requirements.

Complaints regarding the School's Juris Doctor Degree Program can be directed to the Committee of Bar Examiners as follows:

Committee of Bar Examiners  
The State Bar of California  
180 Howard Street  
San Francisco, CA 94105  
415-538-2300  
<http://www.calbar.ca.gov>

## Reservation of Rights

Northwestern California University reserves the right to refuse admission to any applicant and to disqualify, discontinue or exclude any student.

The university also reserves the right to change its policies, including but not limited to tuition, fees, unit or hourly value per course, course offerings, curricula, grading policies, graduation and degree requirements, and admission standards and policies.



# The NWCU Juris Doctor Program and Degree

The Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree is a graduate, professional doctorate degree that is conferred upon those who complete the school's J.D. program. The Northwestern California University J.D. program requires completion of four academic terms of study, each of which is one year in duration, with a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0.

Completion of the Northwestern California University J.D. degree qualifies a student to take the California Bar Examination.

## NWCU's J.D. Program

Students use eJuris®, the school's dynamic internet-based course management system and technology platform, to access online course material, and to collaborate and communicate online with fellow students and faculty members. Additionally, students study purchased casebooks and other required materials for each course. An online syllabus for each course helps with planning and pacing the reading and studies.

Online, real-time classes are available in the school's virtual classroom, and students who cannot attend live can watch recorded classes when it is convenient for them. All students have access to an electronic law library. Faculty members are available to answer questions, and the school's administrative staff is available to assist as needed.

Online audio/video lectures and recorded terminology are available to students. Course requirements include reading assigned casebooks and texts, completing assignments, and taking quizzes, midterms and final examinations. A course syllabus is provided for each course, with details about each requirement for the course.

## Time Requirement for Studies

The School's Law Study Bar Program is regulated by the State Bar of California. It requires that each term must be completed in 12 months. A typical term will include courses totaling 20 credits and will require a minimum of 300 hours of verified academic engagement and 600 hours of further study and preparation. Over the course of four terms, students must complete a minimum of 1200 hours of verified academic engagement and 2400 hours of further study and preparation.

## Student Services

Northwestern California University offers academic counseling as needed. It also offers assistance to advanced students seeking certification to participate in the State Bar of California's Practical Training of Law Students (PTLS) program that may allow them to provide legal services under the supervision of an attorney.

Northwestern California University does not provide job placement services.

## LexisNexis & Library Letter of Introduction

LexisNexis® online law library privileges are provided to all of the school's students. Access to and use of a law library in a physical facility is not required. However, a letter of introduction is provided to enrolled students to assist them in obtaining use privileges at law libraries. Students are advised to present the letter to librarians at law libraries or law offices in their local areas.

# Course Descriptions

## **PART I — First Term**

### **Introduction to Law, Legal Analysis, and Legal Research** (4 units)

Introduction to the basic concepts of law and legal analysis, and the history of the American system of jurisprudence and juristic theory that originated from, and was developed and formulated through, the common law of England, and is now recognized as an organic part of the jurisprudence of most of the United States.

### **Contracts** (6 units)

A study of the promissory agreements that exist between two or more persons or entities and that create, modify, or terminate legal relationships. The different classifications of such agreements and the requisite elements of each will be distinguished.

### **Criminal Law** (4 units)

A study of key aspects of criminal law including how the criminal process works; common law origins of criminal law and statutory modifications; an introductory overview of basic criminal procedure to enable understanding of criminal law; the fundamental bases of substantive criminal law, including definitions of criminal conduct, principles and scope of criminal liability and defenses to liability; classification of crimes; and elements of major crimes.

### **Torts** (6 units)

An analysis of the historical development and purposes of tort law, and analysis of

the major categories of torts: intentional, negligent, and strict liability. Tort injuries are covered from causation through remedy for cases involving injuries to person, including physical and emotional harm and harm to reputation, and injuries to property, including both real and personal property. Discussion is included for specific topics such as defamation of character, invasion of privacy, misrepresentation, products liability, and modern torts such as wrongful death.

## **PART II — Second Term**

### **Business Associations** (6 units)

A study of the various structures for businesses. Agency law is covered, including creation of agency relationships and the authority and fiduciary duties of both agent and principal. Partnerships, from creation through winding up, and the rights, duties, and liabilities of partners are also covered. Finally, formation and types of corporations are covered, as well as the rights and duties of directors, shareholders and corporate officers. Attention is given to court made legal principles and to the rapidly expanding impact of federal regulation of corporations and securities.

### **Criminal Procedure** (4 units)

A course that covers the legal methods for apprehending persons accused of committing criminal acts. The rights of those accused of crimes are covered, along with methods of protecting those rights and remedies for violations. The criminal process from commission of a crime and apprehension through the various phases of adjudication are also covered.

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## **Real Property**

(6 units)

A study of the body of law relating to land and improvements thereon; as distinguished from movable personal property. The English Common Law as it relates to real property will be emphasized.

## **Remedies**

(4 units)

A study of the remedies available for tort and contract matters, including both legal and equitable remedies. Specific legal remedies for various injuries and contract breaches and computation of damages is included. Additionally, analysis of equitable remedies will equip the student to understand the phases and requirements for the imposition of injunctions.

## **PART III — Third Term**

### **Civil Procedure**

(6 units)

A survey of the civil process that covers each step from initial complaint through appeals. Personal and subject matter jurisdiction are thoroughly covered, and venue and transfer rules are presented. The Erie Doctrine, its development, and its applicability in modern civil actions is covered. Also addressed are the handling of multiple claims and parties, including class actions. Finally, procedural trial issues such as discovery methods, trial process, appellate review and its limitations, and the effects of the doctrines of res judicata and collateral estoppel are covered.

### **Constitutional Law**

(6 units)

A study of a wide range of topics drawn from the United States Constitution, beginning with the powers of the various branches of government and the concept of separation

of powers. Authority to hear cases, including the Case and Controversy Doctrine are presented, as is the division of powers between the federal government and the states. The power of the government to regulate economic and personal interests is thoroughly covered, including the levels of protection from interference with personal interests, equal protection, and due process. Finally, due process and procedure, the concept of state action, and the First Amendment rights of freedom of speech and religion are thoroughly covered.

### **Evidence**

(4 units)

A study of the importance of getting evidence admitted and on the trial record, and the process by which this is accomplished. First, the requirements related to relevance are introduced, then the reasons why relevant evidence may be excluded, including a thorough presentation of the hearsay rules and exceptions. Special evidentiary rules such as confidentiality of certain communications and privileges are explained. Both testamentary and documentary evidence are covered, including admissibility requirements for both.

### **Professional Responsibility (Ethics)**

(4 units)

A study of the role and duties of a lawyer, including the duty to the court, to the client, and to society. Regulation of attorneys' conduct and disciplinary action are covered, including the varying requirements of the Model Rules and Model Code. Both aspirational goals of conduct and disciplinary rules are presented. The rules and practical application of the duty of confidentiality, potential and actual conflicts of interest, advertising and solicitation, and other key aspects of ethical obligations will be covered. Additionally, judicial ethics will be addressed.

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## **PART IV — Fourth Term**

### **Administrative Law**

(5 units)

A study of the history and creation of administrative agencies, generally via legislative action. Control of administrative agencies is considered, with attention to the competing interests and powers of the executive and legislative governmental branches, as well as to the monitoring and direction by the judicial branch. Formal and informal administrative actions are studied, focusing on rulemaking and administrative adjudication. Finally, investigation and discovery of administrative agency action and challenges to such actions are covered.

### **Community Property**

(3 units)

An overview of the ways ownership of property by married persons is classified, followed by consideration of how the various classifications affect the disposition of property both upon dissolution and death. Presumptions related to classification of property are covered, as are exceptions to those presumptions. Finally, selected provisions of the California codes related to community property are reviewed.

### **Practical Skills Elective**

(6 units)

Fourth year students take one of the following four elective courses: Advanced Legal Research and Writing, Legal Document Drafting, Legal Practice Internship, or Professional Skills.

### **Wills, Trusts & Estates**

(6 units)

This course is a study of the laws related to succession of property upon death of the owner. Various means of passing property to

those designated by the property owner are covered, including gifts during life as well as upon death. Wills, intestate succession, and trusts are the primary focus.

## **ELECTIVE COURSES**

Elective courses are for third and fourth year students, and for transfer students who have already completed all or most of the Northwestern California University School of Law standard curriculum but need additional courses to meet graduation requirements.

### **Advanced Legal Research and Writing**

(6 units)

This course focuses on learning and practicing advanced legal research methods for scholarly legal writing, through the use of primary and secondary resources available online or through physical law libraries. Students write a law journal style paper on a topic of interest to them, using the research skills they have developed.

### **Legal Document Drafting**

(6 units)

The course exposes students to basic legal document drafting in three key modes: litigating, informing and persuading, and rule-making. Drafting a broad range of documents, students will learn techniques applicable to the most common legal documents. Students will draft a complaint, motion, trial brief, statute revision, contract, and more. Additionally, students will consider the effect their writing style has upon the documents they draft, and they will learn how legal writing has affected case law.

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## **Legal Practice Internship**

(6 units)

The primary focus of the course is an internship, arranged by the student and approved by the school, which provides an opportunity for students to gain practical experience in law by working in a law office or court, under the supervision of a practicing attorney or a sitting judge. Students will complete several assignments related to the internship which encourage reflection and understanding of the skills required for a career in law. Additionally students will study proper handling of client funds, and will read a book related to law, selected from an approved list.



## **Medical Jurisprudence**

(4 units)

A survey course covering health law issues including health care quality, access, organization, finance, and bioethics. The dynamic and complex relationship between the four themes of cost, quality, access, and choice are explored through case law and ongoing health reform public debate.

## **Military Law**

(4 units)

A survey of the regulations for the governing of armed forces, particularly that branch of the law which respects military discipline and the government of persons employed in the military service of the United States.

## **Philosophy of Law**

(4 units)

A study of the nature of law, persuasion, and legal arguments, primarily through cases that illustrate the concepts covered. Both traditional and contemporary philosophies of law are studied, including natural law, positivism, legal realism, economic legal theory, critical race theory, feminist legal theory, international law, and more.

## **Professional Skills**

(6 units)

This course provides advanced law students the opportunity to consider what is required in setting up and maintaining a law practice, including both business management skills and lawyering skills such as client intake, discovery and case planning, and advocating for and providing legal counsel to clients. Students will hand

# Bar Membership & Registration

Admission to the practice of law in the State of California is regulated pursuant to Sections 6060-6069.5 of the Business and Professions Code of the State of California and by the rules of the Committee of Bar Examiners. Each student is responsible to comply with the requirements established by the Committee of Bar Examiners. Those students seeking Bar eligibility are advised to obtain and read the Rules of the State Bar of California, which are available on the website: [www.calbar.ca.gov](http://www.calbar.ca.gov). It is the student's responsibility to meet all California State Bar requirements.

The requirements for licensure and admission to practice in the courts of other states may not be met by graduation from Northwestern California University. However, many states within the United States will admit an attorney to practice after he or she has passed the bar of another jurisdiction, such as California, and has practiced law for a period of time, usually five years.

## Registration with the State Bar of California as a Law Student

Every student seeking admission to practice law in California is required to register with the Committee of Bar Examiners. Students who enroll in Northwestern California University must register with the Committee of Bar Examiners within 90 days of enrollment.

## First-Year Law Students Exam (Baby Bar)

The First-Year Law Students' Exam is not required of most Northwestern California University students. However, the exam is required of those students who gain special admission on the basis of CLEP scores rather than based upon a college degree or units earned.

Students who gain admission based upon CLEP scores must take and pass the FYLSX within the first three administrations from when they are first eligible to take the exam. Students become eligible upon successful completion of the first year of law studies. If passed during the first three administrations after becoming eligible to take it, credit may then be allowed for all courses taken prior to the passing. Those who pass after the first three administrations receive credit for one year of legal study only.

## Social Security Number Requirement

The State Bar of California requires a Social Security Number to register as a law student or to take the Baby Bar or General Bar exam. An exemption exists for foreign students, but an application for exemption is required. The requirements can be viewed on the State Bar of California website at [www.calbar.ca.gov](http://www.calbar.ca.gov).

# Admissions

Students may apply for admission at any time. Northwestern California University operates on a rolling enrollment system so that students start the law study program every month. Each term must be completed within one year of the student's start date.

There is a non-refundable \$75 application fee which may be paid online when the application is submitted.

## Education Requirements

In accordance with the California Business and Professions Code and the regulations of the State Bar of California, students must meet one of the following education requirements for admission to law school:

### Admission as a regular \*student

1. Bachelor's degree from a U.S. regionally-accredited or state-approved college or university;
2. Associate of Arts or Associate of Science degree from a U.S. regionally-accredited or state-approved college or university;
3. At least 60 semester credits or 90 quarter credits applicable toward a bachelor's degree from a U.S. regionally-accredited or state-approved college or university;
4. Evaluation of a foreign degree by an evaluation service approved by the State Bar of California which shows the degree is equivalent to options 1-3 above.

### Admission as a special \*\*student

1. Passing score on the English Composition CLEP exam, plus passing scores on:

- (a) two additional CLEP exams each of which is recommended for at least 6 credits; or
- (b) four additional CLEP exams each of which is recommended for at least 3 units; or

- (c) three additional CLEP exams, one of which is of which is recommended for at least 6 units and two of which are recommended for at least 3 units.

## CLEP Exams

The College-Level Examination Program® (CLEP) is administered by The College Board, [www.collegeboard.com](http://www.collegeboard.com). A passing score on CLEP exams is 50 or higher. The English Composition exam must not be the modular exam. The additional two to four exams may be for any of the following subjects: Composition and Literature (Humanities examination only), Foreign Language, History and Social Science, Science and Mathematics, and Business.

## Applied Associate Degrees

The associate in applied arts and associate in applied science degrees are considered vocational degrees and do not satisfy the education requirements.

## Master's or Doctoral Degrees

Applicants with Master's or Doctoral degrees who do not also meet one of the admission requirements listed in the right column do not meet the education requirements.

## \*Regular and \*\*Special Students

Regular students will be exempt from the Baby Bar requirement upon successful completion of the first year of studies

Special students are required to take the Baby Bar exam after they complete the first year of studies.

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## Official Records of Education Requirements

Official transcripts, foreign degree evaluations, official CLEP score reports, or TOEFL or IELTS are required upon enrollment, before a student begins the term of studies. "Official" means the document arrives at the Northwestern California University office directly from the issuing institution or sealed in the issuing institution's original envelope; once a document has been opened, it is no longer official.

## Residency and Housing

Northwestern California University does not have or require on-campus residence or classroom instruction. Students from anywhere in the world can apply and participate in the law study program on the internet.

Northwestern California University is an online distance learning school. Its programs are offered entirely on the internet. Accordingly, it does not provide dormitory facilities or housing for students.

## Law School Admission Test (LSAT)

No LSAT scores are required for entry to the school.

## Foreign Studies

Students who have completed coursework or graduated from institutions outside of the United States are required to have their transcripts evaluated by a foreign credential evaluation service approved by the California Committee of Bar Examiners. A list of approved evaluation services is available from the State Bar of California.

## English Language Requirement

All coursework at Northwestern California University is provided and completed in the English language. The school does not provide ESL (English as a Second Language) instruction. It is, therefore, essential that all enrolling students have a high level of comprehension and ability in oral and written expression in the English language.

International applicants who are non-native speakers of English must demonstrate English proficiency by one of the following:

- (1) Completion of at least two years of study at a college or university where the language of instruction was English,
- (2) Submitting a passing score from the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), or
- (3) Submitting a passing score on the International English Language Testing System (IELTS).

A passing score on the TOEFL is at least 550 points (paper-based test), 213 points (computer-based test) or 79 (internet-based test). A passing score on the IELTS is 6 or higher for the overall band. There is no preference for one test over the other.

# Transfer Students

Northwestern California University welcomes applications from transfer students, although the school has not entered into a transfer or articulation agreement with any other college or university.

Transfer credit is awarded at the discretion of the dean, however, Northwestern California University typically awards transfer credit for courses completed at U.S. law schools which are approved by the American Bar Association (ABA) or accredited by the State Bar of California, provided that the credits to be transferred are appropriate to the law degree program at Northwestern California University.

Applicants may be allowed to transfer credits earned in unaccredited programs registered with the State Bar of California if they have passed the California First-Year Law Students' Examination (FYLSE). If passed during the first three administrations after becoming eligible to take the examination, credit can be allowed for all courses taken prior to passing. Those who do not pass the examination within its first three administrations upon becoming eligible to take the examination, but who subsequently pass the examination, can receive credit for one year of legal study only. Transferability of credits is determined on an individual basis.

Applicants who have previously attended law school are required to provide official transcripts from all prior law schools before an admissions decision can be made.

As part of the application process, Northwestern California University may require an evaluation of prior law studies by the State Bar of California. Additionally, a proposed plan of study may be required to verify eligibility for California bar admission after completion of the law study program.

## Award of Credit for Experiential Learning

Northwestern California University does not award credits for prior experiential learning or life experience.



# Tuition and Finances

• Application Fee:	\$75.00
• Tuition:	\$4,980.00 per term
• NWCU Materials Fee:*	\$595.00
• Lexis-Nexis Annual Subscription Fee:	\$75.00
• Student-purchased Materials (estimate):	\$825.00-\$1,325.00 per term
• Graduation Fee:	\$100.00

\*The NWCU Materials fee is paid only once, upon first enrollment, as long as the student remains continuously enrolled.

The total tuition for the entire four-term JD degree program is \$19,920.00 (4 terms x \$4,980.00)

Student-purchased materials, if purchased new, are estimated at \$3,300.00 to \$5,300.00 (4 terms x \$825.00 to \$1,325.00)

Note: All fees quoted are in U.S. dollars and are subject to increase.

## Financial Assistance

The school offers a payment plan in which students pay their annual tuition fee in installments. There is a \$100 payment plan administrative fee.

## Student Loans

Northwestern California University does not participate in federal or state financial aid programs, or any other loan programs.

## Ability-to-Benefit Students

Ability-To-Benefit students are those who are interested in enrolling in a postsecondary education program, have not earned a high school diploma or General Educational Development (GED) equivalency credential and are seeking financial aid. The school does not accept Ability-To-Benefit students.

## Refund Policy

The student will be refunded all tuition paid by the student upon written notice of cancellation of enrollment within seven (7) days after student is first given access to the online course site and material.

A later cancellation by a student who has been enrolled for 60 percent or less of a year will result in a pro-rated refund of tuition based upon the length of time that the student has been enrolled. The enrollment period is counted from the date of initial enrollment to the date of withdrawal.

# School Records and Transcripts

## Official NWCU Transcripts

Official Northwestern California University transcripts include the school seal and the signature of the registrar. They are mailed or delivered to the recipient in a sealed envelope. Upon unsealing of the envelope they are considered unofficial and are not accepted by most institutions.

Official Northwestern California University transcripts are sent only by mail and only upon written request of the student, except that official transcripts may be sent to the State Bar of California or may be provided to government authorities as described in the *NWCU Student Handbook*.

Students may request an official copy of their Northwestern California University transcript online, by completing the transcript request from on our website: [www.nwculaw.edu](http://www.nwculaw.edu). There is a \$12 fee for each official transcript.

It usually takes about two weeks for official transcripts to be mailed from the school office.

## School Records

Northwestern California University maintains records for a period of not less than five years, at 2151 River Plaza Drive, Suite 306, Sacramento, California 95833. Records are immediately available during normal business hours for inspection by officials from the State of California Committee of Bar Examiners and the State of California Attorney General's office. Information kept on record includes but is not limited to, the following:

1. The names, addresses and telephone numbers of its students;
2. Student files, kept in such a way that adequate information is maintained by the institution to show student progress, grades, and that satisfactory standards are enforced relating to progress and performance;
3. The courses of study offered by the school;
4. The names and addresses of its instructional and administrative staff, together with a record of the educational qualifications of each;
5. The degrees granted, the date of granting, together with the curricula upon which the degrees were based.



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## Privacy and Confidentiality of Records and Communications

Northwestern California University protects student privacy and the confidentiality of student communications and records both in principle and practice. The disclosure of information from student records is largely governed by state and federal law. The school policy is to abide by that law.

Accordingly, faculty members and administrative staff members of Northwestern California University are guided by three principles as to the privacy and confidentiality of student communications and records. They are:

- The privacy of an individual is of great importance;
- The information in a student's file should be disclosed to the student on request unless there are compelling school interests for non-disclosure of particular information; and
- Without the written consent of the student, disclosure of confidential information from student records to anyone is limited to those who have a legal right of access to the records.

A determination of whether a legal right to confidential information exists shall be made whenever access to a student record is requested by someone other than the student or the administrative staff and faculty of the school. The determination is based on proof that the person or entity requesting disclosure is one of the following:

1. A person or entity for whom the school has been given the student's written consent to disclose information;
2. A person or entity to whom disclosure is required by law, pursuant to subpoena or court order;
3. The State Bar of California, including the Committee of Bar Examiners, if entitled by law to the disclosure, or if the student's written consent for disclosure is provided;
4. An accrediting agency, if entitled by law to the disclosure, or if the student's written consent for the disclosure is provided.

An exception to this policy may be made only in the case of emergency.

## Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974

Students may file complaints with the State Bar of California and with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act Office of the United States Department of Education (FERPA) concerning alleged failures by the school to comply with California law and with the Family Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (the "Buckley Amendment") as amended, in relation to the procedures and decisions involved with any such matters.

# Equal Opportunities

## Equal Opportunity and Non-Discrimination

Northwestern California University is committed to the principle of equal opportunity in education, employment, and welfare for its faculty, staff, students and prospective students. This commitment is consistent with principles of justice and equality, and conforms to both the spirit and intent of federal and state equal opportunity and anti-discrimination legislation.

It is against school policy to discriminate against students, prospective students, or faculty or staff members for political grounds, race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, handicap, ethnic or national origin, ancestry, marital status, medical conditions, status as a veteran or disabled veteran, or within the limits imposed by law because of age or citizenry. Application and enforcement of this policy extends to related forms of intolerance, including, for example, harassment and discrimination based on gender identity or expression.

A prospective student, student, faculty member or staff member with a complaint about unequal treatment or discrimination on the basis of race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, handicap, ethnic or national origin, ancestry, marital status, medical conditions, status as a veteran or disabled veteran, or within the limits imposed by law because of age or citizenry may file a grievance with the school in accordance with the Northwestern California University Policy on Complaints and Grievances.

## Americans with Disabilities Act

The school is committed to meeting the needs of law students with disabilities. Students with disabilities may consult confidentially with the dean or academic dean with regard to their disability, necessary accommodations, and availability of such accommodations.

The Americans with Disabilities Act and the Committee of Bar Examiners policies and procedures as outlined in Rule XVII of the Rules Regulating Admission to Practice Law in California will be used as guidance in making determinations related to accommodations for mental and physical disabilities.

## Disability Accommodations at NWCU

Services for eligible students with disabilities are provided by Northwestern California University to ensure equal access to educational opportunities, programs, and activities in the most integrated setting deemed to be reasonably necessary, according to Federal and State law. Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 together provide for reasonable accommodations and services to qualified individuals with disabilities. The NWCU *Student Handbook* provides details on how to request accommodations, or students are welcome to ask for help in making their requests.

# Grades, Advancement, Standing, and Conduct

## Grades

Course grades are issued at the end of each term of studies. Standard letter grades of A through F are used, with conversion to a 4-point scale for calculation of grade point averages.

The following grading system is used:

- A Indicates a thorough mastery of subject material and ability to creatively use the knowledge gained.
- B Indicates good mastery of subject material and ability to use to good advantage the knowledge gained.
- C Indicates average mastery of subject material with evidence of ability to profitably use the knowledge gained.
- D Indicates a passing grade but poor understanding and ability to use the knowledge gained.
- F Failure

Grading policies, including procedures for requesting review of grades, are provided in the *Student Handbook*.

## Academic Standing

Students who earn a 2.0 or higher grade point average for the term of study are considered in good academic standing with the school. Those who earn less than a 2.0 GPA for the term are subject to probation or dismissal. Academic Standing for each student is evaluated at the end of every academic term.

## Honors Standing

A student who completes at least two full years of study at NWCU and who graduates with the following cumulative grade point average, shall have the indicated honors designation included on his or her transcript:

3.30 - 3.59	With Honor
3.60 - 3.84	With High Honor
3.85 - 4.00	With Highest Honor

## Advancement

Students who are in good academic standing must pass all courses taken during the term and must achieve a grade point average of at least 1.75 to be elevated to a successive year of the law study program. Students who are on academic probation must pass all courses taken during the term of probation and must achieve a grade point average of at least 2.0 to be elevated to a successive year of the law study program.

## Academic Probation

A student whose grade point average for a term is below 2.0 must be placed on academic probation. Any transfer student who was on academic probation in his or her most recent academic term, or who was academically dismissed, at the law school last attended, will automatically be placed on probation if accepted at Northwestern California University.

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## Academic Dismissal

Academic dismissal can result in three ways: (1) a student whose GPA is below 1.75 for an academic term must be academically dismissed from the program; (2) a student who is placed on academic probation and whose GPA remains below 2.00 for the subsequent academic term must be academically dismissed from the program; and (3) a student who has committed academic misconduct may be academically dismissed from the program.

## Administrative Disqualification

Administrative disqualification can result from: (1) failure to pay tuition or fees; (2) violation of the school's Honor Code, administrative rules, or policies in a manner unrelated to academic studies; (3) failure to successfully complete the year of studies, as required, within one year from the student's start date; (4) [For special students only] not passing the First-Year Law Student's Examination within three administrations of the examination after first becoming eligible to take it.

## Student Conduct

The goal of Northwestern California University School of Law is to serve the public and the legal profession by producing graduates who are well-educated and dedicated to promoting justice, excellence, and respect for the law.

Dishonest lawyers are an embarrassment to the profession and a danger to society. Regardless of whether or not a student is focused on the eventual practice of law, any

accomplishment obtained through dishonest or unprofessional means is not a real success at all.

Students and practitioners of law must abide by the highest standards of honesty, integrity, trust and respect. Therefore, it is imperative that students of this school comply with a code of honor that includes a commitment to important fundamental principles. Accordingly, each student of Northwestern California University, by participation in the law study program, affirms a commitment to honesty, integrity, trust and respect.

All students are expected to adhere to the highest standards of ethics, conduct, and scholarship and are subject to the imposition of sanctions that include, but are not limited to, revocation of grades, suspension, disqualification, and complete dismissal or exclusion from the school's activities, facilities, online sites and programs, for conduct determined to be not in keeping with those standards. Such sanctions are described more fully in the *NWCU Student Handbook*.

## Student Handbook

The *NWCU Student Handbook* contains detailed information about the program requirements, grading, standing, conduct, and more. The information in this catalog is intended to provide a general overview for potential students. The *Student Handbook* is made available to all enrolled students when they begin the law study program.

# Frequently Asked Questions

## When do classes begin?

Northwestern California University operates on a rolling enrollment system, so students begin every month. Classes are ongoing throughout the year.

## May I enroll if I have no prior college credit?

Yes. A student may qualify for admission as a special student based upon CLEP exams scores, as described in the Admissions section of this catalog. Additional information is available on the State Bar of California website.

## How much interaction is there between student and professor?

Our professors are available to students on the school's online discussion boards, in the virtual classrooms, and by email. Many of our students report that their interaction with professors at Northwestern California University is much more than in brick-and-mortar schools.

## How long will it take me to complete the program?

The Northwestern California University J.D. program is designed to be as flexible as possible while still meeting the requirements set by the State Bar of California and providing a quality education in the law. To earn the J.D., students must complete four terms of study, each of which requires 12 months of study. Therefore, completion of the program requires four years of study.

## Do I have to take the Baby Bar?

Only those admitted as special students (via CLEP exam scores) must take the Baby Bar Exam. Students who enter as regular students are exempt after successfully completing the first year of studies at Northwestern California University.

## Is NWCU accredited?

Northwestern California University is accredited by the Committee of Bar



Examiners of the State Bar of California, as described on page 11 of this catalog. Prior to 2020, law schools which offered distance law study programs were prohibited from becoming accredited and operated as “registered, unaccredited schools.” When the State Bar modified its rules to allow distance schools to seek accreditation, Northwestern California University immediately began the accreditation process. Accreditation was granted on August 21, 2020.

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## Will I Be Able to Become an Attorney through the NWCU Program?

Students who graduate from Northwestern California University meet the educational requirements to take the California Bar Exam. However, students must meet other requirements for licensure in California. These requirements are listed on the website of the State Bar of California.

Additionally, each state sets its own requirements for bar eligibility, so students from other states should verify with their own state bar association what the requirements are to become licensed attorneys there.

Regardless of geographical location, graduates of Northwestern California University as members of the California Bar can represent individuals in litigation related to federal tax, customs & trade, immigration, military courts-martial (as non-military lawyers), veterans claims and many other matters, with bar membership that can be acquired in certain federal courts, including the U.S. Court of Federal Claims, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit, the U.S. Court of Appeals for Veterans Claims, the Army Court of Criminal Appeals, the Air Force Court of Criminal Appeals, the Navy-Marine Corps Court of Criminal Appeals, the Coast Guard Court of Criminal Appeals, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Armed Forces, the U.S. Tax Court, the U.S. Court of International Trade and the U.S. Supreme Court; and can represent individuals in general immigration matters with the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, in general tax matters with the Internal Revenue Service, and in other administrative matters with many other federal agencies.

## Can NWCU graduates practice law in states other than California?

Northwestern California University graduates are eligible to practice law in California after passing the California Bar Exam and satisfying other licensing requirements. Additionally Northwestern California University graduates are eligible for licensing as lawyers in certain other states and the District of Columbia (Washington D.C.) pursuant to eligibility rules there.

Northwestern California University graduates have so far been admitted as lawyers in Washington D.C., the states of Alaska, California, Florida, Iowa, Massachusetts, Michigan, Washington and Wisconsin; and in the U.S. Territory of Puerto Rico (Federal).

Some states have special rules that allow bar eligibility to graduates to take their bar exams. These rules vary. For example, students with a J.D. degree from Northwestern California University and an L.L.M. degree from an ABA approved school were allowed bar eligibility in Michigan, with no requirement of bar membership in California, and no requirement involving prior active practice as a lawyer.

In other states, Northwestern California University graduates have been allowed to take their bar exams and become licensed after being licensed or actively practicing in California for a specified period of time, usually 3 to 5 years. In still other states, NWCU graduates have been granted law licenses after actively practicing in California for a specified period of time, without having to take another bar exam.

However, these rules have been changing significantly, and since eligibility requirements are relatively comprehensive and can change extensively anytime, you are urged to make inquiries to determine all pertinent details

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related to gaining bar eligibility in the state or states where you wish to practice law.

In addition to checking with the bar organizations of the states where you may wish to practice law; you should also review the *Comprehensive Guide to Bar Admission Requirements*. The publication is available on the National Conference of Bar Examiners website at [www.ncbex.org](http://www.ncbex.org).

## How do I get started?

Begin by completing our application. It's available online at our website: [www.nwculaw.edu](http://www.nwculaw.edu). There is a \$75 application fee, which may be paid online when you apply.



## Northwestern California University School of Law

2151 River Plaza Dr., Suite 306  
Sacramento, CA 95833

Phone: 916-920-9470  
Fax: 916-920-9475

[www.NWCULaw.edu](http://www.NWCULaw.edu)  
E-Mail: [Inquiry@NWCULaw.edu](mailto:Inquiry@NWCULaw.edu)

Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:30 a.m. to noon and 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

For additional information visit [www.NWCULaw.edu](http://www.NWCULaw.edu).

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## Alumni Feedback

"Dean Clancey should take enormous satisfaction in the fact that he has provided an opportunity to people like me, who are willing to work to advance themselves. Without your school, there would have been no such opportunity"

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"People have different reasons for wanting to study law. For me, I did it as a personal challenge. I grew up with the notion that law is a difficult subject and I merely wanted to prove to myself that I have the mental capacities to handle a 'perceived' difficult subject, law"

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"I feel extremely indebted to your school for the service it has provided. So many things offered to you these days are glitter with no substance or value, but here the money I spent was invaluable!"

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"I have found that once a law student graduates and is admitted to the bar, distinctions on where one attended law school become less important and performance on the job is the overriding factor. For me, passing the California Bar Examination validated the outstanding NWCU curriculum."