

U.S. News and World Report, the most visible ranker of graduate programs, publishes its ranking of environmental law programs at U.S. law schools each spring, and [the new list is out](#). Berkeley Law is ranked #3, and UCLA Law is ranked #10 – the first time we have cracked the Top 10. Along with Georgetown, we are the only three Top-20 law schools among the Top 10 ranked environmental law programs this year.

Berkeley's [environmental law program](#) is perennially highly-ranked, and [Dan](#), [Holly](#), and their colleagues there are well-deserving. And I'm glad that our program is getting the attention it deserves. Our environmental law team now includes seven full-time faculty members plus 2 1/2 faculty fellows: four tenured faculty who teach and write in the field ([Ann Carlson](#), [Tim Malloy](#), [Ted Parson](#), and [Jonathan Zasloff](#)); one pre-tenure faculty member ([Alex Wang](#)); [Cara Horowitz](#) and [me](#), who direct the program, teach doctrinal courses and our Environmental Law Clinic, and conduct our own research; 2 full-time fellows ([Megan Herzog](#), [Jesse Lueders](#)); and half of Climate Policy Associate [Ethan Elkind](#), who we share with [Berkeley](#). Our research output – both by individual faculty members, and through collaborative work fostered by our [Emmett Center on Climate Change and the Environment](#) – is significant, and is influencing policy in important ways. Our students are phenomenal, and have been going on to do important work at excellent placements after graduation (including, for example, three alumni in the past five years who have received coveted post-graduate fellowships in the counsel's office of EPA Region 9). And it's fun to work here!

I don't care much for law school rankings, but for better or worse, student applicants to law school – and many others – pay attention to them. The methodology for U.S. News specialty rankings is simply to ask a sampling of law faculty familiar with a particular specialty to list all the law schools that are preeminent in their specialty, and then to tally up the schools on the lists and rank them according to the number of people's lists on which each school appears. It's not a scientific or comprehensive account of which law schools really have the "best" environmental law programs. That said, the very top schools on the list, understandably, are typically and deservedly those that have developed phenomenal environmental law programs as part of a deep and abiding commitment to environmental law at the school's core, such as Lewis and Clark and Vermont Law School (tied for #1), and Pace (#4). And the rankings do provide some sense of the opinion of our colleagues nationally about our program's worth, relative to comparable programs. We're grateful for the recognition of our esteemed colleagues, and look forward to continuing to demonstrate why we belong on any list of the top schools in the field.

[Note: this post originally stated incorrectly that Vermont Law School is ranked #2 in the US News rankings this year, rather than tied for #1.]