

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

1. Overall impression

The overall impression of Berkeley Law was very good. I was able to establish a lot of contacts with lawyers all around the world. Furthermore, all fellow students are very friendly, helpful and open-minded with each other. Also the professors and staff of Berkeley Law are extremely friendly and always committed to help you if you have any questions.

2. Making preparations

(e.g. administrative matters, finding information)

The LL.M. Program of Berkeley Law is meanwhile well organised and planned. In case you don't know where to find your information once you are there, the staff of Berkeley and your fellow students are all very happy to help you. The best and easiest way to get to your information is to write or visit the ADP office of Berkeley Law (E-Mail: adpoffice@law.berkeley.edu) which is located in the second floor of the Law School Building (Boalt Hall).

3. Contacts/Responsibilities

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

The ADP office of Berkeley Law (E-Mail: adpoffice@law.berkeley.edu) is the first place of contact in case you have any questions regarding all matters. They are extremely helpful and friendly and always in a very good mood. The most important contact person and the head of ADP office is Erin Weldon.

4. Housing / Finding accommodation

The housing situation in Berkeley is quite bad. The flats and rooms are very expensive and the quality of the accommodations are not comparable with the Swiss housing standard. But this is normal for the Bay Area around San Francisco and Silicon Valley, which is known to have the highest housing prices around the world. However, the University of Berkeley provides you with different housing suggestions which are comparably payable and close to the university. I recommend each first-year student to live in iHouse (student living right next to the Law School Building) for their first summer because it is comparably cheap, you have food included, it is right next to the law school and you will meet a lot of fellow students there which will study together with you. But you need to reserve a

room in iHouse as early as possible so you will still have an available room. For your second summer when you already know some people you can take a flat together with a friend as an alternative to iHouse. An area in Berkeley which I can highly recommend you is called „Elmwood" because it is clean, safe and has a lot of different restaurants in the area. Furthermore, I don't recommend to live near the Downtown Berkeley Bart Station because there re a lot of homeless people living on the streets around there.

5. Arrival

I recommend to visit the Berkeley campus upon arrival and also visit the ADP office in Boalt Hall (the law school building). In the ADP office they will hand you over a paper with all the important information and timetable for the first week and will welcome you to Berkeley. The people who work at the ADP office are very friendly so they will give you a good start into your summer in Berkeley.

6. Telephone

(e.g. costs, carriers)

In the state of California the best telephone provider/carrier with the best network is AT&T. Their costs re quite cheap compared to Switzerland. Don't use the network provider/carrier T-Mobile because it is more expensive and has a worse network in many places.

7. Bank account

I used my Swiss bank account (St.Galler Nationalbank) while I was in Berkeley and had never a problem with it. However, a lot of my fellow students opened a new bank account in the Bank of America during their time here which is also convenient. During my time in Berkeley I used a debit and a credit card. The debit card I used to withdraw cash from the ATM's and the credit card I used to pay directly smaller amounts.

8. Transport

(e.g. from Switzerland, to the University)

There is a direct flight from Switzerland to San Fransisco with Swiss. During my time here in Berkeley I mostly used BART (the underground station which leads to San Fransisco in 20 minutes) or UBER. UBER is very cheap, convenient and fast here around San Fransisco.

9. General information about the Partner Faculty and student life

Berkeley Law has a very good reputation around the world. The student life is very good since Berkeley is a student city with a huge campus and many bars, cinemas and restaurants in the area. During your summer in Berkeley most regular students are in their summer holidays. There will just be PhD-students, LL.M.-students and summer scholars in the campus. This is a huge advantage since you rarely have to queue in a line for a restaurant or a bar.

10. Teaching and studying at the Partner Faculty

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

There are open- and closed-book exams and in-class as well as take-home exams in Berkeley Law depending on your professor. You can choose to take 3-4 quarters a summer/semester. One quarter represents one subject which you can choose freely. After every quarter (3 weeks) you will have an exam which mostly takes around 3 hours (sometimes also 2 hours). The take-home exams on the other hand mostly take around 8 hours. All the exams in Berkeley Law are written in your computer electronically.

The professors are all very motivated and often leading experts in their field of expertise especially concerning intellectual property law since Berkeley is close to the Silicon Valley. The Professors are often borrowed Professors from other high-ranked Universities like Stanford or the University of California, Los Angeles. Berkeley makes a big effort to provide their LL.M. students with the best professors possible for each single subject.

11. City

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

Berkeley is located near San Francisco and has therefore a lot to offer. In the Berkeley Hills you have a beautiful 360 degree view of the Bay area including the skyline of San Francisco. In San Francisco itself there are many world famous places to visit like the Fishermen's Wharf, Alcatraz or the Golden Gate Bridge. Furthermore, you can visit the Silicon Valley, Stanford, LA (6 hours away) and many other places which are in the area. There are also many National Parks around Berkeley which you can visit in a weekend-trip to go hiking and camping with your fellow students (f.e. Yosemite National Park, Sequoia National Park, etc).