

Maximum J.D. Unit Policy

Revision history: Formerly a part of the annually revised Student Handbook; established as a standalone policy in August 2022; technical edits were made in August 2023.

Related policies: None.

Scheduled Review Date: June 2025 (Student Services Office)

A. Full-Time J.D. Students

A full-time student pursuing the J.D. degree may not enroll in more than 16 units in a fall or spring semester without the permission of the Associate Dean for Student Services; in no case may a student enroll in more than 17 units in a fall or spring semester. A full-time student may not

D. January Intersession

The January intersession program is held for one week each year following the fall semester's conclusion and before the spring semester's start. J.D. students may not enroll in more than one unit in any single intersession, although students may take courses in multiple intersessions.

E. Honors Programs

Units earned for participating in an Honors Program (Law Review, Law Journal, Moot Court Honors Program, Negotiation Honors Program, and Trial Advocacy Honors Program) are included in the maximum units permitted under Sections A, B, and C above.

F. Distance Education Courses

Students may earn no more than 29 of the 87 units required to earn the J.D. degree in distance education courses. For purposes of this Policy, a "distance education course" is one in which more than one-third of the instruction is conducted online.

G. Course Work at Other Law Schools

A maximum of 6 units may be counted toward completing the J.D. degree from coursework taken at other law schools. This 6-unit maximum includes all coursework completed in study-abroad programs, summer sessions, or intersessions.

H. Study-Abroad Programs

Southwestern will accept credit for study-abroad programs completed through other law schools only if the Associate Dean for Student Services has approved the program before the student's departure. Only programs approved by the ABA are eligible for the Associate Dean for Student Services' approval. A maximum of 6 units of credit earned at non-Southwestern institutions may be approved and applied toward completing the J.D. degree. In the case of students who attend both a Southwestern-sponsored summer-abroad program and a summer-abroad program sponsored by another ABA-approved law school, a maximum of 8 units from summer-abroad programs of any kind, Southwestern sponsored or otherwise, may be applied toward completion of the J.D. degree.

I. Visiting Other Law Schools

Under compelling circumstances, the Associate Dean for Student Services may grant permission for a Southwestern student to participate in a semester-