

MASTER OF LAWS (LLM) DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

Master's degree requirements

LLM degree requirements comply with School of Law regulations and are subject to these regulations due to the LLM program's integration into the JD professional program model. In addition, School of Law regulations govern all aspects not specifically mentioned in the LLM requirements. In case of conflict between the LLM degree requirements and the School of Law regulations, the law school regulations prevail.

1) Admissions requirements:

Consideration for program admission requires:

International applicants must submit satisfactory evidence of completion of a bachelor's or master's degree equivalent, involving legal training at an accredited educational institution, or equivalent legal credentials. Applicants from the United States must have completed a bachelor's degree plus a JD, LLB, or equivalent degree from an accredited United States law school.

Applicants must also submit:

- Two letters of recommendation.
- Statement of purpose.
- Official transcripts from all universities attended.
- A minimum of GPA of 3.0 (or foreign equivalent) in undergraduate work or extensive legal experience. Satisfaction of the English language requirement by submitting a TOEFL or IELTS score that meets the minimum required by the law school, or by obtaining a waiver through at least one year of prior legal studies in an English-speaking environment. High quality LLM applicants who must upgrade their English skills to meet these requirements will be considered for the Extended LLM program.
- LSAC online application (through ACES) with fee by the stated admission deadline.

The LLM Admissions Committee makes decisions on a case-by-case basis, based on a holistic review of each candidate's application. Meeting some or all of these criteria does not guarantee admission, but merely eligibility.

a) **Prerequisites:** N/A

b) **Deficiencies:** N/A

2) LLM Degree plan II:

This plan requires a minimum of 20 units (one year), 30 units (one and a half years) or 40 units (two years) of law school courses. LLM students are required to take Introduction to Legal Research (one unit) and US Legal System Seminar (two units). The remainder of their coursework consists of elective law school courses and, if desired, a clinical and/or internship.

In addition, all students must fulfill a capstone project (legal writing requirement, equivalent to the JD legal writing requirement), which is a 20-page, individually authored and analytical legal research project of rigorous intellectual effort.

3) Course Requirements – Core and Electives

A) General requirements:

To earn an LLM degree, a graduate law student must:

- A. Pass all required courses;
- B. Earn a minimum of twenty semester credits;
- C. Complete a minimum of two semesters in residence;
- D. If a graduate of a United States law school, write a graded thesis having a semester credit value of between four to eight units;
- E. If a graduate of a foreign law school, write an analytically rigorous legal research paper, either as part of a seminar or for an independent study project worth at least two semester units of credit, which is completed within the two semesters of the graduate program and is equivalent in quality and substance to the writing project required of candidates for the JD degree under law school regulations;
- F. Have a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.0 at the end of the program. The grade point average shall be determined based on letter grades.

To complete the 2-semester residency requirement, students must enroll in a minimum of 10 units each semester for a minimum of 2 semesters.

B) Core courses and capstone requirement:

For graduates of United States law schools, the graduate law program consists of elective courses and a thesis together comprising twenty semester units of credit.

For graduates of foreign law schools, the LLM program requires the core courses indicated below, or their equivalents as determined by the Graduate Advisor, and a capstone project.

The core courses are:

- 1) US Legal System Seminar (2 units) (Law 200A)
- 2) Introduction to Legal Research (1 unit) (Law 207)

The capstone writing project is a 20-page individually authored and analytical legal research project of rigorous intellectual effort. This requirement can be satisfied through the US Legal Research and Writing Seminar (Law 208 A, 2 units) or another law school class (2 units or more) satisfying the JD advanced writing requirement.

The Graduate Advisor may substitute for core courses, except the capstone writing project, other courses equivalent to the core course. In such cases, the total number of units for the degree will remain the same. The Graduate Advisor determines equivalent courses.

C) Elective courses:

LLM students take the remainder of their LLM course units from the law school curriculum. They must fulfill any prerequisites that are required for an individual course.

With the consent of the Graduate Advisor and on a showing that the course complements the course of study or research, an LLM student may enroll in one course (up to three units) offered by University departments outside the law school.

School of Law elective courses are extensive. Please see the website for elective courses: UC Davis School of Law/Students/Registrar/curriculum

LLM students may not receive credit toward their degree for courses taken at another law school.

D) Research:

N/A

E) English language requirement

Foreign language applicants must meet the following language requirements:

A TOEFL score of 570 (or 230 for the computer-based examination TOEFL-CBT, or 88 for the internet based IBT exam) or a minimum of 6.5 IELTS.

Individuals who have completed one year as full-time students in an English-speaking country may be eligible for a TOEFL exemption. In such case, they should request a waiver.

F) Summary:

LLM students are required to complete a minimum of 20 units for the one-year LLM, 30 units to meet the requirements for the one and a half year LLM program, and a minimum of 40 units to complete the two-year LLM.

All LLM students are required to complete two core courses and a capstone project consisting of a 20-page individually authored and analytical legal research project of rigorous intellectual effort.

Students must enroll in a minimum of two semesters of coursework to fulfill the residency requirement. Students must maintain a GPA of 2.0 in all coursework (law school is graded on a different grading scale in keeping with the ABA requirements).

5) Advising Structure and Mentoring:

The Graduate Advisor approves the student's study plan, advises on the student's research paper planning and approves the student's faculty reviewer for the capstone research paper. The Graduate Advisor is a resource for information on academic requirements, policies and procedures, registration, JD transfer, bar eligibility and other key information for LLM student success. A faculty advisor meets regularly with the student to develop and provide guidance on the capstone project; the faculty also evaluates the final project. The Graduate Program staff assists students with information regarding course availability, registration procedures and general university policies.

The International Law Programs distributes the LLM Handbook in hard copy to all new and returning students in as part of a 3-day group orientation held at the beginning of each semester for incoming students. It also provides the LLM Handbook on a password-protected website for admitted students.

6) Committees:

a. Admissions Committee

Once the Admissions Director receives the completed LLM application, all supporting materials and application fee, the Director submits the completed applicant dossier to the LLM Admissions

Committee. The Admissions Committee consists of the LLM Advisory and Admissions Committee members appointed by the Dean. The function of this committee is to review applications and offer admissions to qualified applicants. Based on a review of the entire application, the Committee accepts or declines an applicant's request for admission. The LLM program accepts applications between September and August the following year for the entering class.

b. Course Guidance and Advising

The Graduate Advisor acts as the student's first source of academic information, works with each student individually to create a personalized study plan and provides ongoing assistance with the details of the graduate program. The Graduate Advisor must evaluate that the student's academic program is acceptable under existing requirements and is making adequate progress. The Graduate Advisor meets with each LLM student at the beginning of the first semester to create a study plan and reviews it each semester after that with each LLM student.

c. Capstone Project

The LLM program awards a degree under Master Plan II requirements. The LLM program culminates in a capstone project consisting of a research paper completed at or near the end of the coursework requirements prepared under the supervision of a faculty member.

7) Advancement to Candidacy:

In accordance with the law school regulations and consistent with American Bar Association requirements, the law school registrar verifies that each student meets the requirements to complete the LLM degree and advances LLM students to candidacy.

8) Capstone Project: Research Paper Requirements

The capstone project is an originally authored, analytically rigorous legal research paper, written either as part of a seminar or for an independent study project worth at least two semester units of credit. LLM students complete the capstone project during the graduate program. The capstone is equivalent in quality and substance to the writing project required of JD degree students.

The capstone paper must be at least 20 typewritten, double-spaced pages, excluding footnotes and citations.

9) Normative Time to the Degree

General principles

The normative time to the LLM degree is 2 semesters for the LLM program, and 3 or 4 semesters for the Extended or Advanced program.

Extended LLM program

The Extended LLM program is designed for high quality LLM applicants who must upgrade their legal English language skills in order to be successful in the LLM program. The program is authorized for four years on an experimental basis effective in 2017-18. The number of semesters of additional study required will be specified as either one semester or two semesters at the time of admission to the Extended LLM program. Each semester of additional study must include a minimum of 10 units. Working with the LLM student, the LLM Director develops an individual plan that receives the approval of both the LLM student and the LLM Director. The requirements for the Extended LLM program shall consist of the required amount of additional study, in addition to the normal requirements for an LLM degree. Students must take a minimum of either 30 units (3 semesters) or 40 units (4 semesters) to complete the Extended LLM program. The LLM Director determines the number of units required for completion of the Extended LLM Program.

Advanced LLM program

The Advanced LLM program is a program for students interested in law study that is more advanced than that offered by the one-year UC Davis LLM program. The law school faculty has authorized the Advanced program for four years on an experimental basis, effective in 2017-18. A re-evaluation will occur at the expiration of the experimental period.

The Advanced LLM program admits up to 10 students per year. Students enrolled in the UC Davis LLM program are eligible to apply for admission.

Students must complete an LLM degree before beginning the Advanced LLM program. Students enrolled in the UC Davis LLM program and accepted into the Advanced LLM program must first complete all requirements of the UC Davis LLM program, before they can begin work in the Advanced LLM program.

10) Sample Timeline and Sequence of Events:

One-year program

| Year One | Fall Semester | Spring Semester |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Core courses and requirements | Law 200 A: US Legal System Seminar (2 units) Law 2017: Legal Research (1 Unit) | Law 208 A: US Legal Research and Writing (2 units) (class meeting the capstone requirement) |

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|----------|---|--|
| Elective | (Between 7 and 14 units of law school classes) Examples: Law 202: Contracts (4 units) Law 206: Criminal Law (3 units) Law 2015: Business Associations (4 units) | (Between 8 and 15 units of law school classes) Examples: Law 227A: Criminal Procedure (3 units) Law 204: Torts (4 units) Law 201: Property (4 units) |
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Two-year program (Extended):

| Year One | Fall Semester | Spring Semester |
|-------------------------------|---|---|
| Core courses and requirements | Law 200 A: US System Legal Seminar (2 units) | --- |
| Elective | (Between 8 and 15 units of law school classes) Examples: Law 202: Contracts (4 units) Law 208 G: US Legal Methods A (3 units) Law 261: Judicial Process (2 units) | (Between 10 and 17 units of law school classes) Examples: Law 204: Torts (4 units) Law 208 H: US Legal Methods B (3 units) Law 270: International business transactions (3 units) |

| Year Two | Fall Semester | Spring Semester |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Core courses and requirements | Law 2017: Legal Research (1 unit) | Law 208 A: US Legal Research and Writing (2 units) (class meeting the capstone requirement) |
| Elective | (Between 9 and 16 units of law school classes) Examples: Law 206: Criminal Law (3 units) | (Between 8 and 15 units of law school classes) Examples: |

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|--|--|---|
| | Law 2015: Business Associations (4 units) Law 248: Public International Law (3 units) | Law 227A: Criminal Procedure (3 units) Law 204: Torts (4 units) Law 239 : Mediation (2 units) |
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Two-year program (Advanced)

| Year One | Fall Semester | Spring Semester |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| Core courses and requirements | Law 200 A: US Legal System Seminar (2 units) Law 217: Legal Research (1 unit) | Law 208 A: US Legal Research and Writing (2 units) (class meeting the capstone requirement) |
| Elective | (Between 7 and 14 units of law school classes) Examples: Law 202: Contracts (4 units) Law 203: Civil Procedure (5 units) Law 215: Business Associations (3 units) | (Between 8 and 15 units of law school classes) Examples: Law 236: Securities regulation (3 units) Law 270: International business transactions (3 units) Law 245: Corporate and white collar crime (3) |

| Year Two | Fall Semester | Spring Semester |
|-------------------------------|--|---|
| Core courses and requirements | --- | --- |
| Elective | (Between 10 and 17 units of law school classes) Examples: Law 211 : Negotiation (2 units) Law 252 : International litigation and arbitration (3 units) Law: 247B Corporate tax (3 units) Law 245A: Corporate responsibility (2 units) | (Between 10 and 17 units of law school classes) Examples: Law 266 : Commercial Law (3 units) Law 215A: Law of Corporate Governance Seminar (2 units) Law 262: Antitrust (3 units) Law 228A: Mergers and Acquisitions (2 units) |

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| | Law 269: Basic Finance for Lawyers (2 units) | Law 284: Law and Economics (2 units) |
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11) Sources of Funding:

The LLM program is a self-supporting program. Its primary audience consists of foreign lawyers, judges, and academics. The expectation is that LLM students will cover the full cost of their LLM education. The LLM program provides prospective students with information about scholarships and grants. LLM permanent residents and US citizens may qualify for federal loans.

12) PELP:

Information about PELP (Planned Educational Leave) can be found at:

<https://law.ucdavis.edu/financial-aid/current/satisfactory-academic-progress.html>

13) Transfer to the JD program:

UC Davis LLM students may be eligible for admission into the JD program as transfer students, upon recommendation by the Associate Dean of International Programs. Law school regulations govern the transfers. The policy on the transfer of UC Davis LLM students is governed by law school regulations.

Last revised: Dec. 18, 2019.