

ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF LAW

**MASTER OF LEGAL
STUDIES (M.L.S.) &
CERTIFICATE STUDENT
HANDBOOK**

Academic Year 2026 – 2027

St. Mary's University, as a Catholic Marianist University, fosters the formation of people in faith and educates leaders for the common good through community, integrated liberal arts and professional education, and academic excellence.

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THIS HANDBOOK IS NOT A CONTRACT.

THE PROVISIONS OF THE HANDBOOK ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE
AT ANY TIME, INCLUDING DURING THE ACADEMIC YEAR.

THE J.D. AND M.L.S. STUDENT HANDBOOKS
AND IMPORTANT CHANGES TO THE TEXT OF THE HANDBOOKS
ARE AVAILABLE ON GATEWAY.

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I. INTRODUCTION

By publishing the *Master of Legal Studies Student Handbook*, St. Mary's University School of Law attempts to bring together from various sources rules, policies, and procedures of interest to enrolled Master of Legal Studies (M.L.S.) and Certificate students. Some of the statements included in the Handbook may change during the academic year. Other rules, policies, or procedures may be added in the future as required. Important changes will be posted on GATEWAY and published in the *Witan*, the law school's internal newsletter.

To the extent that the *Student Handbook* addresses rules, policies, and procedures within the law school, it is authoritative. It is not, however, the exclusive source of guidance. Students wishing for additional information regarding a particular matter not addressed in the *Handbook* should inquire at the Office of the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs. Students are also bound by the University Code of Student Conduct.¹

All M.L.S. and certificate students are subject to the rules, policies, and procedures contained herein and by the rules of the J.D. student handbook on any issue for which the M.L.S. and Certificate Handbook is silent or includes external references. For portions of the J.D. student handbook that have been incorporated by reference, the provisions should be read to apply to M.L.S. and Certificate students. However, these provisions should not be interpreted as transferring or transitioning a student enrolled in the M.L.S. or Certificate program into the J.D. program. Faculty members must comply with the stated academic standards for evaluation of students. It is the responsibility of students and faculty members affected by these rules, policies, and procedures to become familiar with them and to adhere to them closely.

Students from other St. Mary's University programs (UG and GR) are responsible for following the School of Law *Academic Calendar* and are subject to the *Master of Legal Studies Student Handbook* in relation to the courses they take through the M.L.S. program at the School of Law.

Because certain rights, privileges, and remedies, and the ways in which these may be exercised or forfeited, are included in the Handbook, students are directed to read carefully the materials contained herein. The Handbook is available on the StMU website and in the online orientation modules. With regard to any provision of the Handbook, fair notice to the student is conclusively presumed from its publication and, except where expressly noted to the contrary, no further notice is required.

II. TRUTHFULNESS AND DISCLOSURE PREREQUISITE TO ADMISSION AND GRADUATION

The School of Law's admission of an applicant to any program at St. Mary's School of Law is contingent upon the truthfulness of information contained in the application materials submitted by the applicant and/or persons on the applicant's behalf, including letters of recommendation; correcting any misinformation provided to the School of Law; and disclosure of information required by the rules or

¹ <https://www.stmarytx.edu/policies/student-development/code-of-student-conduct/>.

regulations of St. Mary's University. Students also have a duty to disclose new incidents and events relating to their character and fitness to study law and participate in the St. Mary's community that occur subsequent to their application or admission. Students are required to update the law school immediately upon occurrence of any new incident.

Non-exhaustive examples of items that trigger disclosure can include: previous or current academic integrity issues (including being aware of another student's violations of academic integrity), previous or current interactions with the civil or criminal justice systems (even if you believe that such incident has been "expunged" or "removed from your record"), previous or current inaccurate submission of information or credentials.

Per the attestation made on every application to the Master of Legal Studies program, if the information provided in a student's application is found to be false or incomplete that student may be dismissed from St. Mary's University School of Law and/or any degree they earn may be revoked.

III. ACADEMIC CONDUCT, POLICIES AND SANCTIONS

For full text of University Policy See ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT Sec. of University Policy²

Any student found to have committed acts of dishonesty is subject to disciplinary sanctions. The dean of the appropriate school (e.g., the dean of the School of Law) is currently the person(s) designated by the president and academic vice president to administer the academic code. Acts of dishonesty include but are not limited to:

- Cheating, plagiarism, fabrication or any other forms of academic misconduct.
- Furnishing false information to any StMU official, faculty member, administrator or other StMU employee.
- Forgery, alteration or misuse of any StMU document, record or ID.
- Violation of Federal Copyright Law, i.e., photocopying without authorization, etc.
- Misuse of academic computing time and equipment.
- Definition as delineated in the undergraduate and graduate catalogs under the Heading of "Academic Honesty."

The following sanctions may be imposed upon any student found to have violated academic conduct:

- Assignment Redo: A faculty member may require a student to redo a class/laboratory assignment.
- Failing Assignment Grade: A faculty member may record the grade of F (failure) for a particular test, examination or class/laboratory assignment that involves dishonesty.
- Failing Course Grade: A faculty member may record the grade of F (failure) for a final course grade.

² St. Mary's University Policy Library – ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT
<https://www.stmarytx.edu/policies/academic-affairs/academic-misconduct/>

- Academic Suspension: The student is separated from the university for a specified minimum period of time; upon the satisfaction of specific conditions the student is eligible to return. This sanction may be enforced with a trespass action as necessary.
- Academic Expulsion: The student is permanently separated from the university. The student is barred from being on campus and the student's presence at any university-sponsored activity or event is prohibited. This action may be enforced with a trespass action as necessary. (This sanction will be noted as an Academic Expulsion on the student's official academic transcript.)

IV. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Law students may not employ generative AI tools or services (i.e., LexisNexis, Westlaw, ChatGPT, CLAUDE) including, but not limited to, language models, essay generators, or any other type of AI-enabled content creation tools, for course assignments, examinations, or any other academic work, unless explicitly authorized in writing by the course professor. This includes both direct usage of AI output in submitted work, and using AI tools to inform or guide the creation of student work.

Unauthorized use of AI to generate coursework violates the Law School's Academic Integrity policy. Law school course assignments and assessments are designed to evaluate your analytical thinking, knowledge of legal principles, and ability to communicate effectively in writing. While artificial intelligence (AI) tools hold promise to augment legal work, reliance on AI to complete assessments or assignments undermines their purpose as tools for **candid self-assessment**.

Intellectual honesty is vital to an academic community and for the fair evaluation of your work. All work submitted in this program must be your own, completed in accordance with the University's academic regulations. You may not engage in unauthorized collaboration or make use of AI composition software.

Violation of this policy will be considered a breach of academic honesty and will be dealt with according to our existing academic integrity procedures. This applies across all coursework and examinations unless otherwise stated in writing by the professor.

V. MASTER OF LEGAL STUDIES DEGREE GRADUATION REQUIREMENTS

A. Credit Hours and GPA Requirements

A candidate for the degree of Master of Legal Studies must earn a minimum of thirty (30) credit hours in order to graduate. The candidate is eligible to graduate if the candidate's cumulative grade point average is 2.0 or better. Special and/or additional requirements on credit hours may apply to students in joint or dual degree programs.

B. M.L.S. Three-Year Limitation

The thirty (30) credit hours must be earned within a three-year period that begins with matriculation. The three-year limitation is strictly enforced, but a student may appeal to the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs for an extension, and in exceptional circumstances, such appeal may be granted. A student who leaves the program prior to completion, and who wishes to re-join the program

after the 3-year window must re-apply, and any credits earned will be subject to the limitations in Section III. I. regarding transfer grades. Students seeking only a Certificate are generally bound by these same timelines.

C. Graduation/Commencement Application

Applying to graduate signals a student's intent to complete the current program and initiates the degree or certificate clearance process. M.L.S. candidates must apply to graduate through GATEWAY. The application identifies candidates for pre-clearance, graduation-related notices and tasks, diploma and commencement-program naming, and diploma delivery information. Students who intend to continue after completing the M.L.S. by adding a certificate or concentration should discuss that plan with their advisor.

Certificate students must confirm completion intentions directly with their advisor, including the name to appear on the certificate and the mailing address. Degree diplomas and certificates are generated by separate University offices, so these confirmations are handled separately.

Application Deadlines:

September 1 for December completion/participation in the combined University commencement ceremony

February 1 for May completion/participation in the law school's commencement ceremony

June 1 for August completion (no ceremony)

Applying to graduate is separate from requesting permission to participate in a commencement ceremony. Commencement participation does not confer a degree. An M.L.S. candidate who would not otherwise be included in a ceremony, including a student completing degree requirements during the summer, may request early commencement participation. The Assistant Dean of Graduate Law Programs approves requests for early commencement participation. Requests must be submitted by the applicable graduation application deadline listed above.

Students who withdraw from a class or fail to obtain a passing grade in a class during their final semester must submit the early walk petition within forty-eight (48) hours from the time the grade is posted or after class withdrawal.

Pure Certificate students do not participate in the law school's commencement ceremony.

D. Pass/Fail Hours Limitation

A student may not count toward graduation more than three (3) pass/fail hours earned at St. Mary's School of Law. Any graded course in which a student receives a pass (e.g., in the case of a successful grade appeal) will not be counted in determining the three (3) hours maximum limit of pass/fail credit hours. Pass/fail credit hours accepted for students who transfer into the M.L.S. Program (*see* Section III.H.) are subject to the same limitations that apply to the home campus. Pass/fail transient hours (*see* Section III.G.) are subject to the same limitations that apply to hours taken on the home campus.

A student may not elect to take a course as pass/fail unless the faculty as a whole has expressly approved such an election or the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs and the course's teaching faculty member have approved such an election. Such an election should be made prior to the first meeting of class. Independent study credit may be earned on a pass/fail basis only with the approval of the supervising faculty member. A course designated as pass/fail may not be taken for a grade.

In extraordinary situations, the Office for Academic Affairs may authorize pass/fail grades, rather than letter grades.

There is no provision for pass/fail hours in the Certificate framework. Requests for such will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs in consultation with the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

E. Independent Study

A student may arrange a one-, two-, or three-credit independent study.

1. Maximum Independent-Study Hours

An M.L.S. student may count no more than three (3) hours of independent study toward the thirty (30) credit hours required for graduation by completing a research paper and/or such other work as the supervising faculty member may require.

There are two types of independent study opportunities:

- Non-internship independent study: involves the production of an independent scholarly paper under the direction of a faculty member (the paper may or may not also qualify for the upper-level writing requirement). Non-internship independent studies should not be viewed as a substitute for a scheduled class and should only be utilized when a class in the topic area is not available or exigent circumstances are present.
- Internship independent study: involves an external internship that is supervised by a faculty member.

All students pursuing an independent study must maintain timesheets recording time spent on their project and submit timesheets to the supervising faculty member on a bi-weekly basis. The Assistant Dean of Graduate Law Programs in consultation with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs may deny credit for the independent study if timesheets are requested and not provided.

The Attendance Requirement is met through the bi-weekly timesheets and prompt correspondence according to the supervising faculty's required schedule. If students do not comply with the Attendance Requirement they may be administratively withdrawn from the independent study.

Because there is a presumption of self-directed study only candidates in good academic standing will be considered for independent study. Exceptions require the permission of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

There is no provision for independent-study hours in the Certificate framework. Requests for such will be considered on a case-by-case basis by the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs in consultation with the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

2. Significant Writing Requirement

Not all independent study projects require completion of a substantial research paper, but significant written work is required.

3. Faculty Sponsorship

Faculty eligible to supervise an independent study include professors of law, associate professors of law, assistant professors of law and service professors of law. Visiting professors, and adjunct faculty members may not supervise independent studies unless in conjunction with an aforementioned tenure-track professor. Faculty titles are listed on the faculty pages of the website). The sponsoring professor and the student must agree about the length of the research paper or of the other written work, whether the paper will be graded or evaluated only on a pass/fail basis, whether any work in addition to the paper is required, and what semester the student will enroll for the independent study.

No faculty member is obliged to supervise an independent study and no faculty member may supervise more than three (3) hours of independent study during the fall or spring semester or during a single summer session. The Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs may allow supervision of more than three (3) hours in extenuating circumstances.

A student and the supervising faculty member must agree at the time of enrollment whether the independent study will be graded or pass/fail. The designation of the course as graded or ungraded may be changed at any time during the semester, but not after the final paper or other written project has been submitted to the faculty member for evaluation.

A student wishing to arrange an independent study should obtain the appropriate form from GATEWAY (under "Law" → "Forms, Schedules, Calendars"), take it to the sponsoring faculty member for his or her signature and, if necessary, the signature of the Associate Dean, and return the form to the Director of Graduate Law Programs during the registration process.

Independent studies for three (3) credit hours require prior request and approval from the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs.

F. Full-Time Status and Part-Time Status

1. Minimum and Maximum Credit Hours per Semester for Full-Time Status

Full-time enrollment requires at least eight (8) credit hours in a fall or spring semester or three (3) credit hours in a summer session. A student must obtain the written approval of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs to enroll for more than seventeen (17) credit hours during a semester or for more than six (6) credit hours during a summer session or ten (10) credit hours during the summer term (which includes both summer sessions). International students maintaining visa status must obtain the approval of the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs to enroll in fewer than the minimum number of credit hours required to maintain full-time status. Please contact the Office of International Student and Scholar Services for further information.

2. Part-Time Status

Part-time enrollment begins at four (4) credit hours in a fall or spring semester. Students pursuing a part-time course of study remain subject to the three-year completion requirement for the M.L.S. degree or Certificate.

G. Required Courses for the M.L.S.

1. Fundamentals of the American Legal System (2 credit hours)
2. Legal Research and Writing (2 credit hours)
3. At least two of the following first-year J.D. courses that are determined by the curriculum to be most closely related to the track chosen by the candidate (3-4 credit hours):
 - a. Federal Civil Procedure
 - b. Contracts
 - c. Criminal Law
 - d. Property
 - e. Torts
 - f. Constitutional Law

H. M.L.S. Course Registration and Course Availability

The Master of Legal Studies program is a fully online graduate program with a curriculum intentionally designed and curated for graduate-level legal study and the needs of working professionals. Courses offered through the online M.L.S. program constitute the primary curriculum available to M.L.S. students.

Publication of a course in University or School of Law materials, including course descriptions, concentration requirements, program materials, or prior course schedules, does not constitute a representation or guarantee that the course will be offered in a particular semester, academic year, instructional format, or program. Course offerings are determined by the School of Law and may vary based on curricular needs, faculty availability, enrollment, scheduling, and other academic considerations.

M.L.S. students should plan their programs of study in consultation with the Office of Graduate Law Programs and enroll in courses designated for the M.L.S. program. Enrollment in residential J.D. courses is not generally available to M.L.S. students and is permitted by exception only. A student seeking enrollment in a residential J.D. course must demonstrate an appropriate academic or curricular basis for the request and obtain prior written approval from all three of the following:

1. the Assistant Dean of Graduate Law Programs;
2. the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs; and
3. the law faculty member teaching the requested course.

Approval is discretionary and may depend upon the student's academic progress, completion of appropriate prerequisites, the relationship of the requested course to the student's approved program of study, available seating, and the academic needs of the J.D. program. Enrollment in a concentration, certificate, or degree program does not create an entitlement to enrollment in a particular course or section.

Students may not rely upon instructor permission alone, the availability of an open seat, or the appearance of a course in the registration system as authorization to enroll in a residential J.D. course. Registration without the required approvals may result in administrative removal from the course.

I. Available M.L.S. Concentrations

The Master of Legal Studies (M.L.S.) degree requires completion of the required M.L.S. core, designated first-year law courses, concentration coursework, and electives necessary to satisfy the degree requirements. Unless otherwise specified, the M.L.S. requires thirty (30) credit hours.

Students must complete the requirements applicable to their selected concentration. The courses listed below reflect the curricular requirements for each concentration. Course offerings and course numbers may change, and not every elective is offered every academic year. Students should consult with the Office of Graduate Law Programs when planning their course of study.

Unless otherwise specified, students may apply up to six (6) hours of approved transfer credit toward remaining degree requirements, subject to the transfer-credit provisions of this Handbook and approval by the Assistant Dean of Graduate Law Programs.

1. Business and Entrepreneurship Law

Required First-Year Law Courses: Contracts; and either Torts or Property.

Required Concentration Courses: Business Structures and Statutory Compliance; Compliance, Business Law and Risk; Negotiations; Employment Law or Employment and Human Resource Core; Accounting. Undergraduate accounting coursework may be recognized, subject to approval.

Concentration Electives: Select at least two from the approved concentration electives, including Tax; Sales; Secured Transactions; Sales/Secured Transactions or Commercial Law & Contracting; Business Torts; Intellectual Property; Trademark; Copyright; HIPAA Privacy Law; and Cyber Law.

2. Business Risk and Intelligence

Required First-Year Law Courses: Contracts; and one additional first-year course selected from Criminal Law, Constitutional Law, Civil Litigation and Procedure, Torts, or Property.

Required Concentration Courses: Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; Business Structures and Statutory Compliance; Compliance, Business Law and Risk; Business Law and Ethics; HIPAA Privacy Law.

Concentration Electives: Select at least two from the approved concentration electives, including AI Management in Law and Compliance; Cyber Law; Digital Evidence and Records; Forensic Investigations; Fundamentals of Information Systems and Cybersecurity; Machine Learning,

Intellectual Property and the Law; Risk, Regulation and Reporting; Technical Foundations in Machine Learning and AI Systems; and White Collar Crime.

Students seeking Compliance Certification Board (CCB) exam eligibility must complete Fundamentals of the American Legal System, Contracts, Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation, Business Structures and Statutory Compliance; Compliance, Business Law and Risk; Business Law and Ethics, and HIPAA Privacy Law, and must satisfy the applicable cumulative GPA requirement.

3. Commercial Law

Required First-Year Law Courses: Contracts; and one additional first-year course selected from Criminal Law, Constitutional Law, Civil Litigation and Procedure, Torts, or Property.

Required Concentration Courses: Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; Business Structures and Statutory Compliance; and Commercial Law and Contracting.

Concentration Electives: Select at least two from Creditor Rights and Bankruptcy; Legal Drafting Techniques; Negotiations; and Risk, Regulation and Reporting.

4. Compliance, Business Law and Risk

Required First-Year Law Courses: Contracts; and one additional first-year course selected from Criminal Law, Constitutional Law, Civil Litigation and Procedure, Torts, or Property.

Required Concentration Courses: Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; Business Structures and Statutory Compliance; and Compliance, Business Law and Risk.

Concentration Electives: Select at least two courses from the approved concentration elective list which includes AI Management in Law and Compliance; Business Law and Ethics; Commercial Law and Contracting; Cyber Law; Digital Evidence and Records; Employment Law; Forensic Investigations; and Risk, Regulation and Reporting.

Students seeking CCB exam eligibility must complete Fundamentals of the American Legal System, Contracts, Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation, Business Structures and Statutory Compliance, Compliance, Business Law and Risk, Business Law and Ethics, and HIPAA Privacy Law, and must satisfy the applicable cumulative GPA requirement.

5. Criminal Justice

Required First-Year Law Courses: Criminal Law; and one additional first-year course selected from Contracts, Constitutional Law, Civil Litigation and Procedure, Torts, or Property.

Required Concentration Courses: Constitutional Criminal Procedure.

Concentration Electives: Select at least four from the approved concentration electives, including Texas Criminal Procedure; Advanced Criminal Procedure; Civil Rights; Comparative Criminal Procedure; Evidence, Digital Evidence, or Introduction to Legal Evidence; Juvenile Law; Police Liability; Community Policing and the Law; Immigration Law; Mental Health and the Law; Cyber Law; Criminal Justice Procedures and Due Process; and Death Penalty.

6. Cyber and Data Security Law

Required First-Year Law Courses: Contracts; and one additional first-year course selected from Criminal Law, Constitutional Law, Civil Litigation and Procedure, Torts, or Property.

Required Concentration Courses: Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; Compliance, Business Law and Risk; Fundamentals of Information Systems; and Cyber Law.

Concentration Electives: Select at least two from the approved concentration electives, including AI Management in Law and Compliance; Digital Evidence and Records; Forensic Investigations; Machine Learning, Intellectual Property and the Law; Risk, Regulation and Reporting; Technical Foundations in Machine Learning and AI Systems; and White Collar Crime.

7. Education Law

Required First-Year Law Courses: Select at least two from Criminal Law, Constitutional Law, and Torts.

Required Concentration Courses: Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; Education Law.

Concentration Electives: Select at least three from Child Protective Services; Employment Law; Family Law; Family Law Mediation (Negotiations prerequisite); Federal Education Law; Immigration Law; Juvenile Law; Mediation (Negotiations prerequisite); Mental Health and the Law; Negotiations; Special Education Law (Education Law prerequisite); School Discipline, Expulsion and Due Process; Personal Injury of Children; and Trauma-Informed Advocacy.

8. Employment and Human Resource Law

Required First-Year Law Courses: Contracts; Torts.

Required Concentration Courses: Human Resource Core; Employment Law; Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; Business Structures and Statutory Compliance; Compliance, Business Law and Risk; Business Law and Ethics; HIPAA Privacy Law; Negotiations; and Human Resource Capstone.

Additional Electives: Digital Evidence and Records; Introduction to Legal Evidence.

The Employment and Human Resource Law concentration follows a fixed curriculum and requires thirty-two (32) credit hours.

9. Environmental Law

Required First-Year Law Courses: Contracts; Property.

Required Concentration Courses: Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; Environmental Law.

Concentration Electives: Select at least two from the approved elective list, including Commercial Law and Contracting; Digital Records and Evidence; Energy Law; International Business Transactions; Land Titles; Water Law; Oil and Gas; and Legal Drafting Techniques.

10. General Law

Required First-Year Law Courses: At least two first-year law courses selected from Criminal Law, Contracts, Constitutional Law, Civil Litigation and Procedure, Torts, and Property.

Concentration Electives: After completing the required M.L.S. coursework, students may select remaining MLS School of Law electives necessary to satisfy the degree requirements.

11. Health Care Compliance, Business Law and Risk Law

Required First-Year Law Courses: Contracts; Torts.

Required Concentration Courses: Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; Health Law; Business Structures and Statutory Compliance; and Compliance, Business Law and Risk.

Concentration Electives: Select at least two from the approved elective list, including Health Policy and Management; HIPAA Privacy Law; and Public Health and Ethics.

Students seeking CCB exam eligibility must complete Fundamentals of the American Legal System, Contracts, Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation, Business Structures and Statutory Compliance, Compliance, Business Law and Risk, Business Law and Ethics, and HIPAA Privacy Law, and must satisfy the applicable cumulative GPA requirement.

12. International and Comparative Law

Required First-Year Law Courses: Constitutional Law; and one additional first-year course selected from Criminal Law, Contracts, Civil Litigation and Procedure, Torts, or Property.

Required Concentration Courses: Public International Law.

Concentration Electives: Select at least twelve (12) credit hours from the approved International and Comparative Law elective list, including Administrative Law and Statutory Interpretation; Comparative Law; Doing Business with Mexico; Human Trafficking; International ADR and Tribunals; International Business Transactions; International Criminal Law; International Human Rights; Legal Spanish and the Mexican Legal System; Public International Law; Terrorism Law; Transnational Criminal Law; U.S./Mexico Cross-Border Legal Practice; and Law of Armed Conflict.

With permission, up to six (6) credit hours may be taken from the International Relations graduate degree program.

13. Military and National Security Law

Required First-Year Law Courses: Constitutional Law; Criminal Law.

Required Concentration Courses: Military Law; National Security Law.

Concentration Electives: Select at least two from the approved concentration elective list, including Administrative Law and Statutory Interpretation; Cyber Law; International Criminal Law; International Human Rights; Public International Law; Terrorism Law; Transnational Criminal Law; and Law of Armed Conflict.

With permission, up to six (6) credit hours may be taken from the International Relations graduate degree program.

14. Natural Resource Law

Required First-Year Law Courses: Contracts; Property.

Required Concentration Courses: Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; and either Oil and Gas Law or Water Law.

Concentration Electives: Select at least two from the approved Natural Resource Law elective list, including Commercial Law and Contracting; Digital Records and Evidence; Energy Law; Environmental Law; International Business Transactions; Land Titles; and Legal Drafting Techniques.

15. Special Education Advocacy

Required First-Year Law Courses: Constitutional Law; Torts.

Required Concentration Courses: Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; Education Law; Special Education Law (Education Law prerequisite); and Professional Responsibility and the Unauthorized Practice of Law.

Concentration Electives: Select at least two from Child Protective Services; Family Law; Family Law Mediation (Negotiations prerequisite); HIPAA Privacy Law; Immigration Law; Juvenile Law; Mediation (Negotiations prerequisite); Mental Health and the Law; Negotiations; School Discipline, Expulsion and Due Process; Digital Evidence and Records or Introduction to Legal Evidence; Personal Injury of Children; Trauma-Informed Advocacy; Wills and Trusts; and Special Needs Trusts and Benefits Planning.

16. Tax Law

Required First-Year Law Courses: Contracts; Civil Litigation and Procedure.

Required Concentration Courses: Federal Income Tax; Taxation of Business Entities.

Concentration Electives: Select at least two from the approved Tax Law elective list, including Business Structures and Statutory Compliance; Creditor Rights and Bankruptcy; Digital Evidence and Records or Introduction to Legal Evidence; Federal Tax Procedure; Forensic Investigations; Mediation (Negotiations prerequisite); Negotiations; Property Law; Special Needs Trusts and Benefits Planning; and Wills and Trusts.

17. Territorial Law

Required First-Year Law Courses: Constitutional Law; Contracts; Civil Litigation and Procedure.

Required Concentration Courses: Advanced Constitutional Law: U.S. Territories; State and Territorial Legal Institutions.

Concentration Electives: Select at least two from the approved Territorial Law elective list, including Administrative Law and Statutory Interpretation; Commercial Law and Contracting; Comparative Law; Intersectionality and Legal Justice; International ADR and Tribunals; International Commercial Arbitration; and International Human Rights.

With approval of the Assistant Dean of Graduate Law Programs, a student may apply up to six (6) hours of externship credit toward the concentration.

J. Available Certificates

The School of Law offers a Compliance, Business Law and Risk Certificate; a Health Care Compliance, Business Law and Risk Certificate; and several Legal Studies Certificates designed to provide focused study in designated areas of law. Students pursuing a certificate must complete the required core and certificate coursework applicable to the selected program.

A student must submit the required Intent form and register for the certificate through the Office of Graduate Law Programs. Certificate requirements vary by program. Students should consult with the Office of Graduate Law Programs before registration to ensure that courses satisfy the applicable certificate requirements.

1. Compliance, Business Law and Risk Certificate

This credential may be earned independently.

Required Core: Fundamentals of the American Legal System; Contracts.

Required Certificate Courses: Compliance, Business Law and Risk; Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; Business Law and Ethics; HIPAA Privacy Law.

Students seeking CCB exam certification eligibility must satisfy the applicable cumulative GPA requirement. The applicable program requirements provide a designated J.D. substitution for the core requirement.

2. Health Care Compliance, Business Law and Risk Certificate

This credential may be earned independently.

Required Core: Fundamentals of the American Legal System; Contracts.

Required Certificate Courses: Compliance, Business Law and Risk; Health Law; HIPAA Privacy Law.

Certificate Elective: Select at least one from Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; Business Law and Ethics or Public Health Law and Ethics; or Health Policy and Management.

Students seeking CCB exam certification eligibility must satisfy the applicable cumulative GPA requirement.

Legal Studies Certificates may be earned only by M.L.S. students and only in conjunction with the M.L.S. degree. Some electives may require the completion of specific FY courses.

3. Legal Studies in Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation

Required Certificate Courses: Negotiations; Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; Business Law and Ethics.

4. Legal Studies in Business Risk and Intelligence

Required Certificate Courses: AI Management in Law and Compliance; Machine Learning, Intellectual Property and the Law; Technical Foundations in Machine Learning and AI Systems.

5. Legal Studies in Cyber Law and Data Security

Required Certificate Courses: Fundamentals of Information Systems & Cybersecurity; Cyber Law; Risk, Regulation and Reporting.

6. Legal Studies in Employment and Human Resources Law

Required Certificate Courses: Employment & HR Law; Employment Law; Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; Employment & HR Capstone.

The program also identifies approved substitutions for SHRM recertification, including Business Structures and Statutory Compliance; Compliance, Business Law and Risk; HIPAA Privacy Law; Business Law and Ethics; and Negotiations.

7. Legal Studies in Special Education Advocacy

Required Certificate Courses: Special Education Law (Education Law prerequisite); Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation; and Professional Responsibility and the Unauthorized Practice of Law.

Certificate Electives: Select at least two from School Discipline, Expulsion & Due Process; Personal Injury of Children; Trauma-Informed Advocacy; and Special Needs Trusts and Benefits Planning.

8. Legal Studies in Trauma-Informed Advocacy

Required Certificate Courses: Mental Health and the Law; Trauma-Informed Advocacy.

Certificate Emphasis: Students select at least one emphasis and complete at least two courses within that emphasis:

Criminal Justice: Negotiations; Police Liability; Wrongful Convictions; Criminal Justice and Due Process.

Education: Education Law; Personal Injury of Children; Special Education Law (Education Law prerequisite); School Discipline, Expulsion and Due Process.

Health Care: Health Law; HIPAA Privacy & Security; Health Policy & Management; Public Health and Ethics.

K. Auditing and Withdrawing

An M.L.S. student may withdraw from a course up to the end of the fifth (5th) week of a fall or spring semester and up to the end of the second (2nd) week of a summer course.

Student-initiated withdrawals after these deadlines require written approval of the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs based upon a showing of compelling need. Compelling need does not include failure to complete coursework or an anticipated poor grade. Documentation may be required, and the Assistant Dean may consider the student's academic performance and prior course withdrawals.

A withdrawn course appears on the student's transcript with a "W" in lieu of a grade. Withdrawal after the applicable refund period does not create a tuition refund or credit.

A student who withdraws from all courses while in good standing and intends to return must request a leave of absence at the time of withdrawal. Otherwise, the student will be considered withdrawn from

the program. An approved leave of absence tolls the applicable degree-completion period. Time during which a student is on an approved leave of absence will not be counted toward the three-year period for completion of the M.L.S. degree or Certificate.

By written request, a student may change an eligible elective course taken for credit to an audited course up to the end of the fifth (5th) week of a fall or spring semester and up to the end of the second (2nd) week of a summer course. A later request requires written approval of the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs based upon a showing of compelling need.

A student who audits a course may attend the course but does not earn academic credit toward the M.L.S. degree or Certificate. The audited course appears on the transcript with an "AU" designation in lieu of a grade. Changing a course to audit does not create a tuition refund or credit.

Administrative withdrawal for non-attendance or other academic reasons is distinct from a student-initiated withdrawal or audit. When authorized under this Handbook, administrative withdrawal is executed by the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs.

L. Applicant Deferral Policy

Upon the completion of all application materials, it is expected that an accepted student will matriculate in the semester indicated on the application form. However, if an applicant is accepted into the program, they may request a deferral to start at a later date for up to one year. For instance, an applicant that has been accepted into the Master of Legal Studies Program and indicates a start date in the fall, may request to start instead in the spring or the subsequent fall. The deferral decision is at the discretion of the Assistant Dean Graduate Law Programs.

Should an applicant seek to defer beyond one year, the applicant must re-apply. If the applicant's file is still in the possession of the Program, and is still current, the applicant may simply request that the materials still on file be considered. However, the mere fact that the applicant has been admitted before does not mean that the applicant will be re-admitted. The re-application will be considered in light of the strength of the applicant relative to other applicants, the available space in the program, and the likelihood that the re-applicant will actually matriculate.

M. Applicant Leave of Absence Policy

Matriculated students are expected to work continuously toward their degree during fall and spring semesters. A student in good standing who requires a leave of absence may apply to the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs. The request should explain the reason for the leave, the anticipated duration, and include supporting documentation when appropriate.

An approved leave of absence tolls the applicable degree-completion period. Time during which a student is on an approved leave of absence will not be counted toward the three-year period for completion of the M.L.S. degree or Certificate.

A leave of absence is generally granted for no more than one year. In extraordinary circumstances, a longer leave may be approved, but no leave of absence may exceed two years.

A student who does not return when an approved leave expires will be deemed to have voluntarily withdrawn from the program and must reapply before resuming study. Prior admission does not guarantee readmission.

VI. GRADES AND GRADING

Because evaluation through grading has a significant effect on students, many of the rules are designed to protect students from unfairness. On the other hand, it is widely agreed that professors must have the freedom to exercise independent judgment in making difficult decisions relating to teaching and testing. The rules here reflect a balance between professorial discretion and the urge to restrict that discretion on behalf of students.

Faculty members have five (5) weeks after the last examination to complete grading for their courses. After faculty submit grades, the University Registrar reviews and certifies the grades before they are released to students through GATEWAY. Students should not assume that a grade is missing or that a faculty member is late merely because a grade is not yet visible in GATEWAY during this process. Students should not contact faculty members to request grades before the grading and certification process is complete.

Each semester, students are afforded an examination review window as prescribed by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Notice of the applicable review window will be sent to students through their University-assigned email accounts.

Students from other St. Mary's University programs (UG and GR) will be graded on the M.L.S. curve and are subject to the School of Law letter grading scale in any School of Law classes.

A. The Letter Grading Scale

"Graded courses" are evaluated according to a ten-level system using letter grades. The letter grades are assigned numerical values on a four-point scale for the purpose of calculating grade point averages. The letter-grading system and its numerical scale are:

A = 4.00	C+ = 2.33
A- = 3.67	C = 2.00
B+ = 3.33	C- = 1.67
B = 3.00	D = 1.00
B- = 2.67	F = 0.00

If a student receives a grade of D or higher, the credit hours assigned to the course are earned. The only failing grade is F, and receipt of this grade causes a student to lose the credit hours otherwise available for the course. Even though no hours are earned, a failing grade is used in calculating the student's grade point average and is included in the student's transcript.

B. Anonymous and Non-Anonymous Grading Policy

1. Anonymous Grading

Each student is given a four-digit number every semester, including each summer session. The four-digit examination number is available to students on Gateway. The examination number normally should be the only student identification placed on examination responses.³

For spring semester exams, a student should not indicate he or she intends to graduate. That information is already provided to professors through their Instructor Grade Reports (IGRs).

2. Non-Anonymous Grading

Students in online courses do not require exam pins and are not graded anonymously. Students are required to establish their identity and to use a webcam while taking midterm and final exams.

C. Median Grades

The law faculty has adopted the rules described below that circumscribe the grading discretion of a professor in a course in which there are M.L.S. and Certificate students. These rules do not apply to a graded independent study and the faculty member is free to assign the letter grade earned by the student.

1. General Rule

M.L.S. and Certificate students must be graded as a separate cohort from other students. If there are more than twelve (12) M.L.S. and Certificate students in a course, they are to be graded with a B median grade. If there are 12 or fewer M.L.S. and Certificate students in a course, no mandatory median grade shall apply. In evaluating the M.L.S. or Certificate students' exam performance, the grading professor is to bear in mind that the students are not enrolled in, nor will they have completed, the full first-year J.D. curriculum.

Grades of M.L.S. students enrolled in a course or seminar are not included in computing the median grade or compliance with percentage limitations for J.D. students as outlined in Section IV.D. of the St. Mary's University School of Law Student Handbook for JD students.

2. Multiple Sections of the Same Course

A professor who teaches two sections of a course and uses the same examination for both may combine the final grades of both sections to satisfy the applicable required median. In other words, the two

³ The anonymous grading policy broadly applies to written evaluation instruments, including papers, midterms, quizzes, finals, and other documents that count toward a student's grade. There are some exceptions to the anonymous grading policy, such as the evaluation of skills in a trial advocacy course, a required special oral presentation in a classroom course, and a research paper written under close faculty supervision as part of a registered independent study or seminar. Professors should resolve doubts about the applicability of the anonymous grading policy in favor of anonymity.

sections may constitute a single course for application of the following rules, or the professor may choose to treat the two sections as individual courses.

D. Grades of Incomplete

At the request of a professor, a grade of “I” or “Incomplete” may be entered temporarily for a student who for some *legitimate and compelling reason* has not completed the course requirements (e.g., an exam postponed due to illness or other good excuse). *The work not finished on time must be completed within 60 days of the last day of the examination period in which the course was offered.* In the event that a student does not complete all course requirements within the time required, the “I” or “Incomplete” automatically will be converted to an F and the student will receive no credit for the course. The *faculty member* who requested the “Incomplete” may petition the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs for an additional, specific period in which the student may complete the course requirements, but such an extension will not be granted except in *compelling circumstances*.

E. Class Attendance

Attendance is an academic requirement. Faculty are responsible for maintaining attendance records and for promptly identifying students who fail to satisfy the attendance requirements applicable to the course.

1. Withdrawal for Excessive Absences (Residential or Synchronous Courses)

A student who misses one-third (1/3) or more of the scheduled class meetings may be administratively withdrawn. A faculty member who believes good cause supports an exception should provide the pertinent student, course, and attendance information to the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs before final examinations or final grading. The Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs determines whether an exception is warranted and executes any administrative withdrawal.

2. Online Course Attendance

Attendance in asynchronous online courses is documented through weekly attendance quizzes associated with assigned instructional material. A two-credit course will ordinarily include two attendance quizzes each instructional week, a three-credit course three quizzes, and a four-credit course four quizzes.

To receive attendance credit for a quiz, a student must correctly answer at least seventy-five percent (75%) of the questions. Students have two attempts to obtain the required score. Attendance quizzes are available only during the week in which the corresponding material is assigned.

A student must complete at least ninety percent (90%) of the required attendance quizzes. A student who misses more than ten percent (10%) may be administratively withdrawn from the course. A faculty member who believes good cause supports an exception should provide the pertinent student, course, and attendance information to the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs. The Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs determines whether an exception is warranted and executes any administrative withdrawal.

F. Grade-Point Averaging

The University calculates a student's cumulative grade-point average using the credit hours and quality points associated with courses taken for a letter grade. Grades and credit hours designated as excluded from GPA calculation under University or School of Law policy are not included. The cumulative grade-point average reflected in the University's official academic record controls for purposes of academic standing, graduation, and academic honors.

G. Distinguished Academic Achievement

Upon graduation, M.L.S. students with a cumulative grade point average of:

- 3.8 or higher are graduated Summa cum laude,
- 3.5 or higher are graduated Magna cum laude,
- 3.3 or higher are graduated Cum laude.

The appropriate designation is included on a student's diploma and is announced during the graduation ceremony.

There are no designations on Certificates.

H. Appeal of Grades

See Section III.I. of the St. Mary's University School of Law Handbook for J.D. Students.

VII. STUDY ABROAD

This section applies only to study-abroad programs sponsored by St. Mary's University and offered under St. Mary's curricular control. Participation requires prior approval of the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs and is limited to graduate law students in good academic standing who have completed the required core curriculum.

Before registration, the student must meet with the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs to determine whether the proposed coursework is appropriate to the student's academic and professional goals and whether any course may satisfy a particular M.L.S. degree, concentration, or Certificate requirement.

Coursework completed through a St. Mary's-sponsored study-abroad program may appear on the student's academic record as graduate coursework but does not automatically satisfy the thirty (30) credit hours or other curricular requirements of the M.L.S. degree or Certificate. A student may therefore complete more than thirty (30) total graduate credit hours before satisfying all program requirements.

Coursework taken through a study-abroad program sponsored by another institution is not governed by this section and is subject to the ordinary transfer-credit provisions of this Handbook, including prior approval requirements.

Students remain subject to this Handbook and applicable University policies while participating in study abroad and are responsible for program tuition and fees, travel documents, visas, insurance, housing, transportation, and other travel-related requirements.

VIII. PROGRAM STATUS

A. Transfer Course Grades and Credit

Course credit earned while attending a J.D. program at St. Mary's University School of Law or another law school, or other graduate program prior to matriculating into the M.L.S. program that did not result in a degree or resulted in earned hours in excess of said degree requirements, may be considered for transfer to the M.L.S. degree at St. Mary's University School of Law if a grade of C or higher was earned (course descriptions and syllabi are required).

The quality points and hours are not used in calculating the student's cumulative grade-point average, only earned hours will transfer. If approved, the transfer credit is listed on the student's transcript with the grade of "CR" (credit).

Course credit earned at other law schools after a student has matriculated into the M.L.S. program are subject to prior approval by the Assistant Dean of Graduate Law Programs (course descriptions and syllabi are required for review). A grade of C or higher is required for consideration and students must be in Good Standing prior to approval. A maximum of 6 hours total of transfer credit are allowed from host institutions.

Semesters spent at host institutions are included in the total amount of time allowed to complete the degree.

St. Mary's will not accept transient hours earned in a course that the student has already taken at St. Mary's.

Pure Certificate students must earn all of their credit hours from St. Mary's School of Law.

B. J.D. Candidates Transferring into the M.L.S. Program

A current St. Mary's J.D. student who wishes to discontinue J.D. study and seek admission to the M.L.S. program must first consult with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. When appropriate, the Associate Dean may refer the student to the Office of Graduate Law Programs to discuss the M.L.S. program as a distinct academic option.

The student must apply for admission to the M.L.S. program and satisfy the admission requirements applicable to M.L.S. applicants. The application must include two letters of support from members of the law faculty who have taught the student and can address the student's suitability for graduate legal study. Admission is not automatic.

If admitted, the student must execute the required acknowledgment concerning the distinct nature and non-transferability of the M.L.S. credential. Up to fifteen (15) credit hours of prior St. Mary's J.D. coursework in which the student earned a grade of C or higher may be approved for application to the M.L.S. degree by the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs. Approved J.D. credits will be

reflected on the M.L.S. academic record in the manner prescribed by University policy and will not carry the original J.D. grade into the M.L.S. cumulative GPA.

After transition to the M.L.S. program, all remaining degree requirements must be completed in residence through approved St. Mary's coursework. No additional transfer credit, independent-study credit, or study-abroad credit may be applied toward the remaining M.L.S. degree requirements.

Transition to the M.L.S. program withdraws the student from the J.D. program. A former J.D. student who later wishes to pursue the J.D. must apply for admission to the J.D. program through the ordinary admission process. Credits earned during the student's prior J.D. enrollment before transition to the M.L.S. program may not later be revived or applied toward a St. Mary's J.D. degree.

C. Students Excluded from the St. Mary's J.D. Program

A student who has been officially academically excluded from the St. Mary's J.D. program is not eligible for the J.D.-to-M.L.S. transition process described above. Once academic exclusion has occurred, no special admission pathway to the M.L.S. program is available.

An academically excluded former J.D. student may submit an application to the M.L.S. program and will be considered under the admission standards and processes applicable to other applicants with a prior academic exclusion. Prior enrollment in the St. Mary's J.D. program does not create a presumption of admission to the M.L.S. program.

D. Collaborative, Pathway, and Dual-Degree Programs

The School of Law may establish collaborative, pathway, dual-degree, and dual-credential arrangements with other academic units of St. Mary's University or with approved partner institutions. The terms, admission requirements, curricular requirements, credit-sharing provisions, and sequencing applicable to each arrangement are governed by the formally approved agreement and program requirements in effect for the participating student.

Participation in a collaborative or pathway arrangement does not independently alter the academic requirements of the M.L.S. degree or a Certificate except as expressly provided in the applicable approved program agreement. Students should consult the Office of Graduate Law Programs before enrolling in coursework intended to satisfy requirements in more than one program.

E. Transferability of St. Mary's Credit

Academic credit earned at St. Mary's University may be presented to another institution for consideration. The receiving institution alone determines whether St. Mary's coursework will be accepted for transfer, applied toward a degree or credential, or used to satisfy a particular curricular requirement.

St. Mary's University and the School of Law do not guarantee the transferability or applicability of academic credit to another institution or program. Students considering transfer should consult the receiving institution directly before making enrollment decisions based upon anticipated transfer credit.

IX. RETAKING COURSES

A student may retake a course in which the student previously earned credit only with the written approval of the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs.

When a course is retaken, both attempts remain part of the student's academic record and appear on the transcript. The grade earned in each attempt is included in the calculation of the student's cumulative grade-point average. Credit toward the M.L.S. degree or Certificate may be awarded only once for the same course, regardless of the number of attempts.

A student may be required or permitted to retake a course when necessary to satisfy a program requirement, prerequisite, academic-support requirement, condition of continued enrollment, or an applicable Compliance Certification Board (CCB) cumulative GPA requirement. Retaking a course does not remove or replace the grade earned in the earlier attempt.

A student seeking to repeat a course for purposes of satisfying a CCB cumulative GPA requirement must obtain prior written approval from the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs. Federal financial aid and institutional scholarship funds may not be applied to tuition attributable to a course repeated solely for this purpose.

X. EXAMINATIONS AND ASSESSMENT

A. Examinations, Papers, and Evaluations of Skills

Faculty may evaluate student performance through examinations, papers, projects, presentations, skills exercises, quizzes, or other academically appropriate assessment methods identified in the course syllabus. The method and weighting of assessment are determined by the faculty member subject to applicable School of Law and University policies.

When M.L.S. or Certificate students are enrolled in a course with J.D. students, the faculty member may use the same or a different assessment instrument and may weight components differently when appropriate to the learning objectives and academic level of the graduate-law cohort. Disability-related accommodations are governed exclusively by the Student Accessibility Services process described below.

B. Examination Scheduling, Conflicts, and Emergencies

Students are expected to take examinations at the scheduled date and time. A student who experiences an examination conflict, emergency, or other circumstance that may require an alternate examination arrangement must contact the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs in accordance with School of Law examination procedures. Individual faculty members should not independently reschedule final examinations or create alternate examination arrangements for individual students.

C. Online Examination Security and Student Accessibility Accommodations

Online examinations requiring identity verification are administered using Respondus LockDown Browser and Respondus Monitor, including webcam monitoring, or another University-approved secure testing method designated by the School of Law. Use of the required examination-security and

identity-verification system is mandatory for designated online examinations and may not be waived by an individual faculty member.

A student who requires a disability-related testing accommodation must request accommodation through Student Accessibility Services (SAS) in accordance with University procedures. Students should not request disability-related examination accommodations directly from individual faculty members. SAS determines whether an accommodation is appropriate and communicates approved accommodations to appropriate University and School of Law personnel.

Approved accommodations may affect examination time, testing environment, assistive technology, or other conditions identified by SAS. When an approved accommodation requires an alternative testing arrangement, the School of Law will implement an appropriate secure examination method consistent with the accommodation. An approved accommodation does not waive the requirement that an examination be administered through a secure, University-approved testing process.

XI. ACADEMIC ISSUES

A. Academic Support and Advising

Academic support and advising are integral components of graduate legal education and are intended to promote student development, effective learning strategies, and successful progression through the program. Students are encouraged to seek assistance early and may consult faculty members, the Office of Graduate Law Programs, the Office of Law Success, Academic Affairs, or Student Affairs as appropriate.

At any time during enrollment, the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs may require an M.L.S. or Certificate student to participate in academic advising, academic-support programming, or other appropriate services. Students with a cumulative grade-point average below 2.5 may be required to participate in such support as a condition of continued enrollment.

B. Academic Exclusion

An M.L.S. student whose cumulative grade-point average is below 2.0 after completing at least eight (8) credit hours is subject to academic exclusion. A Certificate student whose cumulative grade-point average is below 2.0 after completing at least four (4) credit hours is subject to academic exclusion. A student below a 2.0 cumulative grade-point average before reaching the applicable credit-hour threshold may be excluded at the discretion of the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs in consultation with the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.

Tuition, fees, financial aid, and any refund associated with academic exclusion are governed by applicable University policies and the timing of the exclusion. This Handbook does not guarantee a refund upon academic exclusion.

A student wishing to appeal academic exclusion must file a written statement with the Assistant Dean for Graduate Law Programs within fourteen (14) days after the date of the exclusion notice. The Assistant Dean may extend the filing period for good cause. The appeal is determined by the Dean of the School of Law, whose decision is final and non-appealable. Upon a showing of compelling

circumstances, the Dean may authorize a probationary semester subject to conditions designed to permit the student to return to good academic standing.

XII. TUITION AND FEES

Tuition and fees are established by St. Mary's University and are subject to change. Students are responsible for charges associated with their enrollment and for reviewing applicable University billing, payment, refund, and financial-aid policies.

Withdrawal from a course, change to audit status, leave of absence, academic exclusion, or other change in enrollment does not by itself create a right to a tuition refund or credit. Any refund or adjustment is determined under the University policy and refund schedule applicable at the time of the enrollment change.

Students receiving financial aid or scholarships are responsible for understanding how changes in enrollment may affect eligibility, disbursement, satisfactory academic progress, or repayment obligations and should consult the appropriate University financial-aid office when their enrollment changes.

XIII. REGISTERED STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS POLICIES

See Section VIII.A.-C. of the St. Mary's University School of Law Handbook for J.D. Students.

XIV. MISCELLANEOUS

See Section IX.A.-H. of the St. Mary's University School of Law Handbook for J.D. Students.

XV. PROHIBITED CONDUCT

M.L.S. and Certificate students are subject to the University Code of Student Conduct and applicable School of Law conduct and disciplinary policies, including provisions incorporated by reference from the J.D. Student Handbook where this Handbook is silent.

A student may not avoid, terminate, or interfere with a pending disciplinary, academic-integrity, or investigative process by withdrawing from a course, withdrawing from the School of Law, requesting a leave of absence, or changing enrollment status after the process has been initiated. The School of Law may delay or deny an enrollment-status change until the applicable process is completed and any resulting sanctions or conditions have been implemented.

Questions concerning the application of conduct policies to M.L.S. or Certificate students should be directed to the appropriate School of Law administrator.

APPENDIX A. MASTER OF LEGAL STUDIES COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Course descriptions are provided for academic planning purposes. Inclusion of a course in this Appendix does not guarantee that the course will be offered during a particular term or academic year, offered online, or available for enrollment by M.L.S. students. Course availability and registration are governed by Section V.H of this Handbook.

Required Core:

LW5601 Fundamentals of American Law (2 credits)

This course is intended to be a brief introduction to the American legal system, a broad overview of its structure, and an initiation to legal reasoning and the application of common (judge-made) and statutory law to various circumstances. This will include discussions of case briefing, legal analysis, and the similarities and differences between the various classes of public and private law in the United States. Finally, the course will introduce several key areas of law that are particularly important for students in their first year of legal education

LW5602 Legal Research and Writing (2 credits)

In these courses, students are introduced to the processes of case analysis, legal research, and legal writing. Written exercises are required, including the drafting of legal documents.

First Year Courses (at least two are required):

LW5317 Civil Litigation and Procedure (3 credits)

This course introduces students to constitutional limits on judicial power and to the theory and practice of civil procedure under the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Topics include: jurisdiction to adjudicate the liabilities of nonresident defendants; the structure and limited power of federal courts; and the stages of litigation (including pleadings; motion practice and the pretrial disposition of cases; formal discovery; and the trial process).

LW5311 Constitutional Law (3 credits)

This course introduces students to the United States Constitution. Topics include: the power of courts to interpret and apply the Constitution; the distribution of powers in the federal system, including the division of power among the three federal branches (separation of powers), and the division of power between the federal and state governments (federalism); and the protection of an individual's liberties from governmental interference. The individual liberty topic includes a discussion of the concept of state action and congressional enforcement of civil rights; substantive rights emanating from specific provisions of the Constitution, including the freedom of speech, religion and association; the right to equal protection of the laws; and those rights that are protected by, though not expressly mentioned in, the Constitution.

LW5403 Contracts (4 credits)

Contracts is a foundational course examining the law of voluntary exchange. Major themes include enforceable and unenforceable promises, remedies for broken promises, and interpretation of agreements. Topics include consideration; contract formation; capacity; duress; unconscionability and illegality; damages; conditions; mistake; impracticability and frustration; third party beneficiaries; assignment and delegation; the Parole Evidence Rule; and the Statute of Frauds.

LW5303 Criminal Law (3 credits)

Criminal Law is the basic course on public offenses. Students study the requisites of criminal responsibility, defenses to liability, and inchoate and group crimes.

LW5404 Property (4 credits)

Property (4 credits) introduces students to the legal concept of property. Basic concepts of entitlement and transfer of rights are explored in detail. Topics include: possession; estates and future interests; landlord and tenant; public regulation of land use and ownership (as in zoning and eminent domain); non-possessory interests in and regulation of land (including easements, real covenants and servitudes); and transfer of property by gift or sale.

LW5402 Torts (4 credits)

Torts focuses on the legal principles and public policies governing compensation for personal injuries, property damage, emotional distress, and other forms of serious harm. Topics include: the concepts of intent, negligence, and strict liability; defenses based on the plaintiff's conduct; causation and damages; vicarious liability; privileges; immunities; and statutes of limitations.

Upper-Level Courses (Core curriculum must be completed before upper level coursework):

LW5232 AI Management in Law and Compliance (2 credits)

This course explores the intersection of artificial intelligence (AI), law, and compliance, equipping students with the knowledge and skills to navigate the legal and ethical complexities of AI deployment in professional settings. Students will analyze regulatory frameworks, emerging law, and policy considerations shaping AI governance. Topics include data privacy, bias and fairness, intellectual property, liability, automation, and AI's role in compliance and risk management. Through case studies and applied exercises, students will assess AI-driven decision-making, develop risk mitigation strategies, and evaluate the evolving responsibilities of legal professionals in an AI-driven world.

LW5302 Administrative Law and Regulatory Interpretation (3 credits)

This course explores problems raised by the functioning of administrative tribunals in governmental rule-making, regulatory interpretation, investigation, and enforcement. There is a special emphasis upon rule-making, interpretation and the relationship between administrative agencies and the judicial system.

LW5219 Advanced Legal Research (2 credits – Legal Research and Writing is a Prerequisite.)

This course includes a basic bibliographic review of fundamental primary and secondary federal, state and local sources. Also included is an introduction to international law as integrated into U.S. domestic law under well accepted constitutional principles. Students are expected to complete a "pathfinder," a detailed research strategy for general and specialized sources in a subject area of law.

LW5508 Business Law and Ethics (1 credits)

Business Law & Ethics establishes what ethics is, how people and entities establish an ethical structure, and how that affects corporate behavior. In particular, numerous common legal and regulatory issues are addressed (including, but not limited to, whistleblowing, privacy, the FCPA,

and product liability) both in terms of the statutory and regulatory environment and in terms of an established and thoughtful ethical code.

LW5305 Business Structures and Statutory Compliance (3 credits – Contracts may be taken Concurrently)

This survey course studies issues relating to the selection of an appropriate business form (partnership, limited partnership, or corporation), as well as to the formation, financing, operation, and control of business associations. The course examines issues that can arise in associations of any size and character, and the topics considered include duties and potential liabilities of owners and managers, problems in the issuance of shares of stock and other securities, proxy regulation, insider trading, derivative litigation, and the role of corporations in society.

LW5405 Commercial Law and Contracting (4 credits – Contracts is a Prerequisite)

This course will focus on Articles 1, 2, and 9 of the Uniform Commercial Code, the provisions governing the sale of goods and security interests involving or related to goods. Topics considered include methods of creating and perfecting security interests; issues of priority; interrelationships between federal bankruptcy law and the UCC; and creditors' rights and obligations after debtors' default

LW5307 Compliance, Ethics and Risk Management (3 credits – Contracts may be taken Concurrently)

The course will offer an overview of a number of substantive law compliance areas such as antitrust, anticorruption/anti-bribery (e.g. US Foreign Corrupt Practices Act and the UK Bribery Act), privacy and employment law including social media compliance, data piracy such as what Target recently experienced, board of directors responsibilities, internet compliance, records management, conflicts of interest, compliance issues in M&A, international trade and business and U.S. export controls, wage and hour compliance, government contracting, anti-money laundering and fraud prevention, False Claims Act, SEC disclosures and compliance, and gifts and entertainment compliance.

LW5710 Constitutional Criminal Procedure (3 credits – Criminal Law and Constitutional Law are Prerequisites)

Criminal Procedure is a constitutional law course, with an emphasis on the 4th, 5th, 6th and 14th amendments of the United States Constitution. Topics include arrest; search and seizure; investigative detentions; warrant requirements; confessions and other incriminating statements; and the right to counsel.

LW5306 Creditors Rights and Bankruptcy (2 credits)

This course is designed not only for those interested in general bankruptcy practice, but also for those who anticipate that their practice will involve structuring commercial transactions or litigating business disputes. This is a basic course in debtor/creditor law, but with an emphasis on business bankruptcy. The course includes an overview of the general principles and forms of relief offered by the federal Bankruptcy Code, focusing especially on the legal and financial aspects of business bankruptcy and the process of reorganizations. The areas of emphasis will include the automatic stay; debtor-in-possession financing; operating and administering debtors' estates; treatment of executory contracts and leases; the avoiding powers of the trustee in bankruptcy; and the formulation and confirmation of plans of reorganization.

LW5613 Criminal Justice Procedures and Due Process (2 credits – Criminal Law is a Prerequisite)

This course examines the structure, operation, and legal foundations of the American criminal justice system, with particular attention to the role of due process in the administration of criminal justice.

Students explore the principal institutions of the criminal justice system, including law enforcement, courts, corrections, and related governmental actors, as well as the relationships among them. Topics may include theories of crime and punishment, criminal justice policy, professional roles and ethics, sentencing and incarceration, rehabilitation, and the historical development of criminal justice institutions and procedures.

The course also considers how legal rules, institutional practices, and policy choices shape the treatment of individuals throughout the criminal justice process and how competing interests in public safety, governmental authority, individual rights, fairness, and accountability influence the administration of justice.

LW5313 Cyber Law (2 credits)

This course provides an overview of legal issues arising from the use of digital technologies, information systems, and online environments. Students examine the legal risks and responsibilities associated with digital commerce, online activity, privacy, cybersecurity, data protection, cybercrime, and the creation and use of digital assets.

The course also explores the legal implications of evolving technologies and technology-enabled practices, which may include artificial intelligence, blockchain and distributed-ledger technologies, large-scale data collection and analytics, and emerging forms of digital interaction. Students consider how existing legal principles apply to technological change and how law, regulation, and organizational risk management respond to developments in the digital environment.

LW5612 Digital Evidence and Records (2 credits)

This course examines legal and practical issues involving electronically stored information (ESI) and digital evidence. Students explore forensic and information-management techniques relevant to cybersecurity incident response, data analysis, preservation of information integrity, and maintenance of appropriate chains of custody.

The course also addresses the production and management of ESI in legal proceedings, including electronic discovery, discovery disputes, spoliation, sanctions, and privilege. Legal and ethical considerations involving the preservation, collection, management, and use of digital evidence are examined throughout the course.

LW5309 Education Law (3 credits – Constitutional Law may be taken Concurrently)

This course provides a broad survey of the legal framework governing education in the United States, with particular attention to the rights and responsibilities of educational institutions, students, educators, and governmental authorities.

Students examine the constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and judicial sources of education law and

consider how legal rules shape educational policy and institutional decision-making. Topics may include school governance and finance, student and employee rights, civil rights, educational access and equity, institutional authority, and the respective roles of federal, state, and local government in education.

The course provides a foundation for more specialized study of legal issues affecting educational institutions, students, and families. Education Law is a prerequisite for Special Education Law.

LW5308 Employment Law (3 credits)

This course will address methods of proving a case of discrimination under Title VII of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, which forbids employment discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex or national origin. Issues covered may include sexual harassment, affirmative action, pay equity, and retaliation against employees who file charges of discrimination. The course will also cover procedural issues concerning enforcement, as well as the types of relief available. Other statutes, such as the Age Discrimination in Employment Act, Family and Medical Leave Act, and the employment discrimination provision of the Americans with Disabilities Act, may be covered.

LW5725 Employment & Human Resource Core (3 credits)

This course examines the organizational and human resource principles that shape workplace decision-making and the management of employees. Students explore topics including motivation, communication, leadership, organizational culture, human resource policy, teams, job design, organizational development, and change management.

The course also examines how individual, group, and organizational dynamics influence the development and implementation of workplace policies and management strategies. Students consider these principles within the broader legal, ethical, and organizational environment in which human resource professionals make decisions and manage workplace risk.

By developing an understanding of organizational behavior and human resource management, the course provides a professional foundation for applying employment law and related legal principles to workplace problems.

LW5625 Employment & Human Resource Law Capstone (2 credits)

This capstone course integrates and applies legal knowledge developed through the Employment and Human Resource Law curriculum to complex issues encountered by human resource professionals in public and private organizations.

Students identify and examine a significant problem, emerging issue, or unsettled legal question involving the employment or human resource environment. Through sustained legal research and analysis, students develop a focused thesis and complete a substantial capstone paper under faculty supervision.

The course emphasizes the integration of legal doctrine with professional application, requiring

students to analyze legal issues, evaluate their practical implications, and communicate reasoned conclusions appropriate to the professional environment.

LW5316 Family Law (3 credits)

This course is a survey of a wide variety of legal issues concerning the family unit, with an emphasis on the policies and changing nature of family law. Topics explored may include marriage requirements and consequences, divorce grounds, property division at divorce, child support, custody, non-marital children, domestic violence, parental rights, adoption, and non-traditional families.

LW5210 Forensic Investigations (2 credits)

This course introduces students to the principles and practices that shape effective criminal investigations. Students examine the role of evidence in identifying and apprehending criminal offenders and explore investigative methods used to locate, collect, preserve, and evaluate evidence.

The course also examines the legal and procedural issues that arise during criminal investigations, including the relationship between investigative practices, evidentiary integrity, and the legal standards governing the collection and use of evidence.

LW5410 Fundamentals of Information Systems and Cyber Security (4 credits)

This course provides an in-depth introduction to the foundational principles of information systems and cybersecurity. Students examine the organizational, technical, and risk-management concepts necessary to understand how information systems are designed, protected, assessed, and managed.

Topics may include security and risk management, asset security, security architecture and engineering, communications and network security, identity and access management, security assessment and testing, security operations, and software development security.

The course may incorporate concepts and competencies reflected in widely recognized cybersecurity professional frameworks and bodies of knowledge, while emphasizing their application to organizational governance, legal and regulatory compliance, risk management, and professional decision-making.

LW5312 Health Law (3 credits)

This course provides a broad survey of the legal and regulatory framework governing health care in the United States. Students examine the relationships among health care providers, patients, governmental agencies, regulators, insurers, and other participants in the health care system.

Topics may include professional and institutional licensing and regulation, quality and patient-safety requirements, privacy and confidentiality, health care liability, provider-patient relationships, regulatory compliance, and ethical issues arising in the delivery of health care.

The course also examines contemporary legal and policy issues affecting the organization, regulation, financing, and delivery of health care, providing students with a foundation for more specialized study in health care compliance and related fields.

LW5220 Health Policy & Management (2 credits)

This course surveys fundamental health policy and management concepts, focusing on how health policy is made, how the U.S. health care system is organized, and how health policy, management, and systemic factors influence population health.

LW5607 HIPAA Privacy Law (2 credits)

This course examines the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA) and its implementing regulations, with particular emphasis on the legal requirements governing the privacy and security of protected health information.

Students examine the roles and responsibilities of covered entities and other regulated parties; individual rights concerning health information; permissible uses and disclosures of protected health information; privacy and security obligations; breach standards and notification requirements; and regulatory enforcement.

The course emphasizes the practical identification and analysis of privacy, security, compliance, and enforcement issues arising in health care and other environments subject to HIPAA.

LW5212 Intellectual Property (2 credits – Property is a Prerequisite)

This course provides an overview of the foundational principles and evolving landscape of intellectual property law in the United States. Designed for graduate students pursuing advanced legal studies, the course examines the key doctrines of copyright, patent, trademark, and trade secret law, while considering the intersection of IP with emerging technologies, global commerce, and digital media.

LW5617 Intersectionality and Legal Justice (2 credits)

This course examines the various ways in which race, gender, classification, and the American legal system interact. As a survey course, topics may include affirmative action, the criminal justice system, racist and hate speech, interracial adoption, issues affecting minority women, and housing discrimination. The course examines historical and contemporary issues involving race, identity, and the law.

LW5231 Intro to Legal Evidence & Proof (2 credits)

The goal of this course is to help students develop a working knowledge of Evidence law. This means developing the ability to apply the rules of evidence and related doctrines to specific problems. To this end, much of the course will be example-based discussions regarding facts, evidence and legal proof in fields such as human resources, higher education and criminal justice.

LW5615 Legal Drafting Techniques (2 credits – Legal Research and Writing is a Prerequisite)

The drafting course will teach students the principles of contemporary commercial drafting and introduce them to documents typically used in a variety of transactions. The skills students will gain will be applicable to any transactional practice and will be useful to professionals on legal teams. On finishing the course, students should know for instance: the business purpose of contract concepts; how to translate a business deal into contract concepts; how to draft each of a contract's parts with clarity and without ambiguity; how to work through the drafting process; and how to review and comment on a contract. Students will perform drafting exercises throughout the semester.

LW5305 Machine Learning, Intellectual Property and the Law (2 credits)

This course examines the evolving intersection of machine learning, artificial intelligence, and intellectual property law. Students explore how emerging technologies interact with traditional legal frameworks governing copyright, patent, trademark, and trade secret protection.

Topics may include AI-generated content, authorship and inventorship, ownership and use of data, protection of algorithms and models, transparency and explainability, licensing, infringement, and emerging litigation and regulatory developments. Students apply intellectual property principles to practical problems arising in technology-dependent industries and professional environments.

No technical background is required. Foundational concepts in machine learning and artificial intelligence are introduced as necessary to support legal analysis and application.

LW5610 Mental Health and the Law (2 credits)

This course examines the legal issues that arise at the intersection of mental health, individual rights, governmental authority, and institutional decision-making. Students explore the legal frameworks governing the treatment, protection, and autonomy of individuals with mental health conditions in a variety of settings.

Topics may include civil commitment, involuntary inpatient and outpatient treatment, guardianship and less restrictive alternatives, mental health courts, mental health issues within the criminal justice system, disability rights, and legal protections affecting access to services and participation in public institutions.

The course considers the competing interests that frequently arise in mental health law, including individual autonomy, due process, public safety, governmental responsibility, and access to appropriate care and services.

LW5310 Negotiations (3 credits)

This course examines the theory, strategy, and practice of negotiation and conflict resolution. Students explore major approaches to negotiation, including integrative and distributive bargaining, and develop skills for identifying interests, evaluating alternatives, communicating effectively, and resolving disputes.

The course examines interpersonal and organizational dynamics that influence negotiation, including communication, culture, power, representation, the use of agents and intermediaries, and negotiation in individual and group settings. Ethical responsibilities and professional judgment are considered throughout the course.

Through the study and application of negotiation principles, students develop a foundation for more advanced study of facilitated dispute resolution and mediation.

Negotiations is a prerequisite for Mediation.

LW5604 Oil and Gas (2 credits – Property is a Prerequisite)

This course is the study of the law governing interests in oil and gas, with an emphasis on Texas law. Topics explored include the nature of interests in oil and gas; oil and gas leases; lease covenants, express and implied; title and conveyancing problems; transfers; and pooling and unitization.

LW5211 Personal Injury of Children (2 credits – Torts is a Prerequisite)

This course examines legal issues arising from injuries involving minors, with particular attention to negligence, liability, and injuries occurring in educational and youth-serving environments.

Students explore the legal principles governing duties of care, breach, causation, damages, and potential liability when children are injured. The course considers issues involving schools, governmental and private entities, employees, parents and guardians, and other individuals or organizations responsible for the care or supervision of minors.

Particular attention is given to identifying potential sources of liability, evaluating the legal consequences of injuries involving children, and understanding how the status of a minor and the setting in which an injury occurs may affect legal analysis.

LW5611 Police Liability (2 credits)

This course examines the legal principles governing civil liability involving law enforcement officers and agencies. Students explore the circumstances under which officers, agencies, and governmental entities may be subject to liability, as well as the legal doctrines, defenses, and statutory protections that may apply.

Topics may include constitutional and civil-rights claims, state tort liability, federal liability, immunities and defenses, supervisory and organizational responsibility, and statutory protections applicable to law enforcement personnel. The course emphasizes identifying sources of potential liability, evaluating legal risk, and understanding the relationship between individual conduct and institutional responsibility.

LW5616 Professional Responsibility & the Unauthorized Practice of Law (2 credits)

This course examines the legal, ethical, and professional responsibilities that arise when non-lawyer professionals work with law, lawyers, clients, courts, regulated organizations, and the public. Students explore professional responsibility principles, ethical decision-making, confidentiality, conflicts of interest, professional competence, and the boundaries between permissible law-related professional activity and the unauthorized practice of law.

Particular attention is given to recognizing when professional activities may constitute the practice of law, understanding the limits applicable to non-lawyer professionals, and developing strategies for working effectively and ethically within multidisciplinary professional environments.

LW5229 Public Health and Ethics (2 credits)

The law influences health, improving it in some cases, degrading it in others. This course surveys foundational public health law concepts, including the government's power and duty to prevent

disease and injury and promote the general welfare; the scope and limits of government authority; and the tension between protecting the public and upholding individual rights.

LW5708 Risk, Regulation and Reporting _ CCB Prep (3 credits)

This course examines the structure and operation of effective organizational compliance and ethics programs, with particular emphasis on risk identification, regulatory compliance, reporting, and program effectiveness. Students explore risk-based approaches to compliance challenges across a range of regulated environments, which may include anti-corruption and anti-bribery, privacy and data governance, corporate governance, records management, international trade, employment, government contracting, financial crime, fraud prevention, and regulatory reporting.

The course emphasizes the practical skills used by compliance professionals, including conducting internal investigations, drafting policies and procedures, performing risk assessments, evaluating compliance-program effectiveness, developing compliance training, communicating with organizational leadership and boards, and drafting and implementing codes of conduct.

Course content is designed to reinforce competencies relevant to professional compliance practice and may incorporate subject matter associated with applicable Compliance Certification Board (CCB) credentialing examinations. Students are responsible for determining current eligibility and examination requirements established by the applicable credentialing organization.

LW5614 School Discipline, Expulsion and Due Process (2 credits – Constitutional Law may be taken Concurrently)

This course examines the legal framework governing student discipline in educational settings, with particular attention to suspension, expulsion, and the procedural protections that apply when educational institutions impose disciplinary consequences.

Students examine the constitutional, statutory, regulatory, and institutional sources governing student discipline and consider issues involving notice, hearings, procedural due process, institutional authority, student rights, and the development and implementation of disciplinary policies and procedures.

The course also considers the intersection of school discipline with special education, disability, and mental health, including circumstances in which disciplinary decisions implicate additional legal protections or procedural requirements.

LW5709 Special Education Law (3 credits – Education Law is a Prerequisite)

Building upon the foundation established in Education Law, this course provides an in-depth examination of the legal framework governing the education of students with disabilities. Particular attention is given to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), related federal requirements, and applicable state law and regulations.

Students examine legal issues involving child find and identification, assessment and evaluation, eligibility, free appropriate public education (FAPE), least restrictive environment (LRE),

individualized education programs (IEPs), procedural safeguards, discipline, dispute resolution, mediation, and due process proceedings.

The course emphasizes the application of special education law to decisions involving students, families, educators, educational institutions, and other participants in the special education process.

LW5240 Special Needs Trusts & Benefits Planning (2 credits – Property Law is a Prerequisite)

This course examines the legal and practical principles involved in planning for individuals with disabilities and special needs, with particular attention to the use and administration of trusts and the preservation of eligibility for public benefits.

Students explore the creation, administration, and enforcement of special needs trusts, including the respective roles and responsibilities of settlors, trustees, beneficiaries, families, and other participants in the planning process. The course considers applicable fiduciary principles and the legal requirements governing trust administration.

Particular attention is given to the interaction between trust planning, public-benefits eligibility, fiduciary obligations, and the needs of individuals with disabilities, including relevant principles of Texas trust law.

LW5230 Trauma Informed Advocacy (2 credits)

This course examines the physiological, psychological, social, and emotional effects of trauma and their implications for legal and professional advocacy. Students explore how traumatic experiences may affect individuals' interactions with legal systems, institutions, professionals, and decision-making processes.

Topics may include the science of trauma, different forms and sources of trauma, the effects of trauma on communication and behavior, vicarious and secondary trauma, and the ways professional practices and legal processes may contribute to or mitigate trauma.

The course emphasizes an interdisciplinary, trauma-informed approach to advocacy and professional practice. Students develop strategies for recognizing trauma-related considerations, responding appropriately within professional boundaries, reducing the risk of retraumatization, and identifying relevant trauma-informed resources and practices.

LW5315 White Collar Crime (3 credits)

This course examines both the substantive and procedural law concerning various white-collar crimes that occur transnationally. Areas of criminal law include money laundering, tax evasion and corruption among others. Procedural issues such as prisoner transfer, evidence gathering and extraditions are also addressed.

LW5225 Wrongful Conviction (2 credits – Criminal Law is a Prerequisite)

This course examines the American criminal justice system through the study of wrongful convictions and exonerations. Students analyze the legal, institutional, evidentiary, and human factors that can contribute to the conviction of innocent persons and consider mechanisms for identifying and correcting wrongful convictions.

Topics may include eyewitness identification, false confessions, forensic evidence, investigative practices, prosecutorial conduct, indigent defense, post-conviction remedies, and institutional factors that contribute to error. Students also examine legal and policy reforms designed to reduce the risk of wrongful conviction and improve the reliability and accountability of the criminal justice system.

The course considers the consequences of wrongful conviction beyond the courtroom, including the challenges associated with exoneration, reentry, compensation, and restoration.