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 (infectious disease and geriatrics) 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 Gayre 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.

PROFESSOR RICHARD BONNIE, far left, has chaired 11 studies for the National Academies, ranging from tobacco policy to elder mistreatment. As director of the Institute of Law, Psychiatry and Public Policy, he is also helping the Virginia General Assembly overhaul the state’s mental health laws.

PROFESSOR JOHN MONAHAN, near left, has directed two research networks on mental health law for the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.
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.

CLINIC

Students in the yearlong Health Law 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.

COURSES AND SEMINARS


The University of Virginia Medical Center was ranked the NO. 1 HOSPITAL IN VIRGINIA in the 2017-18 U.S. News & World Report rankings.

FACULTY: UVA HAS 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 study for the National Academies of Sciences, Engineering and Medicine that offered recommendations for curbing the problem. He and Professor Ruth Gaare Bernheim have co-authored casebooks on public health law and ethics. 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.

The Sadie Lewis Webb Visiting Professorship brings to the Law School eminent scholars such as Albert R. Jonsen, professor emeritus of the University of Washington, Timothy S. Jost from Washington and Lee University, and R. Alta Charo from the University of Wisconsin law and medical schools.

FACULTY:

Richard J. Bonnie, Emeritus
Mathias C. R. Fromm
Margaret Foster Riley
Myron S. Cohen
Drew M. Harris
Joseph C. H. Jost
Ruth Gaare Bernheim
Richard Bonnie
John M. Monahan
Carolyn Engelhard
Jules Lobel
Robert J. Meyer
Dayna Bowen Matthews
Christopher Ruhm
Wendy McElroy
Sara Sklar
John W. Gunter
Rivka Neumark
Rebecca Dillingham
Royce Haltz
Michele P. Roberts
Eliza Bitts
Tara Heisterkamp
John S. R. Austin
Sarah J. Loss
William R. Fansler
Sandra L. Greene
Lauren R. Lieberman
Stephen D. Angel
Bryan J. Ryan
Amy C. Gutmann
Briony J. Main
Robert J. Meyers
Drew M. Harris
Gian Paolo Perego
Karl J. Fristoe
Natalie C. S. Markley
Patrick J. Lawlor
Terri C. Couture
Susan C. Movick
Timothy R. Jost
Scarlet I. Reid
Rebecca Dillingham
Benjamin R. Bond
Nancy D. Estep
Andrew C. Goldstein
Drew M. Harris
Richard J. Bonnie
Margaret Foster Riley
Richard L. Guerrant
Raymond Scheppach
Daniel M. Murrié

At the request of Virginia law-makers, UVA Law students and Professor Richard Bonnie are helping mental health experts propose far-reaching, comprehensive improvements to the state’s system of care.