

Master of Legal Studies Student Handbook

1. Master of Legal Studies Student Handbook Introduction

The University of Utah S.J. Quinney College of Law is fully committed to policies of equal opportunity, affirmative action, and respect for members of all minority communities. Accordingly, the law school prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, national origin, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, age, status as a veteran or disabled veteran of the American Armed Forces, or person with a disability. Evidence of practices not consistent with these policies should be reported to the Office of Equal Opportunity and Employee Relations, (801) 581-8365 (Voice or TDD).

The College of Law seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. Reasonable prior notice is needed to arrange accommodations. Although identifying yourself as a person with a disability is voluntary, the S.J. Quinney College of Law can accommodate only known disabilities. Students with documented disabilities will be accommodated as necessary if they have first been certified by the Center for Disabled Student Services, 160 Union Building, (801) 581-5020. For more information, or to discuss accommodations, contact the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

The College of Law strongly endorses the Student Right-to-Know and Campus Security Act. State laws on the University of Utah campus will be enforced at all times and adjudicated in a court of law. Infractions of the University Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities will be referred to the Student Behavior Committee for sanctions and probation. Information regarding University resources and services available to graduate students can be found in the University of Utah General Catalog (www.gradschool.utah.edu/graduate-students/).

The information in this publication is current as of press time but is subject to change without notice. This publication is not a contract between the College of Law and any person or entity. If you have questions regarding anything in the Handbook or where to go for additional information, please contact the Associate Dean for Student Affairs.

The following policies in the College of Law J.D. Student Handbook apply to the Master of Legal Studies (MLS) program:

- Academic Policies and Procedures (Sections 2(b), 2(c), 3, 4, 8, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15)
- Code of Student Rights and Responsibilities
- College of Law Internet Usage Policy
- Double-Dipping
- Exam Policies (Sections 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15)
- Honor Code Statement
- Mission Statement
- Posting of Signs/Notices
- Security Access
- Student Complaint Procedures
- Student Records Policies and Procedures (FERPA)

The following policies in the College of Law J.D. Student Handbook do not apply to the MLS program:

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Academic Policies and Procedures (Sections 1, 2 (a), 5, 6, 7, 9)
College Council
Curricular Offerings
Exam Policies (Sections 2, 8)
Grading System
Graduation Requirements
J.D./M.B.A.
J.D./M.C.M.P.
J.D./M.P.A.
J.D./M.P.P.
J.D./M.R.E.D.
J.D./M.S.W.
L.L.M. Program
Oath and Certification
Student Bar Association
Unauthorized Practice of Law

The following policies have been drafted specifically for and apply only to students in the MLS program:

2. Requirements

The basic requirements for graduation are (1) a minimum GPA of 3.0 and (2) a minimum of 30 semester hours of approved credit, including successful completion of the following required MLS courses:

- Conflict and Legal Crisis Management
- The Regulatory System
- Procuring and Managing Legal Services
- Understanding Cases, Statutes, and Legislation

3. Enrollment

In order to be considered full-time graduate students, MLS students must be enrolled for a minimum of nine credit hours during the fall and spring semesters and six credit hours in the summer semester. Enrollment for less than the full-time minimum requires approval of the MLS Program Director, who will consult with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs before giving such an authorization. No candidate for an MLS degree is permitted to register for more than 16 credit hours in any single semester without approval from the MLS Program Director, who will consult with the Associate Dean for Student Affairs and the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs before giving such approval.

4. Registration

Registration for each MLS student is administered by the College of Law Registrar. MLS students are automatically enrolled in all standard classes in the MLS curriculum and do not need to register for each class separately. MLS students wishing to substitute an elective course must

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complete an elective course substitution form and submit the form to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for approval.

5. Attendance

The College of Law expects regular attendance at MLS class meetings.

Instructors must include in their syllabi a written statement indicating how both absences and punctuality will be treated for grading purposes in the class. Such statements shall address (1) the level of attendance and punctuality required for the class and (2) whether academic sanctions, including grade reductions or involuntary withdrawal from the class, may be imposed in accordance with the instructor's attendance and punctuality expectations for the class. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will ensure that draft language addressing these issues is made available to all instructors for inclusion in syllabi. Each instructor will implement a system for monitoring both class attendance and punctuality and keep records of such.

Students must notify their instructor(s) as far in advance as possible of any anticipated absences. In an emergency, when prior notice is not possible, the student shall inform their instructor(s) of the reason for their absence as soon as possible.

Students shall be permitted to make up both assignments and examinations when they are absent from class to participate in officially sanctioned university activities and/or business, for requested religious accommodation, or with the instructor's prior approval. Instructors should make reasonable accommodation for absences or lateness necessitated by illness or unavoidable conflicting curricular activities.

6. Grading

All MLS courses shall be graded for a letter-grade. Courses in which an MLS student earns a grade below a C- will not be counted toward the MLS degree. An MLS student may retake any class in which his or her grade was a C- or less. The second grade will replace the first for purposes of GPA, but both grades will be reported on the student's record. No course may be retaken more than once.

The MLS program does not offer students the option to enroll in a course in which they will be graded for credit/no-credit (CR/NC).

A student may appeal a grade received in any course in accordance with the grade appeal procedures found in the Student Code, Policy 6-400, Section IV-Student Academic Performance.

7. Academic Probation, Dismissal, and Readmission

MLS students are required to maintain a 3.0 or higher GPA to be considered in good standing with the program. If a student's GPA falls below this minimum requirement at any time, the student will be on academic probation and will be required to meet with the MLS Program Director and the Associate Dean for Student Affairs for academic advising. The MLS Program Director and Associate Dean for Student Affairs have authority to impose conditions and requirements on the student to ensure compliance with this GPA minimum. Failure to satisfy or

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comply with the conditions or requirements imposed by the MLS Program Director and Associate Dean for Student Affairs may result in dismissal from the program.

A dismissed student wishing to petition for readmission must submit a request in writing to the MLS Program Director. The decision to readmit will be made by a College of Law readmission committee, which may require the petitioning student to interview with the readmission committee.

A student will be readmitted upon establishing that:

- their past failure was due to circumstances beyond the student's control or, in instances where a student has withdrawn or failed to complete MLS requirements within four years, legitimate reasons for the student's withdrawal or failure to timely complete the requirements, and
- there is a substantial likelihood of success if the student is readmitted.

In order to achieve continuity in the decision process, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs will be a permanent member of the readmission committee. The Associate Dean for Student Affairs is also responsible for keeping a file of committee decisions with a statement of considerations and reasons for each decision, including the committee's vote, and for overseeing the implementation of conditions that the committee imposed as a requirement for readmission. In every case where the committee readmits a student, the Associate Dean for Student Affairs will ensure that a statement explaining the considerations that led to the decision, including any conditions imposed by the committee on the student's readmission, is placed and kept in the student's file.

The decision of the committee is final and res judicata. No appeal to faculty, the Dean, or College Council is allowed, nor are subsequent petitions for readmission permitted.

8. Directed Research

MLS students may choose to register for up to three (3) elective credit hours of Directed Research in any given semester. Directed Research projects must be supervised by a full-time member of the College of Law faculty, or by a full-time faculty member in cooperation with (1) a non-full-time College of Law faculty member, (2) a faculty member from another college at the University of Utah, or (3) a faculty member at another university. MLS students wishing to enroll for Directed Research credit must receive approval from the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, in consultation with the MLS Program Director.

9. Transfer Credit

Subject to the written approval of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, graduate-level credit may be transferred from other regionally-accredited institutions or degree programs and counted toward a student's MLS degree. Such credits transferred may be used for only one degree. Up to six semester hours of transfer credit may be applied toward fulfillment of the MLS degree if the credits are of a letter grade B or higher, were taken within four years of the semester of admission to the MLS program, and are from a substantively relevant degree program.

10. Unauthorized Practice of Law

The MLS degree does not qualify graduates to sit for the bar exam or to practice law. Credits taken toward the MLS degree cannot be transferred to a JD degree. The College of Law has the right to seek revocation of a degree for any graduate of the MLS program found by any state Bar to have engaged in the unauthorized practice of law.