

MASTER OF LEGAL STUDIES IN LEGAL STUDIES

The Master of Legal Studies (MLG) program is designed for graduate students and professionals who are interested in acquiring legal skills and competencies to enhance their career opportunities but do not intend to practice law.

The MLG degree provides non-lawyers with a solid understanding of relevant legal issues, and will prepare students to interact most effectively with lawyers and the legal system.

Students enrolled in the program pursue a non-thesis Master of Legal Studies degree. Students may be enrolled on either a full-time or part-time basis.

Master of Legal Studies students may complete 30 credit hours in one of the following areas of curricular specialization. MLG students also have the option to complete a 30-credit personalized course of study.

Areas of Curricular Specialization

- Business Law and Compliance*
- Cyber Security Law and Policy*
- Dispute Resolution - Law, Policy, and Problem Solving*
- Education Law and Policy*
- Energy Law - Environmental and Energy Law and Policy*
- Energy Law - Oil and Gas Law and Policy*
- Health Law, Policy and Management*
- Human Resources and Employment Law, Policy and Management*
- Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy*
- International Tax Law and Policy*
- Real Estate and Construction Law, Policy and Management*
- Risk Management and Compliance*
- Transfer Pricing Law and Policy*
- Wealth Management*

* Certificate programs available; please see certificate program requirements for more information.

Specializations

All Master of Legal Studies students are required to take Introduction to the United States Legal System. This course will familiarize students with the structure of the U.S. legal system and fundamentals of legal reasoning and analysis. Additional curriculum requirements vary based on the student's chosen area of curricular specialization.

- MLG students in the Wealth Management; Risk Management and Compliance; Transfer Pricing Law and Policy; and International Tax Law and Policy curricula are also required to take Ethical Decision Making. For the remaining coursework, students select from various course offerings in the student's chosen area of curricular specialization, with credits allowed in courses outside the chosen area of curricular specialization. All courses in these curricula are offered asynchronously or synchronously via distance technology.
- MLG students in the Cyber Security Law and Management; Dispute Resolution - Law, Policy, and Problem Solving;

Education Law and Policy; Energy - Oil and Gas Law and Policy; Energy - Environmental and Energy Law and Policy; Health Law, Policy and Management; Human Resources and Employment Law and Management; Indigenous Peoples Law and Policy; and Real Estate and Construction Law and Policy curricula must take a core set of courses designed to familiarize students with the fundamentals of legal institutions and legal reasoning and analysis, including Contract Law and Strategies, Principles of Regulatory Law, Fundamentals of Business Law, Legal Writing and Analysis, and Dispute Resolution or ADR Doing Deals and Resolving Disputes Through Negotiation, Mediation and Arbitration. For the remaining coursework, students select from various course offerings in the student's chosen area of curricular specialization. All courses in these curricula are offered asynchronously or synchronously via distance technology. Students may also participate in up to three courses that offer in-person instruction at the School of Law in Fort Worth, Texas.

- MLG students in the Business Law and Compliance curriculum must take a core set of courses designed to familiarize students with the fundamentals of legal institutions and legal reasoning and analysis, including Contract Law and Strategies, Principles of Regulatory Law, Fundamentals of Business Law, Legal Writing and Analysis and Dispute Resolution. For the remaining coursework, students select from various course offerings in the Business Law and Compliance curricular specialization. The majority of courses in the Business Law and Compliance curriculum are offered asynchronously or synchronously via distance technology. Students take up to five courses that are offered via in-person instruction at the School of Law's San Antonio, Texas location.
- MLG students completing a personalized course of study must take a core set of courses designed to familiarize students with the fundamentals of legal institutions and legal reasoning and analysis, including Contract Law and Strategies, Principles of Regulatory Law, Fundamentals of Business Law, Legal Writing and Analysis and Dispute Resolution or ADR Doing Deals and Resolving Disputes Through Negotiation, Mediation and Arbitration. For the remaining coursework, students select from various courses offered by the School of Law. Courses are offered asynchronously or synchronously via distance technology and via in-person instruction at the School of Law. While the core set of courses are primarily offered via distance technology, the mode of delivery of the students' remaining coursework will depend on the students' personalized course of study.

This program is approved for delivery via asynchronous or synchronous distance education technology.

For more information, please go to law.tamu.edu (<http://law.tamu.edu/>).

Program Requirements

Program Requirements

- Student's Advisory Committee (p. 2)
- Degree Plan (p. 2)
- Credit Requirements (p. 2)
- Limitations on Credits and Coursework (p. 2)
- Final Examination (p. 3)

Student's Advisory Committee

On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

After receiving admission to graduate studies, students will consult with the graduate program concerning selection of a chair and members (if applicable) for an advisory committee representative of the student's field(s) of study and research.

The Master of [Legal Studies](#) in Legal Studies student's advisory committee consists of the coordinating faculty member of the student's [program](#).

Only members of the Graduate Committee Faculty located on Texas A&M University campuses may serve as chair of a student's advisory committee. Other members of the Graduate Committee Faculty – including those located outside the university or off-campus (if permitted by program, department, and college/school policy) – may serve as a co-chair or member.

The advisory committee as a group – and as individual members – are responsible for advising the student on academic matters. The duties include responsibility for approving the student's proposed degree plan; research proposal (if applicable); thesis, dissertation, or record of study (if applicable); and conducting examinations (if required). The advisory committee members' approval of a degree plan indicates their willingness to accept the responsibility for guiding and directing the entire academic program of the student and for initiating all academic actions concerning the student. Additionally, in the case of academic deficiency, the advisory committee is responsible for initiating recommendations to the Graduate and Professional School.

The chair of the advisory committee, who usually has immediate supervision of the student's degree program, has the responsibility for calling meetings at any time considered desirable.

If the chair of the student's advisory committee is unavailable for an extended period of time in any academic period during which the student is involved in activities relating to an internship, thesis or professional paper – and is registered for courses such as 684, 691, 692, or 693 – the Department Head or intercollegiate faculty Chair may appoint an alternate advisory committee chair during the interim period.

If the chair of a student's advisory committee is on an approved leave of absence – and the student is near completion of the degree and wants the chair to continue to serve in this role – a written request must be submitted to the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School, by the Department Head or intercollegiate faculty Chair, that the faculty member who is on an approved leave of absence be allowed to continue to serve as chair of the advisory committee – without a co-chair – for up to one year. The request must confirm that the faculty member is able to engage in the required duties as chair during the leave of absence. Extensions beyond the one-year period (if necessary) may be granted with additional approval of the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School.

If the chair of a student's advisory committee voluntarily separates from the university, and the student is nearing completion of the degree, the chair may continue to serve in this role – at the student's request – for up to one year. Two options are available:

- The chair may continue, with a co-chair, without additional approval by the Graduate and Professional School. The student must select a current member of the Graduate Committee Faculty – from the student's academic program and located

near the Texas A&M University campus site – to serve as co-chair of the advisory committee.

- The chair may continue, without a co-chair, with approval by the Graduate and Professional School. A written request must be submitted to the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School by the Department Head or intercollegiate faculty Chair to allow the faculty member to continue as chair, without a co-chair, of the advisory committee.

For both options, extensions beyond the one-year period (if necessary) may be granted with approval of the Associate Provost and Dean of the Graduate and Professional School.

Although individual advisory committee members may be replaced by petition for valid reasons, all members of a student committee cannot resign *en masse*.

Degree Plan

On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

Students, in consultation with the advisory committee, will develop a proposed degree plan. The degree plan must be created, submitted, and approved through the online Document Processing Submission System (<http://ogsdps.tamu.edu/>) (DPSS). The degree plan must be submitted prior to the deadline imposed by the student's college or school and approved by the Graduate and Professional School no later than 90 days prior to the date of the final oral examination or thesis defense. Students must select the appropriate program option when submitting a proposed degree plan.

Additional coursework may be added to the approved degree plan by petition through DPSS, if deemed necessary by the advisory committee, to correct deficiencies in the student's academic preparation. No changes can be made to the degree plan once the student's Final Examination Request or Final Examination Exemption Request is approved by the Graduate and Professional School.

Coursework included on the degree plan is subject to the requirements and restrictions detailed in the Credit Requirements and Limitations on Credits and Coursework sections in each degree program page.

Degree program time limits apply to courses listed on a degree plan. Details are available on the Time Limits section in each degree program page.

Credit Requirements

On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

A minimum of 30 semester credit hours of approved coursework is required for the non-thesis Master of Legal Studies degree.

This program does not offer a thesis option.

Ordinarily, students will devote the major portion of their time on work in one or two closely related fields. Other work will be in supporting fields of interest.

Limitations on Credits and Coursework

On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

Credit-hour requirements are subject to the following limitations:

1. To receive a graduate degree from Texas A&M University, students must earn one-third or more of the credits through the

institution's own direct instruction. These limitations also apply to joint degree programs.

2. Transfer credits may be used toward meeting the credit hour requirements under the following limitations:
 - The maximum number of credit hours which may be considered for transfer credit is the greater of 12 credit hours or one-third (1/3) of the total hours of a degree plan.
 - Graduate and/or upper-level undergraduate courses taken in residence at an accredited United States or international institution (recognized by the Office of Admissions), with a final grade of B or greater, may be considered for transfer credit if – at the time the courses were completed – the courses would be accepted for credit toward a similar degree for a student in degree-seeking status at the host institution.
 - An official transcript from the institution at which the transfer coursework was taken must be sent directly to the Office of Admissions. Coursework credit submitted for transfer from any institution must be shown in semester credit hours or equated to semester credit hours.
 - Up to 1 hour of credit may be obtained for each five-day week of coursework for graduate courses of three weeks' duration or less taken at other institutions. Each week of coursework must include at least 15 contact hours.
 - Grades for courses completed at other institutions are not included in computing the GPA.
 - Coursework in which no formal grades were given, or in which grades other than A or B were earned (for example, CR, P, S, U, H, etc.), is not accepted for transfer credit.
 - Courses completed at Texas A&M University and appearing on the degree plan with grades of D, F, or U may not be absolved by transfer work.
 - Except for officially approved cooperative doctoral programs, credit for thesis or dissertation research – or the equivalent – is not transferrable.
 - Courses used toward a degree at another institution may not be applied for transferred graduate credit.
 - Courses used toward a certificate, but not applied to an awarded degree, may be considered for transfer.
 - If the course to be transferred was taken for a certificate or prior to the conferral of a degree at the transfer institution, a letter from the registrar at that institution stating that the course was not applied for credit toward the degree must be submitted to the Graduate and Professional School.
 - A student who has earned 12 credit hours of graduate credit in residence at Texas A&M University may be authorized to transfer courses in excess of the limits upon the advice of the advisory committee and with the approval of the Graduate and Professional School.
3. The maximum number of credit hours taken in post-baccalaureate non-degree (G6) classification at Texas A&M University which may be considered for application to the degree plan is 12.
4. Only grades of A, B, C, and S are acceptable for graduate credit.
5. Graduate courses on a degree plan may not be taken on an S/U basis except for 681 (Seminar), 684 (Professional Internship), 690 (Theory of Research), 691 (Research), 692 (Professional Study), 693 (Professional Study), 695 (Frontiers in Research),

697 (Methods), 791 (Doctoral Capstone), or SOPH 680 (Public Health Capstone).

6. A student pursuing a non-thesis option Master's degree may not enroll in 691 (Research) courses for any reason.
7. A maximum of 12 credit hours may be used, in any combination, of the following:
 - No more than 4 credit hours in a combination of 684, 691 (if permitted), or SOPH 680.
 - No more than 8 credit hours of 685 (Directed Studies).
 - No more than 3 credit hours of 690 (Theory of Research).
 - No more than 3 credit hours of 695 (Frontiers in Research).
8. A maximum of 8 credit hours may be used toward the non-thesis option Master's degree, in any combination, of the following:
 - No more than 2 credit hours of 681 (Seminar).
 - No more than 3 credit hours of 685 (Directed Studies).
9. Certain zero-credit courses may be allowed for Master's degree programs:
 - A zero-credit 684 (Professional Internship) or 685 (Directed Studies) course is only allowed for non-thesis option Master's programs.
 - A zero-credit 681 (Seminar) course may be used for either thesis or non-thesis option Master's programs.
 - Other courses, including 691 (Research) hours, are not eligible for zero credit.
10. No more than 25 percent of the total credit-hours required on the student's degree plan may be in any combination of 684, 685, 690, 691 (if permitted), and 695.
11. A maximum of 9 hours of advanced undergraduate courses (300- or 400-level) may be considered for application to the degree plan.
12. No more than 50 percent of the non-research coursework required for an in-person degree program may be completed through distance education courses.
13. Continuing education or extension courses may not be used for graduate credit.

Some departments may have additional or more restrictive requirements. Exceptions will be permitted only in unusual cases and when petitioned by the student's advisory committee and approved by the Graduate and Professional School.

Final Examination

On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

A final examination is not required for the non-thesis Master of Legal Studies program.

Additional Requirements

- Residence (p. 3)
- Time Limit (p. 4)
- Foreign Languages (p. 4)
- Application for Degree (p. 4)

Residence

On-Campus Degree Program

In partial fulfillment of the residence requirement for the degree of Master of Legal Studies, the student must complete 9 resident credit hours during one regular semester or one 10-week summer semester in resident study at Texas A&M University. Upon recommendation of the student's advisory committee, department head or Chair of the Interdisciplinary Program, if appropriate, and with approval of the Graduate and Professional School, a student may be granted exemption from this requirement. Such a petition, however, must be approved prior to the student's registration for the final 9 credit hours of required coursework.

Students who are employed full-time while completing their degree may fulfill total residence requirements by completion of less-than-full time course loads each semester. In order to be considered for this, the student is required to submit a Petition for Waivers and Exceptions along with verification of his/her employment to the Graduate and Professional School.

See Residence Requirements (<https://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#degreerequirementstext>).

Distance Education Degree Program

The distance education modality does not have any residence requirement.

Time Limit

On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

All degree requirements must be completed within a period of seven consecutive years for the degree to be granted. A course will be considered valid until seven years after the end of the semester in which it is taken. Graduate credit for coursework which is more than seven calendar years old at the time of the final examination (oral or written) may not be used to satisfy degree requirements.

A student who has chosen the thesis option must have the final corrected version of the thesis cleared by the Graduate and Professional School no later than one year after the final examination, or approval of a petition for exemption from the final exam, or within the seven-year time limit, whichever occurs first. Failure to do so will result in the degree not being awarded.

Foreign Languages

On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

No specific language requirement exists for the Master of Legal Studies degree.

Application for Degree

On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

For information on applying for your degree, please visit the Graduation (<https://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#degreerequirementstext>) section.