

Master of Laws (LL.M.)

Academic Requirements

The Academic Policies outlined herein apply to students in the Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree programs only. Students are responsible for reading and following all applicable Seattle University School of Law policies, rules, academic requirements, and regulations including the School of Law's Academic Standards Code and the remaining provisions of the School of Law's Student Handbook. To the extent these policies conflict with other provisions of the School of Law's Academic Standards Code or the School of Law's Student Handbook, these policies control. Where these policies are silent, the policies of the School of Law's Academic Standards Code and the School of Law's Student Handbook apply.

Students are responsible for the satisfactory completion of their program of study. To this end, students must work through the Associate Director of Graduate and International Programs (hereafter "Director") to document in writing information and understandings pertaining to academic matters and any waivers or exceptions.

The enrollment and graduation of each student, the awarding of academic credits, and the granting of any award or degree are strictly subject to the exclusive authority of the School of Law. The School of Law reserves the right to cancel any class that does not meet the required minimum enrollment as determined by the School of Law.

Graduation Requirements

LL.M. students who hold a JD degree from a law school accredited by the Section of Legal Education of the American Bar Association or a degree in law from a non-U.S. law school that would qualify a student to practice law in that jurisdiction must successfully complete a minimum of 24 credit hours.

Required Courses

Students in the LL.M. in American Legal Studies degree program must complete two designated core program courses. The remaining credits will be selected from a list of approved electives as well as specific proscribed courses required for the student to be eligible to sit for the bar exam of their choosing (if they do choose to sit for a bar exam). The remaining proscribed courses and approved electives are dependent on the bar exam that the student wishes to take. Students in the LL.M. in the American Legal Studies program will be required to complete a minimum of 24 credit hours.

Students in the LL.M. in Technology, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship degree program must complete 24 credits to receive their degree. They must complete 16 credits of technology-related law courses. The remaining 8-credits are electives and may be chosen from among any courses in the law school curriculum. If students wants to qualify to sit for the bar of WA or certain other states, then they may be required to take additional courses (which may exceed 24 credits).

The total number of required credits will vary, depending on the program and the bar exam that the student wishes to apply to take. For example: students taking the LL.M. in Technology, Innovation, and Entrepreneurship degree program who wish to sit for the Washington State Bar Exam must take additional credit hours beyond 24 credits to satisfy the eligibility requirements to sit for the Washington State Bar Exam. Additionally, students wishing to take an externship may need to take those externship credits *in addition* to the total credits required to complete the LL.M. degree program and bar exam requirements.

Students will create a degree plan with their academic advisor. While the academic advisor can offer suggestions, students are solely and ultimately responsible for meeting all of the course eligibility requirements of the particular bar exam for which they intend to sit.

Information for Foreign-Trained Applicants

State Bar Eligibility

Students who wish to take the bar exam in the United States are advised to carefully review the eligibility requirements of the particular jurisdiction in which the student wishes to practice. Students are solely responsible for determining the requirements of any state bar to which they intend to apply for admission and are responsible for arranging their law school curriculum to fulfill the respective state bar's educational requirements. Students are strongly advised to meet with their academic advisor to design a course of study that meets the requirements of the jurisdiction in which the student wishes to practice. These bar eligibility requirements are independent of any requirements that must be satisfied in order to earn the LL.M. degree.

In Washington State, eligibility for foreign-trained applicants who wish to sit for the bar examination is governed by the Washington State Bar Association's Admission to Practice Rule (APR) 3. To comply with this rule, students may need to complete additional coursework beyond the credits needed to earn the LL.M. degree. Students are advised to consult with their academic advisor.

Exchange Students

Exchange students are non-degree seeking students from partner universities abroad who attend the School of Law for limited duration and purpose. Exchange students may choose from a wide variety of course offerings and participate in student events and activities (with certain restrictions to activities involving commitments with durations greater than one semester) available to traditional students. Exchange students should confirm with their home institution that said institution will accept course credit transferred from Seattle University School of Law. Exchange students have the option to apply to the School of Law as matriculating, degree-seeking LL.M. students after completing their exchange semester, but admission into the LL.M. program is not guaranteed.

Enrollment Status

LL.M. Degree

Full-time Status

Fall & Spring semesters:	8-12 course credit hours
Summer (optional):	4 or more course credit hours

Half-time Status

(defined for financial aid purposes only)

Fall & Spring semesters:	4-7 course credit hours
Summer (optional):	2-3 course credit hours

Less than Half-time Status

(defined for financial aid purposes only)

Fall & Spring semesters:	fewer than 4 course credit hours
Summer (optional):	fewer than 2 course credit hours

Underloads and Overloads

Students seeking permission to take an overload should submit a written request to both the Director and Academic Advisor stating the reason for requesting the overload and a plan for balancing outside demands with additional course work. Absent extraordinary circumstances, an overload request will be approved if both the Director and Academic Advisor conclude that the student will be able to handle the extra workload.

Students seeking permission to take an underload must submit a written request to the Academic Advisor and the Director stating the reason for requesting an underload. Underloads will be permitted only where a compelling reason exists for taking a light load, a reasonable plan is made to ensure satisfactory progress toward achieving the degree, and the student's academic record and curriculum plan indicate that the light load is not taken merely to isolate difficult course work. Students requesting an underload must obtain the written permission of the Director. International students on an F-1 or J-1 visa seeking permission to take an underload are required to obtain the aforementioned approvals *as well as* the approval of their international student advisor, a designated school official (DSO) in the International Student Center who can advise international students regarding F-1 and J-1 student immigration regulations.

Withdrawal from Individual Courses

No course withdrawal will be allowed unless the minimum course load requirements are maintained. Except as provided below, LL.M. students may withdraw from any course during the first five weeks of a 14-week semester (or an equivalent time during a shorter term) by submission of a course withdrawal form to the Registrar. Students are encouraged to advise the Director and faculty members of their withdrawal as a courtesy. International students on an F-1 or J-1 visa must first obtain the approval of their international student advisor before withdrawing from a course *if* withdrawing from that course would drop them below a full-course of study as defined by USCIS.

After the first five weeks have elapsed, written approval of the instructor, the Academic Advisor, and the Director must be obtained to withdraw from a course.

Students who withdraw during the first week of class in the 100% refund period will receive a drop-without-record (course does not appear on the transcript). Students who withdraw after the first week but before the end of the fifth week will have a "W" recorded on the transcript. A student who withdraws after the first five weeks may receive either a "W" (withdrawn) or a "WF" (withdrawn failing) on the transcript.

Exception to the above: in courses involving a commitment to parties outside the law school, or courses where a student's withdrawal may have an adverse effect upon the education of other students, an earlier withdrawal deadline may be set. Students will be notified of this deadline before the end of the first week of classes. Absent extraordinary circumstances, students requesting permission to withdraw from such a course after the first week of class must have the permission of the instructor and the Director and may be awarded a grade of "WF" for the course. (See also section on tuition refunds.)

Adding a Class after Drop/Add Period

Students may add an open course during the first week of class. After the first week of class, students may add an open class only with the permission of the faculty member. Because of attendance requirements, students will not be permitted to add a class after the third week of class.

Grades

Grading Scale

Grade	Notation	Description	Letter Grade Equivalent
High Honors	HH	Performance in the course demonstrates superior mastery of the subject.	A- or Higher
Honors	H	Performance in the course demonstrates mastery of the subject.	B to B+
Pass	P	Successful performance in the course.	D- to B-
Fail	F	No credit is given for the course.	F
Withdraw	W	No credit is given for the course.	N/A
Withdraw Fail	WF	No credit is given for the course.	N/A

Grading Curve

Students in an LL.M. program are not subject to the mandatory or presumptive grading curves that apply to JD students, nor are their scores included in the calculation of the curve as it applies to JD students.

Class Rank

LL.M. students are not ranked.

Academic Warning and Dismissal

General Provision

Grades of “F” and “WF” are considered failing grades. Grades of “HH, H, and P” are passing grades. Only failed courses may be retaken for credit. Required courses that are failed must be retaken until a passing grade is achieved. Both the original grade and the grade from the retaken course that the student previously failed will appear on the transcript. LL.M. and exchange students on the HH/H/P/F grading system will not accrue a GPA. No academic credit toward graduation is granted for a failing grade.

Exchange Students

Exchange students will be graded according to the HH/H/P/F grading system unless they submit a request to the Director within the first 3 weeks of the start of courses to remain on the same grading system as the JD students.

Academic Warning

A student who fails one or more courses during their first semester will be placed on academic warning. Once a student has been placed on academic warning after failing one or more courses, the student will remain on academic warning until they successfully complete the program or are otherwise academically dismissed under the process outlined below.

Dismissal

Once a student has been placed on academic warning, the student will be academically dismissed if they fail any additional course(s) in a future semester, whether or not the failed course(s) occurs in consecutive semesters.

For example, a student who fails one course during their first semester will be placed on academic warning; if the student fails any course during any future semester, they will be academically dismissed. Similarly, a student who fails more than one course during their first semester will be placed on academic warning; if the student fails any course during any future semester, they will be academically dismissed.

Additionally, a student who has been placed on academic warning and fails any course(s) during their final semester will be academically dismissed and their degree will not be conferred, regardless of their participation in commencement ceremonies, unless the student is readmitted under the process outlined below. If the student is readmitted, the student will be permitted to retake failed course(s) for one semester only, to complete the requirements for awarding the LL.M. degree.

Readmission after Dismissal

An academically dismissed student may petition the Dean for readmission. The petition for readmission to the Dean must be submitted within two weeks of the date that the student receives official notification of the dismissal. In deciding the merits of the student's petition, the Dean shall consider whether readmission is in the best interest of the student and the Law School. The Dean may consider criteria including, but not limited to, the following: 1) The extent to which any factor that compromised the student's academic performance will no longer adversely affect the student's performance; 2) The evaluation of the student's potential for competent academic performance by faculty who have a basis for evaluating that potential; and 3) The recommendation of the Associate Dean of International Programs and Graduate Studies.

The Dean's decision on a student's petition for readmission is final.

Good Standing

All enrolled students, including students on academic warning, are considered to be in good standing. The term "not in good standing" shall be used only to identify students who have been academically dismissed.

Time Allowed for Completing Degree

Pace

LL.M. students accepted into the full-time program are expected to finish the program within one calendar year. LL.M. students accepted into the part-time program are expected to complete the degree within two calendar years. An LL.M. student, full-time or part-time, must complete the degree requirements within four years (48 months) of matriculation, including periods of non-enrollment such as leaves of absence.

Progress

LL.M. students must successfully complete a minimum of 10 credits per academic year (a minimum of 5 credits each for fall and spring term). Satisfactory progress is determined at the end of each semester. Summer term is optional.

Leave of Absence

A leave of absence from academic studies for an LL.M. student may be granted by the Director for good reason at any time during an academic term. In making this determination, the Director shall consider whether unanticipated circumstances exist compelling the conclusion that it is in the best interests of the student and the Law School that the leave be granted. International students on an F-1 or J-1 visa seeking permission to take a leave of absence are required to obtain the aforementioned approvals *as well as* the approval of their international student advisor before taking a leave of absence.

Withdrawal from School

A student who decides to terminate their graduate law studies may withdraw from the Law School at any time. Prior to withdrawing, the student must consult with the Director. A student who has not graduated, taken a leave of absence, or given notice of withdrawal, and who is not currently registered, may be administratively withdrawn from the Law School. A student who withdraws or is given an administrative withdrawal is not guaranteed readmission to the Law School. A withdrawn student may petition for readmission. In determining whether the petition should be granted, the Associate Dean of Graduate and International Programs shall consider the following: 1) why the withdrawal was taken rather than a leave of absence; 2) the length of time away from legal studies; 3) work experience during the withdrawal period; 4) the student's academic record, and 5) enrollment space available given new student applications. Students who do not remain continuously enrolled and who do not apply for a leave of absence will be administratively withdrawn.

Change of Program

A student wishing to change degree programs into another LL.M. specialization, the MLS program, or the SJD program must submit a written petition to the Director to initiate this process. A student may only transfer from the program to which they have been admitted into another program with the approval of the Director and by providing a letter of acceptance into their desired program. International students on an F-1 or J-1 visa are required to notify their International Student Advisor of their intention to change degree programs.

Transfer Credit

Credit from Other Schools

At the discretion of the Director, a candidate for the LL.M. degree may be allowed to transfer credit for courses taken at another institution if: (1) the courses were taken at a law school accredited by the Section of Legal Education of the American Bar Association or an equivalent non-U.S. school; (2) the courses were completed with a grade of "C" or better; and (3) the candidate received no credit for these courses toward any other degree earned.

Residency Requirement

Students in the LL.M. program will not be able to transfer more than 8 credits from law schools accredited by the Section of Legal Education of the American Bar Association toward their LL.M. degree. Students should consult with the Director and the Registrar to determine whether their credits are transferable.

JD Credit for LL.M. Coursework

The American Bar Association prohibits law schools from granting credit toward a JD degree for any coursework in an LL.M. program prior to enrollment in a JD program. Students in the LL.M. program interested in earning a JD degree must apply through the regular admissions process for Seattle University School of Law's JD, Global Accelerated JD, or Flex JD program.

Special Course Requirements

Clinical Courses

LL.M. students may register for clinical courses with the approval of the Clinic Director. A student may earn no more than six (6) clinical credits toward the credits required for graduation. Depending on the program, credits taken toward clinical courses may need to be taken in addition to the required minimum of 24 credits for the LL.M. degree. Students should consult with their academic advisor when pursuing a clinic course.

Externships

LL.M. students may register for externships with the approval of the Externship Director. LL.M. students are eligible for part-time externships only and are not eligible for full-time externships. A student may earn no more than six (6) externship credits toward the credits required for graduation. Students who are doing externships should also enroll in an externship seminar class. Credits taken toward externships may need to be taken in addition to the required minimum of 24 credits for the LL.M. degree. Students should consult with their academic advisor when pursuing an externship.

Independent Study

LL.M. students who wish to pursue a special research and writing project under the supervision of a faculty member may earn up to two (2) credit hours for independent study. Students undertaking independent study meet periodically with the faculty member supervising the project for discussion, review, and evaluation of the research project. The proposed study should require a substantial investment of time and effort and should promise a significant work product that makes an original contribution to the understanding of law or that reflects pursuit of a specialized interest not covered in standard offerings in the curriculum. The finished research paper should be comparable in scope and quality to a student note or comment in a law review or social science journal. A student may earn no more than two (2) independent study credits toward the credits required for graduation without the written permission of the Director.

Co-Curricular Activities

LL.M. students who wish to pursue co-curricular activities such as Moot Court, Alternative Dispute Resolution Board, or journals may do so upon mutual agreement with the organization.

Credit Limit

A student may earn no more than six (6) combined clinic, externship, independent study, or co-curricular credits toward the credits required for graduation without the written permission of the Director.

Information on Student Services and Other Campus Resources

See the Seattle University School of Law [2023-2024 Student Handbook](#) for information on School of Law and University student services and campus resources.