



Cornell Law School Grading Policy for JD Students

Faculty grading policy calls upon each faculty member to grade a course, including problem courses and seminars, so that the mean grade for JD students in the course approximates 3.35 (the acceptable range between 3.2 and 3.5). This policy is subject only to very limited exceptions. †

Due to the public health emergency, spring 2020 instruction was conducted exclusively online after mid-March and law school courses were graded on a mandatory Satisfactory/Unsatisfactory basis. No passing grade received in any spring 2020 course was included in calculating the cumulative merit point ratio.

Class Rank

As a matter of faculty policy, we do not release the academic rankings of our students. Interested individuals, including employers, have access to the top 10% approximate cumulative grade point cut off for the most recent semester of completion. In addition, at the completion of the students second semester and every semester thereafter the top 5% approximate cumulative grade point average is also available. In general students are not ranked however the top ten students in each class are ranked and are notified of their rank.

Class of 2022 [six semesters]:

5% - 3.9105; 10% - 3.8448

Class of 2023 [four semesters]:

5% - 3.9169; 10% - 3.7964

Class of 2024 [two semesters]:

5% - 3.9175; 10% - 3.8240

Dean's List

Each semester all students whose **semester** grade point average places them in the top 30% of their class are awarded Dean's List status. Students are notified of this honor by a letter from the Dean and a notation on their official and unofficial transcripts.

Myron Taylor Scholar

This honor recognizes students whose cumulative MPR places them in the top 30 percent of their class at the completion of their second year of law school. Students are notified of this honor by a letter from the Dean of Students.

Academic Honors at Graduation

The faculty awards academic honors at graduation as follows: The faculty awards the J.D. degree summa cum laude by special vote in cases of exceptional performance. The school awards the J.D. degree magna cum laude to students who rank in the top 10% of the graduating class. Students who rank in the top 30% of the class receive the J.D. degree cum laude unless they are receiving another honors degree. For the graduating Class of 2022, the GPA cut off for magna cum laude was 3.8448 and for cum laude was 3.6874. Recipients are notified by a letter from the Dean and a notation on their official and unofficial transcripts.

The Order of the Coif is granted to those who rank in the top 10% of the graduating class. To be eligible for consideration for the Order of the Coif, a graduate must be in the top 10% with 75% of credits taken for a letter grade.

Note: Due to the COVID-19 public health emergency resulting in Spring 2020 courses being graded on a mandatory S/U basis, Spring 2022 criteria for Order of the Coif eligibility has been adjusted to 75% of graded coursework within 5 semesters. (The Order of the Coif is a National Organization that sets its own rules.)

† Prior to fall 2018, faculty who announced to their classes that they might exceed the cap were free to do so. If the 3.5 cap was exceeded in any class pursuant to such announcement, the transcript of every student in the class will carry an asterisk (*) next to the grade for that class, and for various internal purposes such as the awarding of academic honors at graduation, the numerical impact of such grades will be adjusted to be the same as it would have been if the course had been graded to achieve a 3.35 mean.

For detailed information about exceptions and other information such as grading policy for exchange students please go to the Exam Information & Grading Policies link at <http://www.lawschool.cornell.edu/registrar/>.

