

Introduction

The Extended Option (EO) offers students the opportunity to complete a J.D. degree in more than the standard three-year format, with non-traditional students taking up to the maximum of seven years (84 months) to complete the J.D. degree. The students can choose a flexible program that allows them to be a part-time student or a full-time student, depending upon their other life obligations. This Option would allow students to work during law school so long as they are enrolled in less than twelve units. It would also allow students who have child care responsibilities to matriculate part-time during the day.

Admission and Transfer into the Extended Option

Students must be formally admitted into the Extended Option. The requirements for admission to the Extended Option are the same as the traditional three-year Juris Doctor Program requirements. Students applying for admission must declare on their applications their intention to participate in the Extended Option and which Extended Option schedule they plan to pursue. Students enrolled in the Extended Option must petition the Academic Dean if they wish to change the Extended Option schedule that they have selected to modify their projected date of graduation. Regular full-time students and Accelerated Option students must also petition the Academic Dean if they wish to transfer to an Extended Option schedule. Once the petition is granted, students may modify their semester unit load so that they will be able to meet their new projected date of graduation.

The First Year of Law School

Students in the Extended Option must take all of the first year required courses. For students who elect to do the extended program in 3.5 or 4 years the first year of law school will look very similar to the first year for full-time students. However, those students who elect to take longer options-- 4.5, 5, 5.5 etc. years--the first year courses will have to be spread over several years and students may have to take some electives before they have finished all of their first year courses.

Upper Division Required and Elective Courses

The Extended Option students must follow the same rules as all students when it comes to taking upper division required courses, but students taking 4 or more years to complete their JD must also complete the bar preparation course as an additional graduation requirement. They simply are able to spread these courses over more years. All of the electives will be available to these students including practice and skills courses.

Graduation with the J.D. Degree

In order to graduate, Extended Option students must take the same required courses and complete all of the requirements for graduation, including the requirement of having completed 88 units of credit.

Bar Passage

Those students who participate in the Extended Option for a period longer than four years will be required to take the Pepperdine bar preparation course. The purpose of this requirement is so students can have the maximum opportunity to review courses that they may have taken several years earlier.

Grades and Class Standing

Extended Option students would be graded in the same manner as all other students. Class standing, which does present some unique problems, would be calculated at three points in the student's career: at the time they finish their first year course work, at the time they finish 60 units of credit, and at graduation. Each time they would be ranked with the students who are in the class that is nearest to them in total units. For example, if an Extended Option student finished all of the first year courses at the end of two years, the Extended Option student would be ranked with the students who finished their first year courses at the same time.

Participation in Journals, Moot Court, Trial Team and other Aspects of Student Life

Participation in the normal aspects of student life may be especially important for Extended Option students. Students taking longer than 3 years to complete the degree may feel disconnected from other students and law school life since they will not be part of a "cohort" as is currently experienced by students in 1L sections. Some of the students choosing the extended option will already be nontraditional students with family and/or work obligations that would otherwise prevent them from becoming a full participant. Any activity which is available to full-time students will be available to Extended Option students if the students have met the prerequisites for participation and can fit the units into their schedules. Extensive counseling will be available for Extended Option students to help them manage their unit loads.