The University of Virginia School of Law, known also as UVA Law or Virginia Law, was founded by Thomas Jefferson, third President of the United States. It is one of the oldest law schools in the United States and was accredited by the ABA in 1923.

UVA is located in Charlottesville, VA, a college town about one hour from the Virginia capital of Richmond. In-state students get a slight tuition break; added to the cost of living, Virginia residents can expect to pay $61,600 a year, while out-of-state students will pay $66,100.

With enrollment at over 1,100 students, Virginia Law is one of the larger schools on this list. Each incoming class typically includes between 350 and 370 students. The school boasts an impressive alumni list which includes former U.S. Presidents and Vice Presidents, as well as the current Director of the FBI.

The school’s reputation is legendary with both a national and international reach. Though the bulk of graduates tend to favor a few major markets in particular—D.C., New York, and California—a UVA J.D. has proven to open employment doors to firms located throughout the U.S. and abroad.

Virginia Law has an impressive number of academic and extracurricular offerings: 20 clinics, 6 study abroad programs, 7 joint degree options (with various concentrations), 10 scholarly journals, and 70 student organizations.
Jeffersonian pedigree and grounds
When one of the country’s Founding Fathers establishes a university and law school, excellence is to be expected, and both the University of Virginia and Virginia Law have lived up to the challenge since their inception. Jefferson was involved in practically every aspect of creating the University of Virginia—from hiring professors and writing course curricula to planning campus buildings and landscapes. Nearly two centuries later, his attention to detail and passion for bringing natural beauty to the learning environment is evident both within campus buildings and throughout the lavish Grounds. Buildings are stately and powerful, with high ceilings, rich colors, and intricate adornments throughout and nestled in beautifully landscaped surroundings. The school has also maintained its appearance through multi-million dollar renovation projects, providing students with state-of-the-art classrooms, courtrooms, and seminar rooms. It comes as no surprise when alumni gush about the architectural and historical appreciation they develop during their time at UVA Law.

In-state advantage
So what does that mean for you? If you call Virginia home, don’t expect a free pass by any means, but you may enjoy slightly better odds. If you’re not a Virginian, the competition will be tough so know what you’re up against and ensure your entire application is flawless. Regardless of residency, Virginia Law’s expectations of applicants are extremely high and the admissions committee reputedly considers even the tiniest of details on the application. Even though the numbers are on your side if you’re a Virginia resident, your application still needs to shine in order to get in to Virginia Law.

Exceptional nationwide job prospects
Gaining admission may be a battle, but the payoff is definitely worth the fight. The UVA reputation, both for the university and the law school, is strong throughout the country and abroad. Not only will you get a top-notch education, you’ll also find the Virginia Law name is well-known throughout the country as synonymous with academic excellence, and the school is seriously respected in DC, NYC, Boston, Chicago, and just about any major—and minor—legal market. If you’ve set your sights for the top, Virginia Law can definitely help you get there. According to the school’s website*, UVA is well-represented among law firms nationwide ranking 3rd for the number of alumni who hold positions as managing partners or chairpersons in their law firms.

Supreme Court-approved
Virginia Law has sent 20 clerks to the Supreme Court from 2000 to 2010. Not only is becoming a SCOTUS clerk one of the highest achievements a law graduate can achieve, it is also one of the highest compliments a law school can be paid. SCOTUS clerks are hand-picked for their academic excellence, dedication to their work, and overall exceptional prospects, a great of which can be attributed to the law school they attended and legal education they obtained.

Taking a Firm Lead
If you’ve set your sights for the top, Virginia Law can definitely help you get there. According to the school’s website*, UVA is well-represented among law firms nationwide ranking 3rd for the number of alumni who hold positions as managing partners or chairpersons in their law firms.

Alumni love
When it comes to alumni appreciation, the alumni giving reports at UVA have a lot to say. According to the most recent annual report, over half of UVA Law alumni made contributions to their alma mater. What’s more, the youngest alumni appear to be the most appreciative, with in impressive 93% of the class of 2009 having made contribution pledges. Alumni love also extends directly to current students. Connected by the school’s vast alumni network, fresh grads appreciate the guidance offered by fellow alumni who are eager to lend a hand when job hunting begins.

C’ville ROCKS!
Part of what makes UVA so great, students and alums say, is the town it’s in. Charlottesville (known affectionately as C’ville to its residents) may seem like just another college town to outsiders, but to those living there, it is a haven of cultural, historic, culinary, outdoors, and entertainment opportunities that are not to be missed. “If I wanted to do everything that I found interesting in the city, I wouldn’t have time to go to school,” says a student. “The cost of living is great, and I have access to just about everything I need,” says another. “Shopping, food, history, hiking, kayaking...there’s really nothing missing in Charlottesville,” agrees a third. “I wouldn’t change a thing about it.” Nuff said.

Your application needs to shine in order to get in to Virginia Law. Once you’re in, though, you’re golden. The Virginia Law name is well-known throughout the country as synonymous with academic excellence, and the school is seriously respected in DC, NYC, Boston, Chicago, and just about any major—and minor—legal market.
Virginia Law: The Numbers

ACCEPTANCE RATES

Full-time: 15% (1,166 of 7,880 admitted)
Part-time: N/A

GPA AND LSAT SCORES

GPA - 75th percentile: 3.92
GPA - Median: 3.85
GPA - 25th percentile: 3.54

LSAT - 75th percentile: 171
LSAT - Median: 170
LSAT - 25th percentile: 165

ENROLLMENT AND ETHNICITY

African-American: 19 (M); 41 (F); 5.3% of student body
American Indian: 8 (M); 8 (F); 1.4% of student body
Asian-American: 42 (M); 52 (F); 8.4% of student body
Caucasian: 394 (M); 274 (F); 59.5% of student body
Hispanic: 31 (M); 20 (F); 4.5% of student body
Mexican-American: None reported
Puerto Rican: None reported
International: 6 (M); 4 (F); 0.9% of student body
Non-Reported: 127 (M); 96 (F); 19.9% of student body

TRANSFERS (FIRST-YEAR) AND ATTRITION

Transfers in: 13
Transfers out: 7

1L attrition: 9 (0 Academic, 9 Other)
2L attrition: 3 (0 Academic, 3 Other)
3L attrition: 2 (1 Academic, 1 Other)

FINANCIAL AID

Merit aid available? Yes
Grants and scholarships available? Yes
Students receiving grants: 665, 57.5% of student body
Median grant amount: $15,000
LRAP program available? Yes

The school’s admissions policy is need-blind. Once accepted, students will be provided with a financial aid package that can include scholarships, grants, and loans. All students are automatically considered for merit scholarships.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

Wireless network availability? Yes
Number of wired connections available: 84
Hours per week the library is open: 112
Study seating capacity inside the library: 798
Number of full-time professional librarians: 14

CAREER SERVICES

On-campus Career Services Office? Yes
Number of full-time career services staffers? 7
Career services specializations: Private firms, judicial clerkships, public interest, public service, military (JAG)
On-Campus Interview (OCI) program? Yes, an “early” one in August, and Fall OCI in late September. The school also flies students around the country for interviews.

EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS*

Employment status known: 403, 100.0% of class
Employment status unknown: 0, 0.0% of class
Employed: 398, 98.8% of class
Pursuing graduate degrees: 3, 0.7% of class
Unemployed: 2, 0.5% of class

TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT

Academia: 1, 0.3% of class
Business and Industry: 5, 1.3% of class
Government: 18, 4.5% of class
Judicial Clerkship: 54, 13.6% of class
Law Firms: 305, 76.6% of class
Public Interest: 15, 3.8% of class

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Washington, D.C., and New York were the two biggest markets for graduates in the 2007 and 2009 classes, followed by California, Atlanta, Chicago, and Boston.

Students employed in-state: 11,3%
Students employed in foreign countries: 2.0%
Number of states where students are employed: 34

Virginia Law students are incredibly successful at gaining judicial clerkships and employment with top national law firms and corporations.

ALUMNI NETWORK

UVA Law reports more than 17,000 alumni scattered throughout every U.S. state, and represented globally in 52 countries. The alumni network at Virginia Law is exceptional, as evidenced by the amount of time and money alumni continually give back to the school.

BAR PASSAGE RATES

First-time takers: 382 (94.24% reporting)
Average school pass rate: 98.06%
Average state pass rate: 85.30%
Average pass rate difference: 12.76%
Virginia Law: The School

“I could not imagine a better place to live and study law than Charlottesville and the University of Virginia,” says a grad. “Students are friendly, cooperative, and supportive, and it is incredibly easy to get to know your professors and become friends with them on a social level, not just an academic level.”

Incoming class size: 368 (2009)
Typical first-year section size: 72

CURRICULUM

Virginia Law students take Civil Procedure, Contracts, Criminal Law, Torts, and first-semester Legal Writing in the fall of their 1L year; they take Constitutional Law, Property, and second-semester Legal Writing in the spring, in addition to two electives. One of the first-semester courses will be in a “small section” of 30 students, while the rest may be in groups of 60 or more.

The school offers a variety of options for students to enhance their legal education through specialization and in-depth study of various disciplines: It has eighteen different concentrations that students can take courses in (which include standards such as Tax Law as well as less-common topics like Communications and Media Law), in addition to thirteen curricular programs that bring together interdisciplinary faculty, clinics, and courses to prepare students in fields such as Legal and Constitutional History, Environmental and Land Use Law, and Animal Law, among others.

In addition, students can also participate in the Principle & Practice Program and Trial Advocacy College.

FACULTY

Student-to-faculty ratio: 12.6 : 1

Virginia Law’s prominent faculty includes:

Kenneth S. Abraham, torts and insurance law scholar.
Jason S. Johnston, law and economics scholar.
Jody S. Kraus, expert in contracts and commercial law.
Jeffrey O’Connell, accident and insurance law authority.
Ann Woolhandler, expert on the federal court system and civil procedure.

ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES


STUDY ABROAD: The school has semester exchange programs available with the University of Melbourne in Australia, the University of Nottingham in England, Bucerius Law School in Germany, Tel Aviv University Law School in Israel, the University of Auckland in New Zealand, and Waseda University in Tokyo. Students can also obtain a dual degree with the University Paris 1 Pantheon - Sorbonne Law School, or can embark on their own study abroad program with approval from both schools.

JOINT DEGREE: Virginia Law offers a JD/MA (in English, Government, Foreign Affairs, History, or Philosophy), JD/MBA, JD/MUEP, JD/MPH, and JD/MS (in Accounting) with UVA schools. It also has three “external” joint-degree programs: a JD/MPA with the Woodrow Wilson School of Public Affairs at Princeton University, JD/MALD with the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University, and a JD/MA (in International Relations) with the Johns Hopkins University School of Advanced International Studies (SAIS).

JOURNALS AND PUBLICATIONS


MOCK TRIAL AND MOOT COURT

Virginia Law has moot court and trial advocacy (mock trial) teams, both of which take part in national competitions. The school also hosts the William Minor Lile Moot Court Competition, which is open to 2L students. Approximately 150 students participate in this yearly contest; the winners receive cash and their names inscribed on a plaque.

• NOTABLE ALUMNI •

Virginia Law has graduated a host of notable alumni in a variety of fields, including quite a few highly-recognizable names. They include: Robert F. Kennedy ’51, Democratic Senator from New York; Edward M. “Ted” Kennedy ’59, long-time Democratic Senator from Massachusetts; Woodrow Wilson, 28th President of the United States; Alben W. Barkley, Vice President of the United States during the Presidency of Harry S. Truman from 1949 to 1953; Robert S. Mueller III ’73, current Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation; and Janet Napolitano ’83, current U.S. Secretary of Homeland Security.
Virginia Law is “an academic environment where you can go beyond studying the practical to read about and discuss the theoretical, the conceptual, the ideals of what law ‘should’ be,” says a student. “The professors are, almost without exception, extremely knowledgeable in their fields and sincerely interested in making sure you understand the material.” Even though there is a mandatory curve, this doesn’t affect how students perceive or behave towards their classmates. “Competition is nonexistent,” says one grad. Another student agrees: “No one here wants to do well at the expense of someone else.”

Students here have obtained the reputation for being almost “freakishly happy” during their law school stint. They say the reputation is well-deserved: “Everyone here is exceptionally friendly,” says one student. “There aren’t any aspects of my law school career or of the school that I dislike,” agrees another. “You won’t find a more welcoming or supportive environment.” “There was a clear sense of community at the law school,” says an alum. “Collegiate is the perfect word to describe it.”

The school, perhaps because of the larger size of each incoming class, makes an effort to foster a close community: “Each entering class is broken into ‘small sections’ of 30 students who take all their mandatory first-year classes together, which really makes it easy to get to know your classmates.” Activities outside of class, particularly softball, play a big part in school togetherness. “Softball is a big thing here at Virginia, and you can take it as seriously as you want to—or not.” “It’s an easy, no-pressure way to hang out with your classmates and de-stress from the week (and get a workout in, too).” In addition, “there are always debates, talks, lectures, speeches, and other fascinating stuff going on—so much so that I couldn’t possibly attend everything (even everything I’m interested in)!"

And the atmosphere outside the law school is just as great as the environment in it. “Charlottesville is a fantastic city,” says a student. Another student sums it up: “I believe a very large part of my law school experience has been is my choice of law schools—I doubt I could find the same great environment combined with the same fantastic living conditions anywhere else.”

### ACTIVITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

- A Cappellate Opinions
- ACLU-UV Law
- Action for a Better Living Environment (ABLE)
- American Constitution Society for Law and Policy
- Asian Pacific American Law Students Association (APALSA)
- Black Law Students Association (BLSA)
- Child Advocacy Research & Education (CARE)
- Conference on Public Service & the Law
- Cowan Fellows Human Rights Study Project
- Domestic Violence Project
- Extramural Advocacy Team
- Extramural Moot Court
- Federalist Society
- First Year Council (FYC)
- Feminist Legal Forum
- Graduate Law Students (GLSA)
- Health Law Association
- Human Rights Study Project, Cowan Fellows
- JD/MBA Society
- Jewish Law Students Association (JLSA)
- John Bassett Moore Society of International Law (J.B.Moore)
- Lambda Law Alliance
- Latin American Law Organization (LALO; formerly Voz Latina)
- Law Christian Fellowship (LCF)
- Law Partners
- Law Student Advocacy Project (LSAP)
- Legal Advisory Workshops for Undergraduate Students (LAW for US)
- Legal Assistance Society (LAS)
- Legal Education Project
- The Libel Show
- Migrant Farmworker Project
- Moot Court Board
- Muslim Law Students Association (MLSA)
- National Trial Advocacy Team
- Native American Law Students Association (NALSA)

### CLASS PROFILE

- The University of Virginia School of Law received 8,560 applications, its largest number ever, in 2010.
- Of those admitted, 368 eventually matriculated.
- The 25th and 75th GPA percentiles for the Class of 2013 were 3.51 and 3.92.
- The median GPA was 3.85.
- The 25th and 75th LSAT score percentiles were 166 and 171.
- The median LSAT score was 170.
- The students in the Class of 2013 ranged in age from 20 to 37. The median age was 24.
- The class was 56% male, and 44% female. 29% of the class were minorities (as per the school, it is “the most ethnically diverse class on record”). 65% of the class had post-collegiate work experience, with students undertaking, on average, 2 years of employment after college.
- The class hailed from 42 states, the District of Columbia, and 7 foreign countries; Virginia, New York, California, Texas, Florida, and Georgia had the greatest representation.
- The members of the Class of 2013 represented 155 undergraduate institutions.

- Newt at UVA Law (Network of Enlightened Women)
- North Grounds Softball League (NGSL)
- Outdoors at VA Law
- Peer Advisor Program
- Phi Alpha Delta
- Pro Bono Criminal Assistance Project (P-CAP)
- Public Interest Law Association (PILA)
- Rape Crisis Advocacy Project (RCAP)
- Rappahannock Legal Services Clinic (part of LAS)
- Rex E. Lee Law Society (RELLS)
- St. Thomas More Society
- Street Law
- Student Bar Association (SBA)
- Student Legal Forum (SLF)
- Students United to Promote Racial Awareness (SUPRA)
- Virginia Animal Law Society (VALS)
- Virginia Employment and Labor Law Association (VELLA)
- Virginia Entrepreneurial Society
- Virginia Environmental Law Forum (VELF)
- Virginia Innocence Project Student Group
- Virginia Journal of Criminal Law Association
- Virginia Law Advocates for Life (VLAL)
- Virginia Law and Business Society
- Virginia Law Democrats
- Virginia Law Families
- Virginia Law and Graduate Students Republicans
- Virginia Law Rod & Gun Club
- Virginia Law Students for Reproductive Justice
- Virginia Law Veterans
- Virginia Law Weekly (newspaper)
- Virginia Law Wine Society
- Virginia Law Women (VLW)
- Virginia Society of Law & Technology (VSLAT)
- Virginia Sports Law Society
- Volunteer Income Tax Association (VITA) (part of LAS)
- Women of Color
Virginia Law: The City

Setting: College Town

Charlottesville (or C’ville, as it is known) is a big hit with students. “The city is fantastic,” says one. “The cost of living is low and it benefits from being a combination of small city and university town.” “There is plenty to do: Great restaurants, a solid music scene, malls and shopping, and tons of outdoor activities (hiking, kayaking, biking, jogging, etc).”

LIVING EXPENSES

The cost of living in Charlottesville is just over $19,000 for the academic year, about average for schools on this list. Housing is easy to find, and students can live close enough to campus to be able to walk to school and leave the car at home, saving on gas, parking, and auto maintenance expenses.

Estimated academic year living expenses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Cost</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living expenses</td>
<td>$15,150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health insurance</td>
<td>$2,150.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Books and supplies</td>
<td>$1,800.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>$19,100.00</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Values provided by Virginia Law

HOUSING

Although the university has some housing available for graduate students, it is limited and tends to go fast. Many students live off campus: Housing on Arlington Boulevard is the closest to the school. Both the school and students recommend networking with current students to find the best deals and locations.

On-campus housing available? Y - limited
Average apartment rental cost (1 BR/1 BA) $800/mo

DEMOGRAPHICS

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates the 2006 population of Charlottesville, VA to be 40,124 people, with 74.7% of the population between 18 and 65 years of age. 40.8% of the population has a bachelor’s degree or higher.

Population density in the D.C. area (as per the 2000 census) is 4,391 persons per square mile.

The 2000 census puts the ethnic makeup of the city as 69.6% white, 2.4% of Hispanic or Latino origin, 22.2% African American, 0.1% American Indian or Alaskan native, 4.9% Asian, less than 0.1% native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 2.1% from two or more races.

PARKING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Students agree that traffic and parking in Charlottesville can be difficult. While the school does have parking near the law school, it is typically reserved for third-year students, and requires the purchase of a parking pass (which currently costs over $200 per school year). Students commuting more than 50 miles or with special circumstances can petition for a law school parking pass. Students can also purchase passes for the University Hall commuter parking lot (which is located some distance from the law school and has bus service to and from the law building), for $108 per school year.

However, what many students have reported is that it is often not necessary to use a car to commute to and from school. The University Transit Service (UTS) is very good—and free to UVA students, faculty, and staff. Many students also choose to bike or walk to school.

AREA ATTRACTIONS & ENTERTAINMENT

Charlottesville has “plenty of parks and some great hiking and biking trails (or jogging, if that’s your thing) all over the place. There are lots of great restaurants, including relatively cheap ones appropriate for a student budget, and a great music scene,” says a student.

One of the best known attraction in Charlottesville is Monticello, the home of Thomas Jefferson, visited by hundreds of thousands of tourists every year. UVA itself is also considered a historical landmark, as is the residence of James Monroe, the fifth president of the United States.

In addition to historical attractions, Charlottesville also has a plethora of vineyards and wineries, all of which host wine tastings year-round.

CITY MUST-DOs

Students suggest making time to “go to at least one wine tasting...but you should really try to go to multiple ones.”

“UVA men’s basketball is a great university attraction,” says one grad, “and you really need to get tickets for at least one game.”

If you’re into the outdoors, “drive the 25 minutes to the Blue Ridge Parkway and check out Humpback Rock.” And to relax during the late spring and summer, “go to Downtown Mall and enjoy a free concert or street performers with ‘Fridays After Five’.”