

What's What Law Student Handbook

Animal Law LLM Degree

Note: Please also refer to the registration letter sent to you by the Program Director for details on registration and the LLM Program. LLMs should also review all of the What's What — Student Handbook, as all general law school policies applicable to J.D. students also apply to LLM students, except as noted. LLM students should also look at the Animal Law LLM website.

Overview of Program Requirements: U.S. Students

To obtain the LLM degree, LLM students must earn a minimum of 26 semester hours of credit with a cumulative GPA of 2.50 or better. At least 18 of the 26 total credits must be from the animal law curriculum. All classes listed as animal law classes in the law school's registration materials, including summer animal law classes, count toward the 18 "animal law credits", except Administrative Law and Animal Law Fundamentals. Credits earned in Administrative Law and Animal Law Fundamentals count toward the 26 total credits needed, but not toward the 18 "animal law credits". The two credits of the required LLM seminar do count toward the 18 "animal law credits", as do the 6 credits earned for a thesis, if a student is approved and completes a thesis.

Students who have not previously taken an Administrative Law or a survey Animal Law class in law school fairly recently must take those classes as a LLM at Lewis & Clark as foundational courses. Students may take those classes in the summer or during the regular year. In some cases, students who did not take these two classes in law school, but who have substantial practice experience in administrative or animal law, may request permission from the program director to waive those courses. As noted above, if you need to take either or both of these classes at Lewis & Clark, they will count towards the 26 total credits needed for the degree, but not towards the 18 "animal law credits" needed.

In order to be sure you are meeting the requirements for the LLM degree in terms of total credits and correct number of "animal law credits," students are asked to submit their proposed schedules each semester to the program director and to inform the director of any schedule changes.

Overview of Program Requirements: International Students

To obtain the LLM degree, international students must earn a minimum of 26 semester hours of credit. International students are graded on a Credit/No Credit/Honors basis in all classes. Honors will be awarded in classes in which the qualifying LLM student would otherwise have received a grade of B+ or higher. In unusual circumstances, an international student can request to be awarded letter grades instead of Credit/No Credit/Honors within the first three weeks of the semester. The decision to award letter grades is final and irrevocable, and the student should take into account any future uses of the transcript by employers, other graduate schools, sponsors, and bar examiners before submitting a request. A form recording the student's request for letter grades and the director of the international LLM program's approval will be signed by both the student and the director.

Of the 26 required credits, two credits must be taken in the required Graduate Animal Law LLM Seminar. Of the remaining 24 credits, at least 18 credits must be in animal law classes. One of these must be Animal Law Fundamentals (unless the student has taken a similar course recently at a U.S. law school). We also strongly recommend that international students take Administrative Law as it is helpful in understanding the U.S. environmental regulatory and enforcement system. International students do not have the option to complete a thesis. As discussed below, the student will complete a professional-level graduate research paper in the LLM graduate seminar.

Grading Policy for International LLM Students

This grading policy applies to international LLM students. It applies to all classes, animal law and non-animal law.

These students are evaluated on a Credit/No Credit/Honors basis. The student will be awarded a grade of honors in classes in which the student would otherwise have received a grade of B+ or higher.

Students under this grading scheme who want to transfer credits into the J.D. program must have at least one Honors grade before applying to the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. The Associate Dean will then evaluate the application to determine whether the student meets admissions standards.

Any students evaluated by this method are not counted in the grading curve for the course.

LLM Seminar: All Students

All LLMs need to register for one credit of the Graduate Animal Law Seminar in each of *two* semesters (two credits total). Attendance is required for all LLMs. In most cases, students will prepare a 20-30 page paper as part of the seminar on an animal law topic of their choice and will be graded in the seminar on their overall participation in the seminar, class presentation on their paper, and the paper.

Course Load/Timing

LLMs must register for a minimum of 5 credits each semester, except for summer school and the student's final semester if less than 5 credits are needed to complete the degree. If a student wishes to take less than 5 credits in any semester that is not summer or the final semester, they must request permission to "underload" from the Program Director. Note that a student must be registered for at least 5 credits each semester to be considered a full-time LLM student. Being less than a full-time student may impact a student's ability to defer loan repayments (depending on the lender), so please plan accordingly.

U.S. LLMs have a total of two and one-half years in which to complete the degree. International LLMs under U.S. Homeland Security's regulations, must ordinarily complete their degree within 18 months and must contact the International Students and Scholars Office well in advance if an extension is needed. Extensions for U.S. students are granted only in exceptional circumstances upon written request to the Program Director.

Course Availability

All courses offered at the law school are open to LLM students, except courses for which an LLM student has already received credit in obtaining the J.D. or other degree. Internships and other practical experiences are available to LLMs some with an application process. These include the Animal Law Clinic, the International Environmental Law Project (working with the on-campus international environmental clinic), and Clinical Internship Seminar: Animal Law Legislation. You may also register for an Individual Research project with a faculty member. Consult the Course Description book for details on these opportunities.

Thesis

U.S. students who want to complete a written thesis should request permission from the Program Director by presenting a well-formulated topic and a faculty advisor. Students must register for six thesis credits. Students cannot register for less than six credits for the thesis. The Program Director will work with student if necessary to find a thesis advisor and two readers.

Note that once a student is no longer registered for credit and is only working on the thesis, they are no longer considered an enrolled student for purposes of school insurance coverage, repayment of loans, etc.

Leave of Absence/Withdrawal (LLM)

Leave of Absence

Students who need to take a temporary leave of absence from the program must request a leave in writing of the Program Director. The request must specify the basis for the requested leave and the estimated length of the leave. In the absence of unusual circumstances, leaves will be granted for one semester only. The time taken off for a permitted leave is requested and granted prior to the start of the published first day of the semester, the student will not be required to pay tuition for that semester. If the leave of absence is requested and granted on or after the published first day of the semester, charges will be pro-rated according to the Policy of Charge Adjustment found on page 83. Therefore, the semester tuition charges and the LLM Fee will be pro-rated on a per-day basis, based on the academic calendar, up to the 60% point of the period of instruction for the semester. After the 60% point, there will be no adjustment to these charges.

Withdrawal

If an LLM student wishes to totally withdraw from the program (i.e., not complete the program), the student must notify the Program Director and Registrar as far in advance as possible prior to the withdrawal. The withdrawal is effective as of the date the student notifies the Registrar and Program Director. Students who withdraw prior to the start of the published first day of the semester, will not be required to pay tuition for that semester. For LLM students who totally withdraw from the program on or after the published first day of the semester, charges will be pro-rated according to the Policy of Charge Adjustment found on page 83. Therefore, the semester tuition charges and the LLM Fee will be pro-rated on a per-day basis, based on the academic calendar, up to the 60% point of the period of instruction for the semester. After the 60% point, there will be no adjustment to these charges.

LLM Tuition

LLM students are charged tuition by the credit hour. LLM students also pay a Student Activity and Building Fee of \$85.00 per year.

Add/Drop form [available online](#).

LLM students may register for, add and drop courses throughout the first three weeks of school without penalty. The initial billing will be based on the number of credits registered for at the time of billing. To avoid late charges on tuition, please pay tuition by the time it is due regardless of possible schedule changes. Your account will be adjusted if you change your schedule within the three week add/drop period after paying your tuition.

PLEASE NOTE the following policy on tuition adjustments for schedule changes (not withdrawals): Dropping classes during the first three weeks: ***Tuition reversed at 100% for dropped credits (as long as student is not dropping all credits)***. Dropping classes after 3 weeks: ***no reversal of tuition charges for schedule adjustment***.

Insurance

All LLMs are subject to the same policies on insurance as J.D. students. Please consult the section of this book addressing insurance or visit the [Student Health Insurance Information](#) website for more details.

Please note that you must be a registered student to be eligible for the college's insurance. If you have completed your coursework and are just working on your thesis and are not registered for credits, you are no longer eligible for the college's insurance.

Contacts

If you have any questions about the LLM program, please consult the Program Director, Natasha Dolezal at 503.768.6976 or ndolezal@lclark.edu.