

CUNY Law School Learning Outcomes

Prefatory Note:

The Student Learning Outcomes below are designed to further CUNY School of Law's dual educational missions of preparing outstanding social justice attorneys and diversifying the legal profession. CUNY School of Law, a leader in progressive legal education has developed a curriculum that threads doctrine, theory, and practice through the curriculum. The law school's outcomes are listed under the headings provided by ABA Standard 302. Listed under each outcome are examples of the type of work that may be used to determine competency.

Standard 302. Learning Outcomes

a) Knowledge & Understanding of Substantive and Procedural Law

1. Graduates will be able to identify, explain, and apply basic concepts, theories, procedures, and rules of law.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Understanding of core doctrine and procedure;
- Understanding of critical perspectives on the law's impact on the lives of individuals and society.

b) Legal analysis and reasoning including legal research, problem solving and written and oral communication in a legal context

2. Graduates will be able to identify legal issues and key facts, and to develop sound legal and policy arguments to address the issues.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Issue spotting based on a set of facts;
- Ability to select the appropriate doctrine and apply it to relevant facts;
- Development and assessment of competing legal and policy arguments, informed by critical legal and social perspectives.

3. Graduates will be able to conduct fact investigation tailored to a particular legal or social problem.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Recognition of the need for fact investigation;
- Ability to develop and implement an organized strategy for factual investigation.
- Ability to evaluate and modify strategies when necessary.

4. Graduates will be able to critically analyze the social context in which a legal issue arises.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Formation of individualized and independent judgments supported by legal doctrine;
- Ability to reflect on and reassess judgments based on new information;
- Recognition of the effects of the social and political context in which legal issues arise;

- Recognition of the role of law in social change.

5. Graduates will be able to create efficient and productive research strategies, to organize their research, to review and alter their strategies as required.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Understanding of the structures of the U.S. legal system;
- Creation of productive, effective, and ethical research strategies using both free and fee-based databases;
- Evaluation and modification of research strategies when necessary;
- Ability to distinguish between types and relevance of primary and secondary legal authority.

6. Graduates will be able to work effectively to engage in and assist others in problem solving, including resolving uncertain, indeterminate, and unstructured situations.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Ability to listen to client concerns to effectively assess the problem(s) a client is seeking to have addressed;
- Development of both legal and non-legal strategies to address problems;
- Review and reassessment of selected strategies;
- Work and collaboration with others.

7. Graduates will be able to draft basic legal and other documents that are accurate, organized, audience appropriate and responsive to the legal issue presented.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Ability to draft litigation, legislative, planning and other documents;
- Understanding of the impact of audience and context in legal writing;
- Ability to incorporate and learn from feedback.

8. Graduates will be able to orally communicate in a professional manner that is audience appropriate.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Ability to convey accurate legal analysis in an organized, accurate, and persuasive manner;
- Active listening skills;
- Ability to formulate plans for and to conduct effective interviewing, counseling and negotiations;
- Advocacy in legal and other settings.

c) Exercise of proper professional and ethical responsibilities to clients and the legal system

9. Graduates will be able to articulate and apply the core ethical and professional responsibilities of attorneys.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Recognition of the ethical issues that arise in practice, including the obligation to maintain a level of competence and to engage in appropriate lawyer, client and institutional relationships;

- Identification and consultation of relevant resources to formulate professional responses to ethical concerns so they can fulfill an attorney's commitment to competence, integrity, and accountability.

10. Graduates will understand the specific responsibilities and potential issues that arise when working with clients, including, among others, disempowered individuals, organizations, or when representing government entities.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Understanding of lawyers' responsibilities to provide legal services to those unable to afford them;
- Engagement in identifying and challenging bias in the legal profession.

d) Other professional skills needed for competent and ethical participation as a member of the legal profession

11. Graduates will demonstrate basic competency in conflict resolution skills in litigation- and non-litigation-based contexts.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Trial and pre-trial, administrative and appellate advocacy skills;
- Recognition of the role of mediation and negotiation along with litigation-based conflict resolution mechanisms;
- Ability to proactively advise and counsel clients to strategically address conflicts.

12. Graduates will demonstrate an ability to work across difference.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Recognition of the potential for structural inequality to negatively impact relationships with clients and others;
- Active listening and engagement with multiple perspectives;
- Incorporation of theoretical perspectives in practice.

13. Graduates will be able to collaborate with others, to organize and plan their efforts, and to reflect and reassess their work on an ongoing basis.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Ability to work in teams;
- Project management skills, including planning, careful resource allocation, time management and ability to reassess and alter planning as necessary;
- Ability to incorporate feedback from and to provide feedback to others in a professional manner.

14. Graduates will demonstrate the fundamental skills of reflection and independent learning.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Understanding of individual learning preferences;
- Reflection on and ability to learn from experience;
- Willingness to learn from others.

15. Graduates will be able to incorporate social justice lawyering into their practice.

Competency may be assessed through demonstrated:

- Understanding of the impact the law has on access to justice;
- Understanding of the role allocation of resources has on access to justice;
- Familiarity with critical theoretical perspectives and how those perspectives may be incorporated into a social justice practice.