THE DISTINGUISHING FEATURE of the Law School’s program in health law is its collaboration with the University’s School of Medicine and its Medical Center, which is consistently ranked among the nation’s top hospitals.

At Virginia, law students can study health law in the clinical setting, interacting with medical students and physicians from all medical specialties, including pediatrics, neurology, internal medicine and psychiatry.

Law faculty teach in the School of Medicine, and Medical School professors teach Law School classes. This collaboration extends to health policy experts in the Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, the Darden School of Business, and the Schools of Architecture, Arts & Sciences, Engineering and Nursing.

STUDENTS BENEFIT FROM VIEWING THE REGULATORY CONTEXT through the eyes of physicians, inventors, health care administrators and experts from a variety of fields. THIS INTERDISCIPLINARY APPROACH is further borne out through institutes and centers at UVA that allow students to study and work on pressing issues in health care, biotechnology, research, genetics and moral philosophy.

INSTITUTE OF LAW, PSYCHIATRY AND PUBLIC POLICY
VIRGINIA CENTER FOR TRANSLATIONAL AND REGULATORY SCIENCES
INSTITUTE FOR PRACTICAL ETHICS AND PUBLIC LIFE
CENTER FOR BIOMEDICAL ETHICS
CENTER FOR HEALTH POLICY
CENTER FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

J.D.-M.P.H. (PUBLIC HEALTH) PROGRAM

In conjunction with the Department of Public Health Sciences at the School of Medicine, the Law School offers a dual degree in public health through a program directed by Professors Ruth Gaare Bernheim and Richard Bonnie. Students have access to graduate courses in health policy and management, health economics, ethics, global health, social and behavioral health, environmental health and research methodology. Instituted in 2003, the M.P.H. program offers concentrations in generalist practice and research, health policy, and law and ethics, and includes field placement options in global health, health policy and public health sites. The program takes four years to complete and requires a minimum of 116 credits.
J.D.-M.D. PROGRAM

Designed to educate the next generation of health leaders, the J.D.-M.D. program allows students to complete law and medical degrees in six years, instead of the seven years normally required if the degrees were pursued separately. Students spend the first three years and the summer of year five in classes at the School of Medicine, and years four and five at the Law School. In the final year, one semester is spent in each school. Students are required to secure admission separately to the School of Medicine and UVA Law.

HEALTH AND DISABILITY LAW CLINIC

Students in the yearlong clinic help represent mentally ill and elderly clients in negotiations, administrative hearings and court proceedings. The legal matters may involve civil rights, mental health care in jails and prisons, disability benefits claims, access to health or rehabilitative services, creating wills and other testamentary documents, and advance directives.

FELLOWSHIPS AND EXTERNSHIPS

Students may apply for funding from the Law School’s health law fellowship program to work in a variety of settings. Students have worked for employers such as the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s Public Health Law Program and the Food and Drug Administration.

For the sixth consecutive year, the UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA MEDICAL CENTER was ranked the NO. 1 HOSPITAL IN VIRGINIA by the U.S. News & World Report (as of July 2021).

FACULTY:

Leading scholars in the fields of public health, bioethics and health law

Professors Richard Bonnie, Margaret Foster Riley and Christopher Ruhm are working to address various aspects of the opioid crisis. Bonnie chaired a generation of health leaders, and the summer of year five in years four and five at the Law School. Students are required to secure admission separately to the School of Medicine and UVA Law.

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A wide range of professors and doctors teach courses in the program or on related subjects. For example, Lois Shepherd, the author of “If That Ever Happens to Me: Making Life Decisions after Terri Schiavo,” teaches bioethics and reproductive ethics at the school.

SCHOOL OF LAW

RICHARD J. BONNIE
mental health law, health law, aging and the law, bioethics, public health law
NAOMI CAHN
reproductive technologies, aging and the law
DEBORAH HELLMAN
bioethics
CRAG KONNOTH
health and civil rights, LGBT health law and bioethics
BRUCE COHEN
psychiatry
DEWEY CORNELL
psychology
REBECCA DILLINGHAM
global health
CAROLYN ENGELHARD
health policy
RICHARD L. GUERRANT
infectious diseases
DREW HARRIS
medical-legal partnerships
ROBERT J. MEYER
food and drug law, regulatory science
DANIEL MURRIE
psychiatry
LOIS SHEPHERD
disability law, health law and bioethics
JANET WARREN
psychiatry
CAMERON WEBB
health law and equity

BATTEN SCHOOL
AND UVA

CHRISTOPHER RUHM
health policy
RAYMOND SCHEPPACH
health policy

VISITING FACULTY

The Sadie Lewis Webb Visiting Professorship brings to the Law School eminent scholars such as EZEKIEL J. EMANUEL of the University of Pennsylvania, TIMOTHY S. JOST from Washington and Lee University, and R. ALTA CHARO from the University of Wisconsin Law and medical schools.

SCHOOL OF LAW

RUTH GAAKE BERNHEIM
public health, bioethics
DONNA CHEN
psychiatry and bioethics

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