

## Notice of VLGS Amendment to the Academic Regulations

**Effective:** Thursday, April 11, 2024

**Students Effected:** Effective immediately upon approval by faculty.

**Amendment Type:** Online Hybrid Juris Doctor (OHJD)

**Academic Regulation:** Sections II.B.1.a, II.B.1.b, II.C.7.b, II.D, III.A.5.a, III.A.6.b(2), III.A.6.b(5), III.A.6.c, III.A.9, III.E.6.a, III.E.6.c, III.E.6.d, and III.E.8

### Amendment Description:

The following amendments formalize procedures for the OHJD program and reflect areas where this program differs from the traditional JD track.

### NEW LANGUAGE

Amend academic regulation II.B.1.a. with the changes in red below.

The minimum course load **for full-time students** is 10 credits per semester, and the maximum course load is 17 credits per semester. **The minimum course load for part-time students in the Online Hybrid JD program is 6 credits, and the maximum course load is 10 credits per semester.**

Amend academic regulation II.B.1.b. with the changes in red below.

Except for students in the AJD **and Online Hybrid JD** program, the maximum course load is 11 credits. For students in the AJD program, the minimum course load for the first AJD summer is 12 credits and the maximum course load is 14 credits. The minimum course load in the second AJD summer is 10 credits, and the maximum course load is 14 credits. **For students in the Online Hybrid JD program, the minimum course load for the summer is 6 credits and the maximum course load is 10 credits.**

Amend academic regulation II.C.7.b. Fn 5 with the changes in red below.

In most situations **for residential students**, the student's "final semester" is the sixth semester so that honors may be earned either at the end of the fifth or the sixth semester. **For Online Hybrid JD students, the student's "final semester" is the tenth semester so that honors may be earned at the end of the ninth or tenth**

semester.

Amend academic regulation II.D. with the language in red below.

If a student experiences a technical issue during an examination being monitored through remote monitoring software, the student must immediately contact the exam administrator who will remotely proctor the remainder of the examination.

Amend academic regulation III.A.5.a. with the changes in red below.

The minimum course load for full-time students is 10 hours per semester, and the maximum course load is 17 hours per semester. The minimum course load for part-time students in the Online Hybrid JD program is 6 hours per semester, and the maximum course load is 10 hours per semester.

Amend academic regulation III.A.6.b(2) with the changes in red below.

A student may also extend this time period by requesting a leave of absence. Except as provided in regulation III.A.7.g. with respect to students in the Accelerated JD program, and regulation III.A.9.g. with respect to students in the Online Hybrid JD program, the Registrar may grant leaves of absence, other than medical leaves of absence, for two semesters; all other requests for leaves of absence, other than medical leaves of absence, must be addressed to the Committee on Standards. The Vice Dean of Students may grant requests for medical leaves of absence upon submission of appropriate documentation from a health care professional. Under no circumstances will a request for a leave of absence, including a medical leave of absence, be granted that extends the period of study beyond seven years. A student who is on academic probation at the end of the first semester and who requests a leave of absence will be required to complete the second semester of first year JD courses, including Legal Methods, before taking upper division courses.

Amend academic regulation III.A.6.b(5) with the changes in red below.

- a. The usual period of study to obtain the JD degree is three years (six semesters).<sup>1</sup>
  - (1) A student may extend this time period to four years (eight semesters) by taking a reduced course load or pursuing an extended scheduling option.
  - (2) A student may also extend this time period by requesting a leave of absence. Except as provided in regulation III.A.7.g. with respect to students in the Accelerated JD program, the Registrar may grant leaves of absence, other than medical leaves of absence, for two semesters; all other

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<sup>1</sup> For students pursuing an accelerated or extended scheduling option or for students in the Online Hybrid Juris Doctor program or certain joint or dual degrees, the term "sixth semester" as used throughout these regulations means the student's final semester in the JD program at the end of which the student is awarded the JD degree. The term "fifth semester" means the semester preceding the final semester in the JD program.

requests for leaves of absence, other than medical leaves of absence, must be addressed to the Committee on Standards. The Vice Dean of Students may grant requests for medical leaves of absence upon submission of appropriate documentation from a health care professional. Under no circumstances will a request for a leave of absence, including a medical leave of absence, be granted that extends the period of study beyond seven years. A student who is on academic probation at the end of the first semester and who requests a leave of absence will be required to complete the second semester of first year JD courses, including Legal Methods, before taking upper division courses.

- (3) A student pursuing the accelerated scheduling option must also complete a minimum of six residential semesters. (For purposes of this regulation, a summer session will count as one residential semester.)
- (4) A student pursuing the Online Hybrid JD option must complete a minimum of ten residential semesters. (For purposes of this regulation, a summer session will count as one residential semester.)
- (5) A student may not extend the period of study to obtain the JD degree beyond seven years from the date of matriculation.

Amend academic regulation III.A.6.c with the changes in red below.

- b. To obtain the degree from Vermont Law and Graduate School, a student must be in residence at Vermont Law and Graduate School, or at a school with which Vermont Law and Graduate School has an exchange program, for the last four semesters.

A student pursuing the accelerated scheduling option must also be in residence for the last four semesters. (For purposes of this regulation, a summer session will count as one semester.)

A student pursuing the Online Hybrid JD must be in residence for the last six semesters. (For purposes of this regulation, a summer session will count as one semester.)

No exceptions will be made except for an unforeseeable change of circumstance of an emergency nature.

- (1) A desire to enroll in an academic program not offered at Vermont Law and Graduate School (or its exchange program) is not considered an unforeseeable change of circumstance of an emergency nature.
- (2) A desire to avoid separation from a spouse or partner will not ordinarily be considered an unforeseeable change of circumstances of an emergency nature.

No residence credit is granted for Vermont Law and Graduate School's summer sessions or for attendance at another law school unless part of an exchange program as provided under 6.c. above, unless the student is pursuing the accelerated scheduling option, or

the student is pursuing the extended scheduling option and has received permission from the Committee on Standards (see regulation III.A.8.c.).

Amend academic regulation III.A.9. with the changes in red below.

#### 10. ONLINE HYBRID JD PROGRAM (OHJD)

The Online Hybrid JD (OHJD) allows for completion of the JD course of study online in ten consecutive terms (seven regular semesters and three summer sessions). All academic regulations pertaining to the JD apply to the OHJD except where modified by regulations contained in this subsection.

- a. Eligibility: Students are accepted to the OHJD program at the time of admission. Transfers between the VLGS JD program and the OHJD program are not permitted.
- b. Course Load Requirements: The minimum course load for the OHJD is 6 credits and the maximum is 10 credits.
- c. Residence Requirement: OHJD students are subject to the residence requirement described in III.A.6. For purposes of this regulation each summer session counts as a regular semester.
- d. Academic Probation: OHJD students are subject to requirements for academic probation and EIS as outlined in regulations III.E.2 and III.E.5 except OHJD students shall not be required to take Legal Methods.
- e. Academic Dismissal: OHJD students shall be given two semesters to raise their GPA above 2.3 prior to dismissal under regulation III.E.3.
- f. Residential classes: Other than foundational courses, OHJD students may take classes that are offered in-person in the JD program. In-person courses are not offered with a virtual option and OHJD students need to be physically present to take an in-person course.
- g. Leaves of Absence: A leave of absence for OHJD students normally must be for one year, except a shorter leave may be approved by the Director of the OHJD.
- h. Foundational Courses: OHJD students may take Foundational Courses after 60 credits as required by III.A.2.a with permission of the OHJD Director
- i. Impact on Extracurricular Activities: Students in the OHJD program will be eligible for participation in Vermont Law Review, VJEL, and extramural moot court competitions only after completion of their second year.
- j. Commencement: OHJD students who complete their degree requirements following the fall semester are eligible to walk at the commencement ceremony immediately preceding or following the completion of their degree. Honors will only be read for OHJD students who walk during the commencement ceremony following the completion of their degree.

Amend academic regulation III.E.6.a with the changes in red below.

Students in the JD program will receive a class rank only after grades are submitted at the end of the fall and spring semesters. Class rank will not be calculated at any other time. Students will be ranked based on anticipated completion date, with all **residential** students whose final semester ends in May, August, or December of the same calendar year being ranked as one cohort **and all Online Hybrid JD students whose final semester ends in December or May or August of the following calendar year being ranked as one cohort**. Completion date is the end of the semester in which the student has completed all degree requirements.

Amend academic regulation III.E.6.c with the changes in red below.

**For residential JD students, class rank calculated at the end of the spring semester in the year of completion of degree requirements is final even if the student does not complete the degree requirements until the end of summer or fall semester of that year. For OHJD students, class rank calculated at the end of the fall semester in the year of completion of degree requirements is final even if the student does not complete the degree requirements until the end of spring or summer semester of the following year.**

Amend academic regulation III.E.6.d with the changes in red below.

Class rank for a semester will not be recalculated at any time, including after completion of academic work for which the student has received a grade of I (temporarily excused from completion of a requirement), after a student has retaken a course in which the student had earned a final grade of D or lower, or after completion of all degree requirements at the end of the summer or fall **for residential JD students or spring or summer for Online Hybrid JD students**.

Amend academic regulation III.E.8 with the changes in red below.

~~This award is given to the JD student with the highest cumulative grade point average at the end of the spring semester who has completed either five or six semesters.~~

Approved by the Committee on Standards: April 1, 2024

Approved by the VLGS Faculty: April 11, 2024

Proposed effective date: April 11, 2024