

“Choose Your Own Adventure” through the International Legal Studies Program



Whether you’re looking to build a long-term career in international law or explore a new perspective on legal practice, the International Legal Studies program provides a variety of opportunities to get involved with comparative and international law. The tables below describe many of the options available to students charting their paths through ISLP- an *a la carte* menu of possibilities to choose from.

Vel Lewis, '21, on externship in Geneva. After graduation, Vel served with the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees.

1L Year

Academic	Extracurricular	Professional
<p>Introduce yourself to International Legal Studies Faculty for mentorship and guidance – reach out for lunch, coffee, or a chat.</p> <p>Focus on your fall semester studies – succeeding in 1L classes can only be helpful in opening doors.</p> <p>Consider your interests – where do you want your career to take you and how can international law fit in to those goals?</p> <p>Use your spring 1L elective to take your first international law class. This will pay dividends during 1L summer and Fall OCI.</p> <p>Participate in Vanderbilt-in-Venice to immerse yourself in international law and obtain credits that make semester-long externships more feasible.</p>	<p>Become an active member of the International Legal Society.</p> <p>Vanderbilt is an American Society of International Law Academic Partner – Join ASIL as a student member and get involved with their programming or job boards and attend the ASIL Annual meeting for free.</p> <p>After spring exams, participate in write-on and/or moot court try-outs if you’re interested in Journal or the Jessup International Moot Court team. Vanderbilt is home to a variety of journals that deal with international law issues, including the 4th ranked student-run international law journal in the U.S.</p>	<p>Use winter break to consider what internship opportunities most appeal to you and your career plans.</p> <p>Speak with International Legal Studies faculty and learn about opportunities for summer internships.</p> <p>If you are interested in a career as a Judge Advocate General (JAG), speak to Prof. Newton.</p> <p>Apply for funding for public interest experiences through Legal Aid Society and Vanderbilt Law School Public Interest Stipends.</p> <p>If interested, apply for the Helen Curry Strong International Legal Studies Scholarship in the spring.</p>

2L Year

Academic	Extracurricular	Professional
<p>Before the semester starts, strategize course selection – if you’d like to do a semester-long internship away, make sure you have a plan for completing graduation requirements.</p> <p>Take the International Law Practice Lab, or other international law classes.</p> <p>In the fall, take Transnational Legal Research.</p> <p>Consider what other courses will help bolster your area of interest – if your focus is international environmental law, private environmental governance is a great option. If you hope to litigate in international fora, litigation-focused courses like trial advocacy, evidence, and appellate procedure will help to build skills.</p>	<p>If on a journal, use your note drafting process as an opportunity to explore an international law topic in greater depth, aiming for publication.</p> <p>If you are not on a journal, consider preparing an article for note-on or to submit for external publication.</p> <p>Apply for ILS leadership positions.</p> <p>Participate in reading groups.</p> <p>Apply for, or continue participation with, Jessup.</p>	<p>Reflect on your 1L summer experience and consider where you want to head in the mid-to-long term. Discuss your goals with faculty mentors.</p> <p>Take on campus interviews (OCI) for firms seriously—summering at a firm is a great way to build experience and your resume for public service or private careers.</p> <p>Consider a semester-long internship, thinking critically about post-graduate employment.</p> <p>Apply for Federal Clerkships: District, Circuit, Court of Federal Claims, or Court of International Trade are all great experiences and resume-builders.</p> <p>Use your summer to do another internship or to continue your semester internship.</p> <p>Start looking at applications for post-grad employment – for example, the DOJ Honors Program application is due August of your 2L summer.</p> <p>Check the ASIL Job board for fellowships, internships, and full-time jobs in international law.</p>

3L Year

Academic	Extracurricular	Professional
<p>If you haven't already, plan your semesters so that you don't miss Practice Lab, any international law courses you're hoping to take, or the opportunity to extern.</p>	<p>If publishing a note or article, aim to have your piece out by the end of 3L fall so that you can use your publication as a selling point in fellowship applications or interviews.</p>	<p>Keep track of fellowship and job deadlines – public interest opportunities may become available on a rolling basis, and more formal programs often have earlier deadlines than you'd expect.</p>
<p>Make sure you have taken all required courses and credits for graduation, and to be barred in your state of choice.</p>	<p>Take a leadership role in Jessup or on your journal's board.</p>	<p>Sign up for international public interest employment list serves.</p>
<p>Consider working with an ISLP professor on an independent study or research project.</p>	<p>Complete your volunteer hours and any additional experiential hours needed for the New York bar membership application.</p>	<p>Fall semester, complete any government honors program applications or the PMF program application.</p>
<p>Work towards publishing an article prior to graduation as many VULS students have won national writing awards.</p>		