As a Top 25 law school, Boston College has highly competitive admissions standards. In 2005, there were nearly 7,000 applicants for the first-year class and only 275 spots available. According to the school’s website, members of the 2006 entering class had a median GPA of 3.58 and a median LSAT score of 164. Despite its reputation for rigorous admissions and competitiveness, the school is also known for its friendly atmosphere.

The school was founded in 1929, with Dennis Dooley serving as its first dean. According to the school’s site, Dooley “envisioned a law school with a social conscience as well as an analytical mind.”

In 1932, just three short years after the school was established, it received its accreditation from the ABA. For years, academic standards were so high that as many as two thirds of students in first-year classes were excluded for poor grades. Standards are still high, but the school now blends the practical and professional skills needed by attorneys with ideals such as justice and public service.

The law school is home to one of the most well-respected clinical programs in the country. BC Law’s clinical program encompasses a wide array of topics, such as civil litigation, criminal justice, immigration law, and prevention of homelessness. There are three types of clinical programs available: externships, in-house studies, and judicial internships.

Through the clinical externship program, students are partnered with practicing attorneys in settings outside of law school. The courses available to students in the externship program are Attorney General Program, ICT: Theory and Practice, London Program, and Semester in Practice.

Courses in the in-house clinical program are supervised by full-time clinical faculty members and include Immigration Law Practicum, Women and the Law, Juvenile Rights Advocacy, and Housing Law Clinic.

Students who participate in the judicial internships clinic do not perform any actual legal work but, rather, observe judicial and legal practices. The two classes in the program are The Judge and the Community Courts and The Judicial Process.

In keeping with Boston College’s Jesuit traditions, the law school has issued the following statement regarding pro bono work:

“We encourage our students to develop their own individual commitment to others and to explore those themes which are central to the Jesuit tradition: the dignity of the human person, the advancement of the common good, and compassion for the poor. We seek to train a diverse student body not merely to be good lawyers, but to be lawyers who lead good lives, and who will be prepared to seek and to find meaningful work in service to others that will enrich their communities.”

In order to facilitate communication between students and pro bono organizations, BC Law has compiled a list of organizations students can assist including criminal justice programs, civil legal services, public-interest organizations, and bar associations.

While all law schools have organizations for students, BC Law has created the Law Students Association (LSA), which oversees student organizations and maintains “all aspects of student life, including academic and career services, faculty appointments and tenure, social and athletic activities, community service, and alumni development.” The LSA organizes sports teams for students to join, such as basketball, dodgeball, squash, swimming, rugby, and tennis teams. Other organizations available to students include the Christian Legal Society, Law for Life, the Coalition for Equality, and the National Lawyers Guild.

According to the school’s mission statement, BC Law stands out “nationally among other law schools because we respect and are concerned for each individual. We strive to reflect the world’s rich diversity and work together to create a community of growth and learning. We believe that such a diverse, supportive community provides the best possible environment for instruction and learning. At least as importantly, it represents the model for the types of intellectual and professional interaction that we hope to instill in our alumnae and alumni who are engaged in the practice of law.”

ON THE NET

Boston College Law School  
www.bc.edu/schools/law/home.html

Boston College Law Students Association  
bclsa.org/blog

Newton, MA  
www.ci.newton.ma.us