

# MASTER OF LEGAL STUDIES IN LEGAL STUDIES

The Master of Legal Studies program (MLG) 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. As further described below, the MLG program is also approved for delivery via asynchronous or synchronous distance education technology.

## Areas of Curricular Specialization

- Business Law and Compliance\*
- Cyber Security 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\*
- International Tax Law and Policy\*
- Real Estate and Construction Law, Policy and Management\*
- Risk Management and Compliance\*
- 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; 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; 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; 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. The majority of 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.

- 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 five courses that are offered via in-person instruction at the School of Law's San Antonio 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.

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

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

## Program Requirements

### Program Requirements

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## Student's Advisory Committee

### On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

The Master of Legal Studies in Legal Studies student's advisory committee consists of the coordinating faculty member of the student's program, who has the responsibility of approving the proposed degree plan for the Master of Legal Studies in Legal Studies student.

## Degree Plan

### On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

The student's advisory committee, in consultation with the student, will develop the proposed degree plan. The degree plan must be completed and filed with the Graduate and Professional School prior to the deadline imposed by the student's college or interdisciplinary degree program, if applicable, and no later than 90 days prior to the date of the final oral examination or thesis defense.

A student should submit the degree plan using the online Document Processing Submission System (<http://ogsdps.tamu.edu/>).

A student submitting a proposed degree plan for a Master of Legal Studies degree should designate on the official degree plan the appropriate program option.

Additional coursework may be added to the approved degree plan by petition if it is 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 Request for Final Examination or Request for Final Examination Exemption is approved by the Graduate and Professional School.

## Credit Requirement

### On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

A minimum of 30 semester credit hours of approved coursework is required for the Non-Thesis Option.

Ordinarily the student will devote the major portion of his or her time to work in one or two closely related fields. Other work will be in supporting fields of interest.

## Transfer of Credit

### On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

A student who has earned 12 hours of graduate credit in residence at Texas A&M University may be authorized to transfer courses in excess of the limits prescribed below upon the advice of the advisory committee and with the approval of the Graduate and Professional School. Courses taken in residence at an accredited U.S. institution or approved international institution 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. Otherwise, the limitations stated in the following section apply. Coursework in which no formal grades are given or in which grades other than letter grades (A or B) are earned (for example, CR, P, S, U, H, etc.) is not accepted for transfer credit. Courses appearing on the degree plan with grades of D, F or U may not be absolved by transfer work. Credit for thesis research or the equivalent is not transferable. Credit for coursework submitted for transfer from any college or university must be shown in semester credit hours or equated to semester credit hours. An official transcript from the university at which the transfer coursework was taken must be sent directly to the Office of Admissions.

Courses used toward a degree at another institution may not be applied for graduate credit. If the course to be transferred was taken 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.

Grades for courses completed at other institutions are not included in computing the GPA.

## Limitations on the Use of Transfer, Extension and Certain Other Courses

### On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

Some departments may have more restrictive requirements for transfer work. If otherwise acceptable, certain courses may be used toward meeting credit-hour requirements for the master's degree under the following limitations.

1. The maximum number of credit hours which may be considered for transfer credit is the greater of 12 hours or one-third (1/3) of the total hours of a degree plan. The following restrictions apply:
  - Graduate and/or upper-level undergraduate courses taken in residence at an accredited U.S. institution, or approved international institution with a final grade of B or greater will be considered for transfer credit if, at the time the courses were completed, the student was in degree-seeking status at Texas A&M University, or the student was in degree-seeking status at the institution at which the courses were taken; and if the courses would be accepted for credit toward a similar degree for a student in degree-seeking status at the host institution.
  - Courses previously used for another degree are not acceptable for degree plan credit.
2. 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.
3. A zero credit 684 or 685 course is only allowed for non-thesis option master's students. A zero credit 681 course can be used for either thesis or non-thesis option master's students. Other courses, including 691 (Research) hours, are not eligible for zero credit.
4. Not more than 12 hours may be used in any combination of the following categories:
  - Not more than 8 hours in the combination of 691 (Research), 684 (Professional Internship), or SOPH 680 may be used.
  - Not more than 8 hours of 685 (Directed Studies) may be used.
  - Not more than 3 hours of 690 (Theory of Research) may be used.
  - Not more than 3 hours of 695 (Frontiers in Research) may be used.
5. A maximum of 2 hours of 681 (Seminar).
6. A maximum of 9 hours of advanced undergraduate courses (300- or 400-level).
7. For graduate courses of three weeks' duration or less, taken at other institutions, up to 1 hour of credit may be obtained for each five-day week of coursework. Each week of coursework must include at least 15 contact hours.
8. Continuing education courses may not be used for graduate credit.
9. Extension courses are not acceptable for credit.
10. For non-distance degree programs, no more than 50 percent of the credit hours required for the program may be completed through distance education courses.
11. 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. This limitation also applies to joint degree programs.

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.

## Non-Thesis Option

### On-Campus and Distance Education Degree Programs

A final comprehensive examination is not required for the Master of Legal Studies program.

A student pursuing the non-thesis option is not allowed to enroll in 691 (Research) for any reason and 691 may not be used for credit toward a non-thesis option Master of Legal Studies degree. A maximum of 4 credit hours of 684 (Professional Internship), 8 credit hours of 685 (Directed Studies), and up to 3 credit hours of 690 (Theory of Research) or 695 (Frontiers in Research) may be used toward the non-thesis option Master of Legal Studies degree. In addition, any combination of 684, 685, 690, and 695 may not exceed 25 percent of the total credit hour requirement shown on the individual degree plan. All requirements for the non-thesis option Master of Legal Studies degree other than those specified above are the same as for the thesis option degree.

## Additional Requirements

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## 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 (<http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#degree requirementstext>).

### 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 (<http://catalog.tamu.edu/graduate/academic-expectations-general-degree-requirements/#degree requirementstext>) section.