

Cumberland School of Law

- Founded in 1847, Cumberland School of Law is the 11th oldest law school in the country.
- Cumberland School of Law has over 9,000 alumni working in 50 states and abroad.
- A typical first year class at Cumberland will have between 150 and 160 students.
- All full-time faculty members at Cumberland practiced law prior to becoming professors.
- Cumberland offers 8 joint-degree programs. The JD/MBA is the most popular.
- The vast majority of students at Cumberland are on financial aid consisting of scholarships and loans.
- There is no on-campus housing for graduate students at Samford University; most Cumberland students live in rented apartments or houses nearby.

Law School Classes and Grades

- Law school typically takes three years to complete, with an average of 15 credit hours per semester.
- To be considered full time, a law student must take 10 hours in any given semester.
- First-year students are referred to as "1L's," second-year students, "2L's," and third-year students, "3L's".
- Each of the first-year classes will have around 50-75 students, except Lawyering and Legal Reasoning, which will have around 15-20. These groupings are called "sections."
- Law students do not declare a major. The J.D. is a general law degree.
- First year courses are pre-determined, but the second and third years allow flexibility in course selection.
- The term "booking a class" refers to receiving the highest grade in that class, within your section.
- First year law students are ***strongly discouraged*** from working. In keeping with the ABA rules, second- and third-year students may work up to 20 hours per week. However, students work to gain legal experience in their second and third year rather than earn a living. Some legal internships and externships are paid.
- Law students spend their summers clerking, working internships, studying abroad, or participating in summer school.
- Most law school classes offer one grade, received from taking one final exam.
- Law school exams are graded anonymously; there are no names on exams.
- Most professors take class participation into account when determining final grades.
- At Cumberland, poor class attendance will negatively impact your final grade.
- First semester grades are incredibly important because they pave the way for interviews for summer clerkships, invitations to be on Law Review and Trial Journal, and many other law school achievements.

Current First-Year Class Profile—Class of 2025

Class Size	146	Undergraduate Schools Represented	44
Females	54%	Undergraduate Majors Represented	41
Males	46%		
Median LSAT	155	Home States Represented	13
Median GPA	3.62	Alabama	64%
		Georgia	10%
		Florida	8%
Underrepresented		Tennessee	6%
Racial Groups	18%	Mississippi	3%
		Colorado	2%
Average Age	23	Texas	2%
Oldest/Youngest	35/20		

How to Relate and Communicate

Have the Talk

Have a conversation before law school starts. Recognize things will be different. Some things will need to take lower priority while others should remain top priority. Set expectations and communicate continuously.

Patience, Patience, Patience

Understand that your law student is doing something that only a small percentage of the population is able to do. It is hard and (usually) requires more of them than anything they've ever done before. Be patient.

Support System

Talk about your support role in the law school journey—financial, emotional, etc. Discuss what expectations there are—if any—in return for the support you provide.

Reality Check

Law school is an important thing, but it is not the ONLY important thing. Help your law student keep perspective.

No Pain, No Gain

Law school is intense—especially in the first year. But law school is only three years, and those years pass quickly. The rewards, benefits, and opportunities that come with a legal education and J.D. are forever.