

ROGER WILLIAMS UNIVERSITY

RALPH R. PAPITTO SCHOOL OF LAW

INSTITUTIONAL INFORMATION

Public/private	private
Student-faculty ratio	20:1
% part-time	30
% female	42
% minority	5
Total faculty	53

SURVEY SAYS...

Great research resources
Great library staff
Beautiful campus

STUDENTS

Enrollment of law school	608
% male/female	50/50
% out-of-state	26
% full-time	84
% minority	11
# of countries represented	2
Average age of entering class	25

ACADEMICS

Academic Experience rating	77
Profs interesting rating	86
Profs accessible rating	80
Hours of study per day	5.73

Academic Specialties

Commercial law, constitutional law, corporation securities law, criminal law, environmental law, intellectual property law, international law, labor law, maritime law, public interest law.

Advanced Degrees Offered

JD, 3 years, full-time.

Combined Degrees Offered

JD/MMA master's Marine affairs, 3.5 years; JD/MS master's of science in labor relations and human resources, 4 years; JD/MCJ master's of criminal justice, 3.5 years.

Clinical Program Required	No
Legal Writing	
Course Requirement	No
Legal Methods	
Course Requirement	Yes
Legal Research	
Court Requirement	No

Academics

A decidedly optimistic spirit permeates the atmosphere of the Ralph R. Papitto School of Law. At this young law school, students applaud the cooperative spirit, school pride, and dedication to excellence demonstrated by the entire community, noting that "everyone at the school—staff and students—seem dedicated to making Roger Williams as good as it can possibly be." With a dedicated and responsive administrative staff "willing to listen to new ideas and . . . open to suggestions," students at Roger Williams feel they have the unique opportunity to help shape their school's future. As a result, Papitto is constantly improving: "Every year brings new challenges, better qualified students, and further experienced professors," explains a 2L.

Over its short history, Roger Williams has focused on building a superior academic program. A 2L reports, "The administrators of Roger Williams were extremely smart in their hiring; they knew that the only way to take a fledgling law school and move it quickly up through the ranks was to hire the best faculty." As a result of these efforts, "The diverse backgrounds that the professors bring, the different teaching skills, and the rigorous expectations this young law school demands of its student body will lead it to great dimensions."

Papitto students must be primed to give their all in the classroom. A 3L explains, "The faculty are among the best and they don't take 'pass' for an answer. Preparedness is expected, and we're being grilled and graded as if we were at Harvard." Students insist that they are amply rewarded for their efforts: "The law school is extremely challenging, and the professors coax more from me than I ever believed I could give," reports one 2L. In addition, students reassure us that professors are dedicated to promoting academic success. By most accounts, professors are readily available to meet with struggling students, and "the smaller size and availability of the faculty allows for great communication and interactions outside the classroom." In addition, the school has instituted a number of programs to help students succeed academically, like the "excellent orientation program and seminar series continuing into the school year to teach and reinforce skills vital to 1L success."

Roger Williams is the only law school in the state of Rhode Island, a happy privilege that pays off in many ways. For example, "the local judiciary [including the chief justice of the Rhode Island Supreme Court] and legal community are highly involved with the school and frequently attend functions here." In fact, "the moot court competition involves arguing before the RI Supreme Court." In addition, "internship opportunities abound because RWU has an exclusive franchise in the state." "I was able to work for a federal judge over the summer between my 1L and 2L years," recalls one 2L. When it comes to extracurriculars and externships, many students point out that "Roger Williams has an excellent public service focus" that likewise exerts a strong influence in the Rhode Island community; one student reports that "the Feinstein Institute for Public Service is the best thing about this school! They are amazing and have a huge range of placements available." After graduation, career prospects are good for Roger Williams' alumni, especially if they plan to practice in Rhode Island. After a recent revamp, "the new Career Services department is outstanding!" While things already look good for RWU grads, students are convinced that their prospects improve with every passing year. As one enthusiastic 2L explains, "As more and more employers see the excellent caliber of students RWU turns out year after year, the school will continue to garner respect in the legal community."

Life

Situated in Bristol, “Roger Williams is located in one of the most scenic locations in the country, Rhode Island’s East Bay.” “From my classroom I can see the bay and the sailboats out on a sunny day,” reports one student. On campus “there are many clubs and organizations that make it a priority to put together different activities; anything from study groups and sports to parties and balls.” Students say a decidedly social atmosphere pervades the campus, and students appreciate it. A 1L reasons, “I’d much rather spend three intensive years with classmates who can kick back and drink a beer on a Thursday night than with a competitive group of straight-A stress cases.”

Thanks to an “extremely proactive admissions staff,” Papitto attracts a “really interesting, fun student body” from all across the nation. By most accounts, “the students are by and large quite friendly and outgoing.” Don’t expect much by way of ethnic diversity: “Where are the minorities? I feel like I’m the only one sometimes, and usually I am,” writes one 2L.

Getting In

LSAT scores and undergraduate GPA are generally considered to be the two most important factors in an application to Papitto. However, the school also considers graduate work, work experience, extracurricular activities, undergraduate curriculum, community involvement, and life experiences. A B-minus undergraduate GPA and an LSAT score above the 50th percentile puts you in the running, although it certainly doesn’t guarantee admission.

EMPLOYMENT INFORMATION

Career Rating	72	Grads employed by field (%):	
Rate of placement (nine months out)	86	Business/industry	27
Average starting salary	\$51,194	Government	14
State for bar exam	RI, CT, MA	Judicial clerkships	17
Pass rate for first-time bar	71	Military	3
Employers who frequently hire grads		Private practice	34
New England judges (state and local) and small New England firms.		Public interest	5

Moot Court Requirement	No
Public Interest	
Law Requirement	Yes

ADMISSIONS

Selectivity Rating	70
# applications received	1,743
# applicants accepted	716
# acceptees attending	198
Average LSAT	153
LSAT range	151–155
Average undergrad GPA	3.2
Application fee	\$60
Regular application	Rolling
Regular notification	Rolling
Rolling notification?	Yes
Early application program?	No
Transfer students accepted	Yes
Evening division offered?	No
Part-time accepted?	No
LSDAS accepted?	Yes

Applicants Also Look At

Franklin Pierce Law Center, New England School of Law, Suffolk University, Vermont Law School, Western New England College.

International Students

TOEFL required	
of international students	Yes
Minimum Paper TOEFL	600
Minimum Computer TOEFL	250

FINANCIAL FACTS

Annual tuition	\$27,300
Books and supplies	\$1,100
Fees per credit	\$220
Tuition per credit	\$910
Financial aid application deadline	3/15
% first-year students receiving some sort of aid	91
% receiving some sort of aid	92
% of aid that is merit based	15
% receiving scholarships	42
Average grant	\$12,073
Average loan	\$35,016
Average total aid package	\$43,500
Average debt	\$86,105