

“I am interested in Business Law.
WHAT COURSES SHOULD I TAKE?”

DAVID V. SNYDER
Professor of Law

You probably want a list of courses, right here, right off the bat. I will give you some lists, but realize that not everyone should have the same list, plus (you know this already) you have to make your own list. On top of that, different knowledgeable people would give you different lists and priorities. So you need to start with the realization that just as various students have varying interests and outlooks, so do various professors. What follows are just my own views,

creditors

trying to get money out of the bankrupt company. They negotiate and document deals to reorganize companies in bankruptcy. They also work on deals and law suits where there is concern about bankruptcy. Once someone files a petition in bankruptcy, everything changes. Bankruptcy lawyers are experts in that specialized world.

x Real estate has obvious meaning. Also keep in mind that there can be a hefty component of finance as well as planning, zoning, and the like.

- x Tax is also self-explanatory, but you should realize also that tax lawyers are always involved in major deals. Tax law drives everything.
- x Commercial litigation includes a large number of practice areas. Some major ones: litigating the mergers that go bad, or that involve jilted suitors; contract disputes; antitrust; unfair trade practices and intellectual property enforcement; securities litigation and arbitration.
- x The rest you can figure out for yourself. And there are obviously specialties I haven't included.

COURSES, WITH EXPLANATION

Courses everyone should take

Everyone should take Business Association

you need to pick up accounting somehow, if you don't have it already. There are courses you can take here (Law and Accounting), or you can take a Business School course. This is easy to put off, but don't. Take it seriously, and it will pay rich dividends no matter what area you choose. This is

likely eventual practice but also your chances of getting a job.

If you've been paying attention, you will see that I have given you reasons why and why not to take a vocational as opposed to a liberal arts approach to your legal education. What good does that do you? It means you get to choose. Do what you want, and do what sounds good, and comfortable. You will have job prospects in mind, I do not doubt, but you will also keep in mind the broader interests you had before you came to law school.

Should I do a clinic or some other experiential learning? Experiential learning can be valuable for obvious reasons. How much time you devote to it in law school is a personal decision that you will have to make for yourself. You are presumably accustomed to multifactor balancing tests by now, so let me give you some factors.

Don't do a clinic. You only have three years in law school, and you can only choose roughly eighteen of your courses. We have about 150 courses in business law alone—a sensational range of choices—and you will want and need to do other things as well, so you have to spend your choices carefully. Clinics can require a significant commitment of time and intellect, sometimes an enormous investment (a year-long clinic can take 14 credit hours). Plus, you'll have the whole rest of your life to practice law, and you should enjoy the chance for a purely academic experience now, as this is probably your last chance, ever.

Do a clinic. Not everyone likes law school all that much. At all. Many of those people eventually love practicing law. Why not bring on the love now? Clinics give you that chance. Not to mention

how much better you can learn by doing rather than simply reading about it. Plus, the clinical program at WCL is, without debate, among the best in the nation, maybe the best in the world. The only debate is whether we're #1 or #2. (Right answer: We're #1.) It's smart to take advantage of the best things that a place has to offer, whether you're talking about food at a restaurant or courses in school. And the best clinics put together the academic with the real world in a setting that gives you genuine experience. That's a lot to love, and a lot of work, so you get a lot of credit. If you want to do 14 credit hours, you can, but you can also do a one-semester clinic: the Tax Clinic is 6 credit hours and the General Practice Clinic is 7.

Choose an alternative experience, or an additional one. A wealth of internships and externships are available in Washington, and they offer excellent chances for experiential learning. A few field components are also available, particularly in securities and real estate. In addition, some paying jobs offer excellent experience in business-related areas of practice, and I find my students who are

