

See College of Law [Student Handbook](#)

**Credit for Courses Taken Outside the University of Iowa College of Law<sup>1</sup>****1. *Courses Taken Prior to Matriculation at the College of Law***

Except as provided below, no student shall receive credit hours toward the J.D. degree for courses taken prior to matriculation in the J.D. program at this law school.<sup>2</sup>

**2. *Transfer Credit*****a) Credit for Previous Legal Studies**

Subject to the limitations in Part B of the Graduation Requirements for the J.D. Degree, credit hours for studies undertaken as a J.D. degree student at another ABA accredited law school prior to enrolling at the College of Law may be transferred to the J.D. degree at the College of Law. No credit hours shall be transferred for any course in which a grade of less than a “D” was received. Grades received at another law school shall not be counted in ascertaining the student’s weighted cumulative average for any purpose.

Subject to the limitations in Part B of the Graduation Requirements for the J.D. Degree, credit hours earned at a law school outside the United States may be counted toward the J.D. degree, provided that the Dean or the Dean’s designate determines that the College of Law would have granted credit towards satisfaction of J.D. degree requirements if earned at the College of Law.

Students may transfer in no more than 10 distance education course credits from previous legal studies in satisfaction of the required first-year courses listed in Section (II)(D)(1).

**b) Transfer of Credits After Admissions.**

College of Law students visiting at ABA-accredited law schools after enrollment at the College of Law may transfer credit hours subject to the limitations in Part B of the Graduation Requirements for the J.D. Degree. Students seeking credit for courses taken as a visitor at another law school must obtain permission from the Dean or the Dean’s designate and comply with all relevant College and University policies regarding study at another institution.

College of Law students visiting at a law school outside the United States must first obtain the permission of the Dean or the Dean’s designate, who shall ensure compliance with the relevant ABA Standards and Criteria. Students shall also comply with all relevant College and University policies regarding study abroad and at another institution. Credit hours transferred for such studies are subject to the limitations in Part B of the Graduation Requirements for the J.D. Degree.

**3. *Transfer of Credit for Externships Earned at another School<sup>3</sup>***

Except in the case of students who bring externship credits with them when they transfer into the College of Law, a student seeking to receive academic credit at this college for a field placement program taken or arranged through another law school must secure the approval of the administrator and the Curriculum Committee prior to beginning the field placement program. The administrator may set and enforce appropriate deadlines for applications for approval of such field placements. If a field placement program arranged by another law school has been previously approved, the administrator may approve subsequent

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<sup>1</sup>Amended language adopted by the faculty on January 24, 2018 (prior citations deleted); amended again on February 17, 2022.

<sup>2</sup>Amended September 23, 2021; February 17, 2022.

<sup>3</sup>College of Law Field Placement Policy, adopted by the faculty on May 9, 2013; amended March 21, 2017.

requests for credit through that program by the approval process described in the Policy on Field Placements. This approval process is not meant to discourage students from registering for externship programs at other schools, nor should the approval requirement be taken to suggest that the other school's program must conform in all respects to our own.

#### 4. *Non-Law Courses*<sup>4</sup>

A student seeking to count credit hours from a non-law course toward the J.D. degree must obtain the approval of the Dean or the Dean's designate. The student must provide the Dean (or the Dean's designate) with a course description for the course. Credit hours for the course will be approved only if all of the following conditions are satisfied:

1. The student can demonstrate that the course either (a) contributes to the professional competency of an attorney, or (b) provides perspective that will broaden the student's understanding of some aspect of law or the legal process.
2. The subject matter of the course does not duplicate that of a course offered by the College of Law.
3. The subject matter of the course does not duplicate that of another course the student has taken in any program.
4. The student takes the course after matriculating in the College of Law's J.D. program.
5. The course is either (a) graduate level (currently level 5000 or above); or (b) supported by a compelling argument demonstrating how a particular lower-level course will specifically benefit the student's legal education.

A student's ability to count non-law credit hours toward the J.D. degree is also subject to the restrictions in the Graduation Requirements for the J.D. Degree, the College of Law's Joint Degree Program policy, and any other applicable University, College of Law, or departmental requirements.

A course that is taken outside the College of Law for credit hours towards a law degree will be graded according to the course's standard grading practices. These grades will appear on the student's transcript but will not be used in computing a law student's cumulative average. A pass, or a grade of "C" or higher, is required for law school credit.

Students who take courses outside the College of Law may be subject to course rules that are set by the partner program, and those rules may differ from rules in the College of Law. But law school policies on misconduct apply to joint degree students even with respect to the students' conduct in non-law courses.

Because non-law courses cannot count toward the J.D. degree without meeting the requirements of this policy, the College of Law strongly recommends that students seek the Dean's (or the Dean's designate) approval of any non-law course prior to enrolling in the course.

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<sup>4</sup>Amended language adopted by the Faculty of the College of the Law on December 4, 2017.