
Immigration Law Studies (Advanced Certificate)

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URL: http://sps.cuny.edu/programs/gradcert_immigrationlaw

THE PROGRAM

Immigration is one of the most pressing contemporary issues in the United States. Professionals across the country, working in many fields, are faced with immigrant employment and family issues on a regular basis. The Advanced Certificate in Immigration Law offers a unique opportunity for those working with immigrants, employers, and families to:

- Understand law and regulations governing immigration and citizenship;
- Learn how to comply with rapidly evolving immigration policies;
- Learn how to file petitions and applications;
- Witness immigration court proceedings first hand;
- Work with top CUNY faculty and legal experts; and,
- Gain expertise to professionally advance.

Students will learn how to: determine an individual's eligibility for benefits under the Immigration and Nationality Act; access the resources needed to analyze complicated legal issues; identify and complete standard immigration applications and petitions; and, recognize the ethical and legal restrictions on the practice of law by non-attorneys.

Graduates may pursue careers working with immigrant populations in areas such as law, education and non-profit and community-based organizations. *It is important to note that this program does not qualify anyone who does not hold an attorney's license to practice law.*

Online courses available:

All courses in the program are available online. The online courses in the Immigration Law program are provided asynchronously, which allows students to read course materials, participate in class discussions and complete assignments at their own pace each week. For more information about online learning at CUNY SPS, visit <http://sps.cuny.edu/online>.

Program Requirements

Nine credits are required for the certificate.

Required Course

- ILAW 601 - Introduction to Immigration Law

Elective Courses - Students must complete six credits from among the following courses:

- ILAW 602 - Business Immigration Law
- ILAW 603 - Proceedings in Immigration Court: The Removal Process and Applications for Relief
- ILAW 604 - Family-Based Immigration Law
- ILAW 605 - Naturalization and Citizenship

COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

ILAW 601

Introduction to Immigration Law

3 Credits

Prerequisite: None

The student will gain a comprehensive understanding of the basics of U.S. immigration and citizenship law with an emphasis on family-based immigration, adjustment of status to permanent residence, citizenship and naturalization. The student will also survey asylum and refugee law, employment-based immigration, nonimmigrant visas, and employer sanctions compliance and anti-discrimination laws. The course is oriented towards the students gaining a practical understanding of the law.

ILAW 602 Business Immigration Law 3 Credits

Prerequisite: ILAW 601 or five years experience with the field of immigration law.

The student will gain a comprehensive understanding of business immigration law. The course will prepare the student to provide immigration law paralegal services to employers of foreign-born workers, foreign investors, and outstanding and extraordinary individuals. The student will learn how to prepare and document applications for permanent labor certification, and petitions for employment-based permanent residence, petitions for temporary professional workers and intracompany transferees. Students will also learn how to prepare applications for change and extension of nonimmigrant status and for nonimmigrant visas at U.S. consulates abroad.

**ILAW 603 Proceedings in Immigration Court: The Removal Process 3 Credits
and Applications for Relief**

Prerequisite: ILAW 601 or five years experience with the field of immigration law.

This course will cover what happens once a non-citizen has been charged and placed in immigration removal proceedings (formerly called deportation proceedings). The student will study each step of the proceeding, with the choices that the client and her representative must make in the effort to avoid removal: responding to the charges and putting the government to its proof; determining the client's immigration history; determining the client's eligibility for any relief from removal; preparing a winning case on paper; preparing the client and other witnesses to testify; what options are available for appeal and the requirements for filing a motion to reopen. The course will cover the legal standards and the preparation of the following applications for relief: cancellation of removal, Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) cancellation of removal, and asylum relief along with withholding of removal and relief under the Convention Against Torture. Given that recent developments have greatly increased the complexity of asylum law, the course will cover this area in depth. The course will also briefly cover adjustment of status and voluntary departure. The course will not emphasize courtroom skills; however, we plan to arrange a visit for the class to Immigration Court near the middle of the semester. In addition, the skills necessary to prepare court cases will be emphasized throughout the course, with class discussion and exercises.

ILAW 604 Family-Based Immigration Law 3 Credits

Prerequisite: ILAW 601 or five years experience with the field of immigration law.

Students will gain a comprehensive understanding of family-based immigration law, as well as how family relationships affect other areas of immigration. Students will engage in a detailed study of family-based immigration as they learn how U.S. Citizens and Lawful Permanent Residents (LPRs) may sponsor certain family members who can become LPRs through adjustment of status and consular process. Students will also consider how family members of asylees, employment-based applicants for LPR status and others are able to become LPRs based on their familial relationship to primary applicants. The course will also review how changes in age and family circumstances affect eligibility for immigration benefits. Special family situations, such as those involving the foster care system and domestic violence will also be studied. Finally, the affect of immigration status on other areas of law involving families (such as custody determinations, tax implications, and public benefits access) will be discussed.

ILAW 605 Naturalization and Citizenship 3 Credits

Prerequisite: ILAW 601 or five years experience with the field of immigration law.

The student will learn the law regarding eligibility for Naturalization under different sections of the I&N Act, as well as when and how one can acquire citizenship at birth, and how one can derive U.S. Citizenship. Issues such as good moral character and physical presence will be explored in detail. The student will also learn the law regarding denaturalization, appellate review, and options if an Application for Naturalization is denied. The course will also cover dual nationality and special classes of individuals who are applying for Naturalization including spouses of U.S. Citizens, veterans, and active duty members of the military. The course will cover automatic bars to citizenship such as convictions for an aggravated felony, or for refusing to serve in the military. The student will also learn about the English language requirements, the new civics examination that tests one's knowledge of U.S. history and government, certain exemptions for persons with disabilities, and considerations made for the elderly and people who have been Lawful Permanent Residents for many years.