

COLLEGE OF LAW

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The College of Law's history dates to 1891 when the Detroit College of Law was established to serve residents of Detroit. Before the Law College's founding, the only way a Detroit resident could become a member of the bar without leaving the city to study was by "reading" law in local attorneys' offices. The Law College's founders were a group of such "readers"—law clerks and students in southeastern Michigan. As a result, during the first two years of the school's history, its directors were themselves students—a unique situation.

The first class of 69 graduates included a future circuit court judge and a future ambassador. A woman in the first class and an African American in the second exemplified the Law College's commitment to offering all sectors of the population an opportunity for a quality legal education.

In 1995, the Law College affiliated with Michigan State University, thereby providing students with access to a wealth of resources and opportunities while preserving the school's student-centric culture. Over the years, the affiliation relationship grew progressively closer, until MSU and MSU Law leadership committed to full in October 2018. As of August 17, 2020, MSU College of Law was fully integrated into the university, and exists as a constituent college of MSU.

Michigan State University College of Law has preserved the historic DCL values of access and opportunity, work ethic, and immersion in the profession, while embracing the opportunities that come from being part of a Big Ten university.

Mission

The mission of the Michigan State University College of Law is to provide a rigorous educational program, preparing a diverse community of students to become leaders in private legal practice, business and industry, government service, and legal education. The Law College draws upon a century of service, an association with a major research institution, a commitment to broad educational access, scholarly excellence, and service to society.

The Law College teaches core legal skills, supplemented with academic concentrations, specialized programs, and scholarly research. The college stresses ethics, good lawyering, professionalism, and service. Consistent with these values, it instructs students in the arts of client representation and trial advocacy, and the tenets of legal principles, private rights, and public policy.

The Law College strives continuously to strengthen academic quality in all of its programs and activities. The college is committed to offering opportunities for professional growth, innovation, research, and scholarship to its faculty. The faculty embraces its mandate to provide excellence in instruction with significant contributions to legal research, public service, and community outreach. The staff contributes service, support, and creativity.

The Law College aspires to preserve its educational heritage while seeking sound innovation through a flexible and creative program of academic growth, development, and opportunity. The college fosters an environment of trust, collegiality, and inclusion for faculty, students, and staff.

Legal Education

The Michigan State University College of Law legal education program leading to a Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree is designed to offer integrated learning, combining theory with practice. The Law College wants its graduates to be ready to practice law in real-world settings. This goal is accomplished in and out of the classroom. The classroom provides skill-based learning — especially writing and advocacy skills — and legal theory. Out of the classroom, experiential learning opportunities such as internships, externships, and clinical experiences provide opportunities to apply classroom lessons.

A distinction of an Michigan State University Law education is the substantive collaboration with other disciplines and programs at Michigan State University. College areas of focus and certificate programs allow students to build expertise in a specific area of law, and include opportunities to take graduate-level courses throughout MSU. This interdisciplinary approach to legal education results in a greater understanding of how law is practiced in society and how it affects other disciplines. For those who wish to take integrated learning a step further, dual-degree programs allow students to earn both a law degree and another graduate degree in four years. Of particular note is the dual-degree program with the University of Ottawa School of Law, which enables students to earn the U.S. and Canadian J.D. in four years. This program provides a deeper understanding of international law and practice in cross-border situations.

Michigan State University Law offers other degree opportunities: The Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree is designed for students who have earned their J.D., LL.B. or comparable law degree. The Master of Jurisprudence (M.J.) degree is designed for individuals who do not have a law degree, such as doctoral students in other disciplines, policymakers, government officials, business executives, intellectual property agents, journalists, media professionals, scientists and computer programmers. The Master of Jurisprudence (M.J.) degree in Legal Doctrine and Analysis is designed for students who have met the admission criteria for the J.D. degree and have successfully completed the first-year required J.D. curriculum.

Juris Doctor

Admission

Admission to the J.D. program is based on the following:

1. applicant's academic record;
2. applicant's Law School Admission Test (LSAT) score;
3. applicant's professional accomplishments; and
4. recommendations from persons with knowledge of the applicant's capability to participate in a rigorous professional-level academic program.

The admissions process identifies individuals who have the potential to excel in their legal studies and the practice of law. In order to be considered for fall-term admission, an applicant must:

1. possess a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university prior to enrollment;

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2. create an account with the Law School Admission Council (LSAC), register for and complete the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), and sign up for the Credential Assembly Service;
3. provide an official transcript to the LSAC for each undergraduate and graduate institution attended;
4. submit two letters of recommendation or evaluations to the LSAC (up to four letters/evaluations will be accepted);
5. submit an application fee (contact the Michigan State University College of Law Office of Admissions to request a fee waiver if you are unable, for financial reasons, to provide this fee);
6. submit a resume of up to two pages;
7. submit a personal statement of up to three pages;
8. submit a supplemental statement if you respond in the affirmative to any questions in the Character and Fitness section of the application.

An applicant file will not be reviewed until all materials are received by the Michigan State University College of Law Office of Admissions and are reviewed on a “rolling” basis.

Of the 88 credit hours needed to graduate with a Juris Doctor (JD) degree, required courses consist of the following:

	CREDITS
1. All of the following courses:	
LAW 500F Criminal Law	3
LAW 500Q Professional Responsibility	3
LAW 500G Property	4
LAW 500R Torts I	4
LAW 530A Civil Procedure	4
LAW 530B Contracts	4
LAW 530J Advocacy	2
LAW 530K Foundations of Law	0
LAW 530S Constitutional Law and the Regulatory State	4
2. One of the following courses:	
LAW 530D Research, Writing and Analysis	3
LAW 530E Research, Writing and Analysis: Intellectual Property Perspective	3
LAW 530N Research, Writing, and Analysis: Criminal Law Perspective	3
LAW 530Q Research, Writing and Analysis: Social Justice Perspectives	3
3. At least five of the following courses:	
LAW 500M Business Enterprises	3 or 4
LAW 500N Constitutional Law II	4
LAW 500P Evidence	3 or 4
LAW 501A Basic Income Tax A	2
LAW 501B Basic Income Tax B	2
LAW 501K Basic Income Taxation	2 to 4
LAW 501D Trusts and Estates	3 to 4
LAW 501E Secured Transactions	2
LAW 501F Sales and Leases	3
LAW 501J Secured Transactions and Practice	3
LAW 501M Commercial Transactions Survey	3
LAW 525 Torts II	2 or 3
LAW 532 Administrative Law	2 or 3
LAW 550A Topics in Conflict of Laws	3
LAW 593D Remedies	2 to 3
LAW 616B Criminal Procedure: Investigation	3
LAW 616C Criminal Procedure: Adjudication	3

A student who completed the first-year curriculum with a cumulative grade-point average of at least 3.50 may apply to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for a waiver of this requirement. The student must submit the application prior to completing 60 credits. In addition to the required courses, students must complete at least 6 credits in an experiential course and a paper that satisfies an upper-level writing requirement. A minimum 2.0 cumulative grade-point average must be earned to satisfy degree requirements.

Students take elective courses to gain a more generalized legal education, which may be used to fulfill the requirements

for a certificate or concentration program. Complete information about concentrations can be found by visiting www.law.msu.edu. The following concentrations are available:

Indigenous Law

- (1) All of the following courses:

LAW 635A Advanced Topics in Indian Law	2
LAW 635B Federal Law and Indian Tribes	3
- (2) Six credits from the following:

LAW 501D Trusts and Estates	3 or 4
LAW 501E Secured Transactions	2
LAW 532 Administrative Law	3
LAW 541E Family Law I: Marriage and Divorce	3
LAW 550A Topics in Conflict of Laws	3
LAW 579G Federal Jurisdiction	3
LAW 616B Criminal Procedure: Investigation	3
- (3) Complete an Experiential Learning experience 3

Trial Practice

- One of the following courses:
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| LAW 616B Criminal Procedure: Investigation | 3 |
| LAW 616C Criminal Procedure: Adjudication | 3 |
- All of the following courses:
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| LAW 500P Evidence | 3 |
| LAW 623B Trial Practice Institute: Pretrial I | 3 |
| LAW 623C Trial Practice Institute : Pretrial II | 2 |
| LAW 623D Trial Practice Institute : Trial I | 3 |
| LAW 623E Trial Practice Institute : Trial II | 3 |
| LAW 623M Trial Practice Institute: Trial Presentation | 2 |
| LAW 623N Trial Practice Institute: Scientific Evidence and Legal Technology | 3 |

Students in the Trial Practice concentration may not receive credit towards the requirements of the Juris Doctor degree for the following courses: Law 587B, 587C, 590A, 591A, 617A, and 617B. The content of these courses are duplicate of the content of courses required for the Trial Practice concentration.

Full-and Part-time Programs

The American Bar Association (ABA) sets requirements for the study of law at all of the law schools it has accredited. The residency requirement states that students must attend classes a prescribed number of days and weeks. Full-time students at the Michigan State University College of Law complete their J.D. degree in three years. A student may accelerate by completing some course work in the summer. The time limit for the completion of the requirements for the J.D. degree is seven calendar years from the date of enrollment in the first courses included for degree certification. The degree may not be completed in less than two calendar years.

In order to be considered full-time for academic purposes, students must carry the minimum number of credits per semester or summer session as defined below:

Master of Laws (LL.M)	6 credits
Master of Jurisprudence (M.J.)	6 credits
Master of Legal Studies (M.L.S.)	6 credits
Juris Doctor (J.D.)	12 credits

Full-time Program

The Michigan State University College of Law full-time program is designed for students who can devote most of their time to the study of law. By definition, full-time students do not hold employment that requires them to work more than 20 hours a week or have other commitments which preclude them from focusing exclusively on their legal studies. Classes are held at varying times between 8:00 a.m. and 9:45 p.m.,

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Monday through Friday, and a normal course load is 14 to 16 credit hours per semester.

Part-time Program

The Michigan State University College of Law part-time day option offers a flexible alternative to our full-time program. Students who elect this option can customize their schedules to fit their needs. Students who pursue this option either work more than 20 hours per week or have other commitments that are not conducive for full-time study.

Summer Session

Both full- and part-time students may enroll in a seven-week summer session. Most summer program courses require prior legal education. Students who have not completed the first-year curriculum may be limited in their course selection because they may not satisfy course prerequisites.

Master of Laws Programs

The Master of Laws (LL.M.) and Master of Jurisprudence (M.J.) programs are open to both domestic and international students. Participants may enroll on either a full-time or part-time basis.

The LL.M. program provides a rigorous academic program to advance the legal training of those who already hold a J.D., LL.B. or an equivalent law degree. The M.J. program provides an equivalent academic program, without the opportunity for licensure to practice law, for students who do not have a law degree.

The M.J. in Legal Doctrine and Analysis is only offered after a student has successfully completed the first-year required J.D. curriculum.

Admission

Admission to the LL.M. or M.J. program, with the exception of the M.J. in Legal Doctrine and Analysis, is based on the:

1. applicants academic record;
2. applicants professional accomplishments; and
3. recommendations from persons with knowledge of the applicant's capability to participate in a rigorous graduate-level academic program.

Applicants must submit all of the following items:

1. a brief statement of interest in the Michigan State University's College of Law LL.M. or M.J. program. The statement may be one or two pages in length and should be a sample of professional writing sufficient to demonstrate comprehension of writing skills in English.
2. two or more letters of recommendation.
3. transcripts indicating degrees earned. Unofficial transcripts may be sent with your application, however official transcripts must be received prior to enrollment. If the transcripts are not in English, the transcripts must be translated and certified or notarized. Transcript information will be verified for the College of Law by an independent transcript evaluation service.
4. the scores from an English Language Proficiency test, such as the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL), the Pearson Test of English Academic (PTE A), or the International English Language Testing System

(IELTS). Unofficial test results may be sent; however, official scores must be received prior to enrollment.

International applicants must provide evidence of sufficient financial support to fulfill the program, including tuition, books, medical insurance and living expenses during the program, and proof of medical insurance.

LL.M. and M.J. in Global Food Law

Both degree programs are offered entirely online and are designed for working professionals in the food and agriculture industry, law, government, and related areas who wish to enhance their working knowledge or to seek careers in the field of international food law.

Academic Requirements

LL.M. students with a prior J.D. degree must complete 26 credits. International LL.M. students who do not have a prior J.D. degree from a U.S. law school must complete 28 credits. M.J. students must complete 30 credits. All students must complete the program within five academic years with a 2.0 minimum cumulative grade-point average.

CREDITS

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| 1. All of the following courses (11 to 13 credits): | |
| LAW 558B Food and Drug Law | 3 |
| LAW 810D International Food Laws and Regulations | 3 |
| LAW 810K Administrative Law: Focus on Food Safety and Labeling | 3 |
| LAW 811C Fundamentals of Food Science and Safety for Lawyers | 2 |
| International LL.M. students who do not have a prior J.D. degree from a U.S. law school must additionally complete the following course: | |
| LAW 807A Foundations of Law and Legal Research | 2 |
| Students pursuing the M.J. will complete the following course in lieu of LAW 811C: | |
| LAW 807A Foundations of Law and Legal Research | 2 |
| 2. At least 15 credits (LL.M.) or 19 credits (M.J.) from the following courses: | |
| LAW 512B International Business Transactions | 3 |
| LAW 512K International Commercial Arbitration | 3 |
| LAW 545K Halal Food: An Introduction to Islamic Laws and Ethics | 2 |
| LAW 566T Marijuana Law | 1 |
| LAW 624 Directed Study | 3 |
| LAW 810M Regulation of Agricultural Production and Marketing | 3 |
| LAW 810N Survey of Intellectual Property in Agriculture | 3 |
| LAW 810P Biotechnology Law and Food Products | 3 |
| LAW 810S Current Issues in Food Law Summer Seminar | 2 |
| LAW 810T Advertising Law: Food Focus | 3 |
| LAW 810U Regulatory Leadership in Food Law | 3 |
| LAW 810Z Food Law: Preventing Fakes and Counterfeits | 3 |
| LAW 811A Food Law: Africa and the Middle East | 3 |
| LAW 811B Special Topics in Global Food Law | 3 |

Additional courses may be approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate and International Programs and Director of the Global Food Law Program. No more than 9 credits may be taken from LAW 810A, LAW 810B, LAW 810C, LAW 810E, LAW 810F, LAW 810V, LAW 810W, LAW 810X, LAW 810Y unless approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate and International Programs and Director for the Global Food Law Program.

LL.M. and M.J. in Intellectual Property and Communications Law

Both degree programs offer advanced course work in a full range of intellectual property and communications law.

Students are strongly encouraged to design their own courses of study with the assistance of their faculty advisors. The LL.M. and M.J. curriculum includes a wide variety of courses and seminars.

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Academic Requirements

LL.M. students must complete 24 credits within two fall and spring semesters with a 2.0 minimum cumulative grade-point average. M.J. students must complete 30 credits within two fall and spring semesters with a 2.0 minimum cumulative grade-point average. A longer time period may be granted with a waiver.

	CREDITS
1. One of the following courses:	
LAW 530D Research, Writing and Analysis	3
LAW 530E Research, Writing and Analysis: Intellectual Property Perspective	3
2. A minimum of two courses from the following:	
LAW 533B Copyright Law	3
LAW 533K Patent Law	3
LAW 533N Trademark and Unfair Competition	3
3. At least 14 credits of course work in Intellectual Property and Communication from a list of approved courses maintained in the Michigan State University College of Law.	
4. Additional credits from courses listed below to meet the requirement of 24 credits. Courses used above may not be used to fulfill this requirement.	
LAW 504 Antitrust Law	2
LAW 533C Internet Law	3
LAW 533E International Intellectual Property	2
LAW 533F Licensing Intellectual Property	2
LAW 533G Media Law	2
LAW 533J Patent Application Preparation	2
LAW 533R Patent Litigation	2
LAW 535D Intellectual Property Survey	3
LAW 551B Constitutional Law Topics: Free Expression	2
LAW 558S Biotechnology Law Seminar	2
LAW 609 Sports Law	2
LAW 624 Directed Study	1 to 4
LAW 625A Law Externship	3
LAW 630T Great Lakes First Amendment Law Clinic I	4

Additional relevant MSU Law or MSU courses may be used with approval by the student's faculty advisor.

LL.M. in the American Legal System

For many attorneys around the world, the successful practice of law requires an understanding of the American legal system. The LL.M. program in the American Legal System is designed exclusively for foreign-educated lawyers who want to advance their careers with knowledge of the laws and regulations of the United States.

Academic Requirements

All students must complete 24 credits within two academic years with a 2.0 minimum cumulative grade-point average. A longer time period may be granted with a waiver.

	CREDITS
1. One of the following courses:	
LAW 530D Research, Writing and Analysis	3
LAW 530E Research, Writing and Analysis: Intellectual Property Perspective	3
LAW 530N Research, Writing, and Analysis: Criminal Law Perspective	3
LAW 530Q Research, Writing and Analysis: Social Justice Perspectives	3
Other Research, Writing, and Analysis courses may be approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate and International Programs.	
2. Two of the following courses:	
LAW 500F Criminal Law	3
LAW 500G Property	4
LAW 500M Business Enterprises	3 or 4
LAW 500N Constitutional Law II	4
LAW 500R Torts I	4
LAW 530B Contracts	4
LAW 532 Administrative Law	2 or 3
3. Electives: Complete additional electives to achieve 24 credits by designing a curriculum in consultation with the student's academic advisor based upon the	

student's professional needs and interests using the standard set of classes offered to current J.D. students.

M.J. in Legal Doctrine and Analysis

This program is designed to give current J.D. students who do not plan to complete the J.D. program the opportunity to receive the M.J. degree after successfully completing the first-year J.D. curriculum.

Admission

Students must meet the admission criteria for the Juris Doctor (J.D.).

Academic Requirements

	CREDITS
All students must complete the following:	
LAW 500F Criminal Law	3
LAW 500G Property	4
LAW 500R Torts I	4
LAW 530A Civil Procedure	4
LAW 530B Contracts	4
LAW 530J Advocacy	2
LAW 530K Foundations of Law	0
LAW 530S Constitutional Law and the Regulatory State	4
LAW 624 Directed Study	2
One of the following courses:	
LAW 530D Research, Writing and Analysis	3
LAW 530E Research, Writing and Analysis: Intellectual Property Perspective	3
LAW 530N Research, Writing and Analysis: Criminal Law Perspective	3
LAW 530Q Research, Writing and Analysis: Social Justice Perspectives	3
Other courses may be used to satisfy the 30-credit hour requirement, subject to approval by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.	

M.L.S. in Legal Studies

The program is a one-year, 30-credit degree that will provide legal knowledge and training to professionals. The program includes core courses and designed for students to customize their program to best align with their professional goals.

Admission

Students must:

1. have a bachelor's degree from a recognized educational institution;
2. demonstrate an interest in and aptitude for legal study through submission of a required personal statement.

Admission to the program is selective and is not guaranteed. An applicant's overall record will be considered including the student's personal goals for legal study, letters of recommendation, academic transcripts, and professional experience.

Academic Requirements

All students must complete 30 credits within three academic years with a 2.0 minimum cumulative grade-point average.

	CREDITS
1. One of the following courses (3 credits):	
LAW 530D Research, Writing and Analysis	3
LAW 530E Research, Writing and Analysis: Intellectual Property Perspective	3
LAW 530N Research, Writing and Analysis: Criminal Law Perspective	3
LAW 530Q Research, Writing and Analysis: Social Justice Perspectives	3
Other Research, Writing, and Analysis courses may be approved by the Associate Dean for Graduate and International Programs.	
2. Two of the following courses (5 to 8 credits):	
LAW 500F Criminal Law	3
LAW 500G Property	4
LAW 500M Business Enterprises	3 or 4
LAW 500N Constitutional Law II	4
LAW 500R Torts I	4

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LAW 530B Contracts 4
LAW 532 Administrative Law 2 or 3

3. Electives to meet the minimum requirement of 30 credits, planned in consultation with the student's advisor and based on the student's professional needs and interests. Courses are chosen from courses offered to current J.D., L.L.M., and M.J. students.