



# **Berkeley Law, University of California (United States of America)**

## **Study Guide**

### **1 Overall impression**

Berkeley was a unique experience with countless memories. While I learned a lot about the U.S. law system I also got to know many amazing – mostly already practicing – lawyers from all around the world which is great for networking and also making friendships.

### **2 Making preparations**

(e.g. administrative matters, finding information)

The administrative preparations for the LL.M. at UC Berkeley are very time consuming. Make sure to start the LSAC process early as there are quite a few documents needed from all your universities which takes them time to prepare and physically mail it to LSAC.

Additionally, as it is a program over two consecutive summers UC Berkeley will give you a new I-20 for the second summer with a new SEVIS ID. This led to some confusion as there is no coherent recommendation whether you need to apply for a new visa.

### **3 Contacts/Responsibilities**

(e.g. important contact persons at the Partner University and Faculty)

The ADP office of Berkeley Law is the main department to contact for any concerns regarding your time at Berkeley Law. Berkeley International Office (BIO) is the main office to contact for any questions relating to visa matters.

### **4 Housing**

Housing prices in Berkeley are very expensive. I stayed in off-campus housing close to the law school for both summers (Airbnb/sabbaticalhomes). To future Double Degree students, I'd recommend looking for apartments early and staying somewhere close to the Law School. I would avoid staying in downtown or central Berkeley.

### **5 Arrival**

Due to Covid Immigration only took me 5 minutes in SFO (passport with the visa & I-20) and then I took an Uber to Berkeley which takes around 40 min.

## **6 Telephone**

(e.g. costs, carriers)

The first summer I used the e-sim from Mint – the reception was not always the best; however, I think the value for money was ok. The second summer I used my Swiss carrier which used the AT&T reception which was a lot better.

## **7 Bank account**

I did not open a US Bank account but used mostly neon and sometimes revolut. Neon (a debit mastercard) was really convenient as it uses a great exchange rate.

## **8 Transport**

I took the direct flight from Zurich to San Francisco operated by Swiss. To class I walked (5 min). There is also public transportation that you can use in Berkeley for free as UC Berkeley provides the students with a clipper card. However, public transportation is not very reliable. To San Francisco there is also a train called BART which is \$4.35 one way. However, most of the times we took Ubers.

## **9 General information about the Partner Faculty and student life**

As the LL.M. is a summer program, many students are away during that time and Berkeley is not as busy. However, the LL.M. Executive track group is quite big, so I met many different people from all around the world and made amazing friendships. There are social activities, such as Traditional Tuesday.

## **10 Teaching and studying at the Partner Faculty**

(e.g. program structure, methodology, exams, etc.)

There are four quarters in which you can take 1-2 classes. 3-unit classes are every morning from 9am-12pm and the afternoon classes (usually 1 unit) are from 2-5:30 pm twice a week. After each quarter (usually 13 classes) you already take the exam. The exams are open book and between 2-6 hours long. Only one of my professors used the Socratic method. In general, the students participated a lot which made the classes very interactive.

## **11 City**

(e.g. cultural activities, sports, discounts, nightlife, must-sees, short trips, etc.)

Berkeley is quite a small town and there's not much to do. The fire trails are amazing to go for a run, there are many tennis courts and UC Berkeley has a nice gym. San Francisco is only about 20-30 min away and has nice restaurants, bars, sightseeing etc. There are quite a lot of homeless and violence in Berkeley and San Francisco so always be aware of your surroundings. By car there are many nice places to visit such as Lake Tahoe, Monterrey, Napa Valley, Silicon Valley etc.

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