

Summer Trial and Evidence Program (STEP)

Frequently Asked Questions

1. What courses are included in STEP?

The STEP Program covers 11 units of courses, including Evidence, Trial Advocacy, Evidence in the Courtroom, Presentation and Persuasion, and Motions Practice. This program is specifically designed for students to learn the rules of evidence and then be able to put that knowledge into real-world practice in their trial presentation course. Motions Practice emphasizes effective writing and advocacy of evidentiary issues. The Performance training guides you to deliver persuasive motions arguments and effectively present to your judge or jury. You will develop confidence and audience awareness as you master trial skills.

2. What is Immersion Week?

Immersion week is the first full week of STEP where you will participate in a hands-on workshop each day. Your professors will integrate lectures, workshops, and student presentations to teach you how to conduct a trial. As the week progresses, you will gain insight into every major aspect of trial and conclude the week by presenting a full trial.

3. What will my summer schedule be like?

For Immersion Week, class is Monday through Friday from 9:30 AM to 5:30 PM. For the duration of the program following Immersion Week, classes take place Monday through Friday and will include several evenings during the week.

4. What is the STEP workload?

STEP is an intense and highly beneficial program that will teach you the rigors of trial practice firsthand. Just like in real life, preparing and putting on a trial is a lot of work. Trials are won and lost on how well each side prepares their case and knows the rules of evidence. You are in control of whether you are prepared when you walk into the courtroom. STEP is truly a program that follows the old saying “you get out only what you put in.”

5. Should I plan a vacation during the program or take an internship?

You are in an exclusive, intensive, 10-week, 11-unit program that will require your full attention. STEP builds new skills every day. It is *highly* discouraged that you plan vacations that will cause you to miss class or to sign up for internships that will take time away from your studies. Students in the past who took time off for vacations expressed difficulty in catching up, because every day covered a new subject and built on the previous class. If a student must take time off for an important reason, they must discuss this with Professor Brockl before signing up for the Program to schedule make-up assignments.

6. When does STEP start?

Immersion Week takes place within the last few weeks of May. The Motions and Brief Writing class will start on the Thursday before Immersion Week. Evidence class begins the week after Immersion Week.

7. What is the GPA requirement to join the STEP?

You must have a minimum 2.5 GPA to remain in STEP. This is the GPA you must achieve at the end of your first-year. Thus, if your GPA is below 2.5 and you were accepted into STEP, you will not be able to continue in the summer program and classes.

8. What is required in my application materials?

You must submit an application, resume, and cover letter via email to the Baxter Fellow at baxterfellow@ggu.edu in PDF format.

9. What is the deadline for applications?

Applications for the Program are due in mid-October each year. Applications must be emailed in PDF format to the Baxter Fellow: baxterfellow@ggu.edu. Applications are available on the ggulitigation.com website and on the GGU Litigation Center TWEN page. An informational session about the Program is held prior to the application deadline and any additional questions can be emailed to the Baxter Fellow. Notice of any informational session will be listed in Law School News and posted on the website noted above.

10. I was pre-admitted, do I still need to apply?

Yes, pre-admitted students must still turn in an application packet by the mid-October deadline. The Committee receives over 50 pre-admitted students each year and narrows the selection of candidates based on their application materials.

11. How many students are admitted into STEP?

There are a maximum of 24 students permitted, however, the Committee has the discretion to admit less students based on the quality of the applications, performance, or professionalism.

12. How can I make myself a more competitive applicant?

It is recommended that 1L students get involved in Litigation Center activities and events as soon as possible, including volunteering to help with In Vino Veritas in October (an annual mock trial competition hosted by the Litigation Center), attending or offering to assist with Center events throughout the semester, joining the Society of Litigators (SOL) board or membership, reaching out to the Director and Baxter Fellow to introduce yourself and find ways to stay involved. Lastly, read the ggulitigation.com website and Student Handbook section to understand the Litigation Center and how STEP can benefit your legal career.

13. When will I find out if I got into STEP?

Following the application deadline, the admissions committee will review all applications. Subsequently, you will be notified via email whether you have been accepted or not.

14. I'm not sure that I want to do trial work, is STEP still right for me?

While STEP is designed around litigation and trial, the skills and confidence you will gain from STEP are highly transferable and can be implemented into every aspect of your legal training. You will gain competence in interviewing witnesses, case analysis, drafting and arguing motions, corresponding with opposing counsel, collecting evidence, elevated speaking skills, and much more. Many STEP alumni have accredited STEP for their advanced ability to speak confidently and persuasively inside and outside of the courtroom. To see feedback from STEP graduates, visit the ggulitigation.com website STEP page.

15. Who can I talk to about STEP?

Schedule an appointment with either Professor Brockl or the Baxter Fellow. We can answer all questions about STEP and the Litigation Center. You can reach Professor Brockl at rbrockl@ggu.edu or the Baxter Fellow at baxterfellow@ggu.edu. You may also find more information on the ggulitigation.com website or in the [Student Handbook](#) located on the GGU website.