LL.M. in Individualized Legal Studies

15.0 Master of Laws (LL.M.) in Individualized Legal Studies (ILS)

15.1 Academic Requirements

15.11 A candidate for the LL.M. degree in Individualized Legal Studies (ILS) must successfully complete 24 semester hours of law credit drawn from the regular Drake Law School curriculum.

15.12 A candidate who wishes to do so may pursue a concentration, or major, within the LL.M. program by devoting 12 of these 24 credits to one of the areas of study set forth below:

1. Specialized Study (12 credits). This “build your own program” option consists of 24 semester hours of law credit drawn from the regular Drake curriculum. A student may design his or her own concentration by devoting 12 of these 24 credits to a specialized area of study of the student’s choice. Faculty members work closely with each LL.M. candidate to design a customized curriculum by selecting courses that are tailored to the candidate’s particular career goals or interests. Each student can choose his or her own individual specialization as an alternative to the prescribed concentrations (e.g., Human Rights and Global Citizenship, or Sustainable Development) listed below.

2. Business Law (12 credits). The following courses may be used to satisfy this concentration’s requirements: (Note: Courses followed by an asterisk cover subjects tested on some or all state bar examinations.)

   (a) Business Associations*
   (b) Business Planning
   (c) Business Tax
   (d) Current Problems in Corporate and Business Law
   (e) Federal Income Tax
   (f) International Trade
   (g) Payment Systems*
   (h) Real Estate Transactions
   (i) Sales*
   (j) Secured Transactions*
   (k) Other business, commercial, or tax law courses (as approved by the Program Director)

3. Human Rights and Global Citizenship (12 credits). The following courses may be used to satisfy this concentration’s requirements:

   (a) Art, Cultural Heritage, and the Law (3 credits) Revised 03/01/2011
Revised 03/29/2012

(b) Comparative Constitutional Law (3 credits)
(c) Human Rights seminar (3 credits)
(d) Intellectual Property Law and Human Rights (3 credits)
(e) International Environmental Law (3 credits) (proposed)
(f) International Intellectual Property Law (3 credits)
(g) Public International Law (3 credits)
(h) Independent Research (as approved by the Program Director)
(i) Other international, comparative, or human rights courses (as approved by the Program Director)

(4) **Sustainable Development (12 credits).** The following courses may be used to satisfy this concentration’s requirements:

(a) Food and the Law (3 credits)
(b) Environmental Regulation of Agriculture (3 credits)
(c) International Trade (3 credits)
(d) Introduction to Agricultural Law Problems (3 credits)
(e) Legal Issues in Wind Energy Development (2 credits)
(f) Rural Lands Rural Livelihoods (1 credit)
(g) Independent Research (as approved by the Program Director)
(h) Other sustainable development courses (as approved by the Program Director)

15.13 A candidate who chooses to pursue a concentration may devote the remaining credit hours to other courses drawn from the regular Drake Law School curriculum.

15.14 The Program Director will work closely with each candidate to design an individualized course of study that will give the candidate advanced knowledge of American and international legal principles to fit the candidate’s particular career goals.

15.15 No candidate with a J.D. from an ABA-approved law school will be given credit toward an LL.M. degree for repeating work or a course already completed by the candidate toward fulfillment of the candidate’s J.D.

15.16 Not all courses will be offered every semester. The law school, however, will make every effort to offer each course (or its equivalent) listed here at least once every two years. Applicants are advised to examine the schedule of courses on the law school’s website or consult with the Program Director to determine the availability of individual courses during specific semesters.

15.17 Subject to approval by the Program Director, students may elect to take no more than 6 new semester hours of related coursework outside the LL.M. curriculum, including related coursework at other academic units at Drake University. This arrangement will provide flexibility to students who have interdisciplinary interests or interests across various practice areas.
To be in good academic standing, and therefore eligible to continue law studies, candidates for the LL.M. degree are required to have at least a 2.5 cumulative grade point average (CGPA) at the completion of each semester of classes.

At least 12 semester hours must be earned in regularly scheduled class sessions at Drake Law School (i.e., excluding internship, clinic, independent research, and courses taken at another institution).

Subject to waiver by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, full-time students must complete the requirements for the LL.M. degree within two academic years and part-time students must complete the requirements within 84 months of entering law school.

**15.2 LL.M. Written Project Requirement**

Subject to waiver by the Program Director, a candidate for the LL.M. in Individualized Legal Studies shall write a paper of two to four (2-4) credit hours under the supervision of a full-time member of the Drake law faculty. The minimum standards for the paper are as follows:

1. The paper must be a written project of sufficient quality and suitably documented for a project of its type to be deemed of professional quality by the supervising professor.
2. The project must be at least 35 pages long, double-spaced on 8 ½” x 11” paper, including any footnotes.
3. The project must involve submission of a draft to the supervising professor, with the requirement of a rewrite at the option of that professor.

With the permission of the supervising professor, the LL.M. written project requirement can be satisfied by a paper or written project completed for any course within the LL.M. curriculum.

A candidate for the LL.M. may count the written project toward the required 24 semester hours of Individualized Legal Studies course work.

**15.3 Experiential Training Requirement**

Subject to waiver by the Program Director, a candidate for the LL.M. degree is required to satisfy an experiential training requirement by participating in one of the law school’s clinics or internship programs. This experiential component of the LL.M. program emphasizes hands-on training that is specially designed to maximize the candidate’s performance after graduation.

A candidate who wishes to concentrate in Human Rights and Global Citizenship can apply for internships with a wide variety of organizations that offer a high concentration of international and human rights work, both state and nationwide. The Law School has established ongoing internship relationships with Iowa Legal Aid, Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence, Iowa Coalition Against Sexual Assault, and the Iowa Civil Rights Commission,
as well as opportunities, upon application, with the Hola Center and the Immigrant Justice Project. In addition, a candidate can propose an independent internship to government agencies such as the Department of Defense, Department of Justice, Department of State, the International Trade Commission, and the United States Court of International Trade. A candidate can also apply to international non-profits and non-governmental organizations, including The Carter Center, the International Food Policy Research Institute, the World Trade Organization, Amnesty International, the Asia Pacific Forum, the International Committee of the Red Cross, and the United Nations. This listing of organizations is illustrative of internship opportunities and does not purport to be exhaustive. Independent internships require plan approval by the On Site Supervisor, Program Director, and Associate Dean.

15.33 For candidates who wish to concentrate in Sustainable Development, Summer Service Learning Internships are available through the Drake Agricultural Law Center. One opportunity the Center offers, using the financial support provided by Congress through the National Agricultural Law Center, is our summer Harkin Service Learning Internships. The internships provide stipends to Drake Law students to spend a significant portion of the summer working for a public or non-profit organization in the field of food policy, agricultural law or sustainable development. The internships provide students with valuable insights and experience in policy work and benefits sponsoring organizations by providing legal intern assistance. Internships are available with a range of organizations including: Iowa office, USDA Rural Development; ISU Beginning Farmer Center; Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation; International Food Policy Research Institute; USDA-Natural Resource Conservation Service; the Iowa Environmental Council; the Leopold Center for Sustainable Agriculture; and the Iowa Department of Agriculture and Land Stewardship.

15.34 The internship experiences described in paragraphs 15.32 and 15.33 are sometimes done for academic credit and sometimes done for compensation. Accreditation rules do not permit a candidate to earn academic credit for work for which the candidate is compensated (i.e., paid internships). However, with the Program Director’s approval, a candidate can satisfy the experiential training requirement in a paid internship; however, the internship will not count toward the required 24 semester hours of Individualized Legal Studies course work.

15.4 Additional Requirements for LL.M. Candidates from Non-Common Law Jurisdictions

Unless a waiver is granted by the Program Director, LL.M. candidates who do not have a basic or an advanced law degree in a common law jurisdiction must complete the following:

15.41 A course “Introduction to the American Legal System,” which will familiarize candidates with the structure of the American legal system and the requisite research techniques to support continued study; and

15.42 A course in Legal Writing and/or Legal Research.
15.43 Academic credits earned while satisfying 15.41 and 15.42 will count toward the 24 semester hours required in 15.11

15.5 Admission Requirements

15.51 The LL.M. program provides a rigorous academic program to advance the legal training of those who already hold a J.D., LL.B., or equivalent law degree.

15.52 The LL.M. program is open both to domestic and foreign students. Participants may enroll on either a full-time or part-time basis and may begin their studies in either the fall or spring semester. Students pursuing the part-time option, however, should be aware that Drake Law School does not offer a part-time J.D. program or weekend courses and are therefore expected to participate in courses offered during the daytime.

15.53 Unless approved by the Program Director, LL.M. candidates, including LL.M. or J.D. candidates who do not have a basic or advanced law degree in a common law jurisdiction, will not be able to begin their studies in the spring semester.

15.54 Strong writing and verbal skills, as well as a solid conceptual understanding of basic legal theory, are expected of all participants. Admission to the LL.M. program will be based on the following:

(1) an applicant’s academic records;

(2) an applicant’s professional accomplishments; and

(3) recommendations of persons with knowledge of the applicant’s capability to participate in a rigorous graduate-level academic program.

15.55 Applicants must submit all of the following items:

(1) a complete law school application in English or accompanied by a certified translation (including a personal statement of no more than three pages in length);

(2) an application fee of $50.00, subject to waiver by the Program Director;

(3) three (3) letters of recommendation (including at least one from a dean or faculty member familiar with the applicant’s academic performance and potential); and

(4) an official transcript from each college, university, professional school and/or law school the applicant attended.

15.56 LL.M. applicants are strongly encouraged, but not required, to submit GMAT, GRE, or LSAT scores.
15.6 English Language Competency

Foreign candidates for the LL.M. degree whose native language is not English must also submit documentation showing their TOEFL scores, including the TWE (Test of Written English). As a general rule, applicants are required to have a TOEFL score of 250 or above for the computer-based test, 100 or above for the Internet-based test, or 600 or above for the written test. Only results from tests taken within two years from the date of application to the LL.M. program will be considered. The law school may request the applicant to participate in a telephone interview.

15.7 Application Deadline

The application priority deadline is June 1 of the year in which an applicant wishes to be considered for admission. Admission decisions are made on a rolling basis. Late applications will be considered for admission only on a space-available basis.

15.8 Transfer of Foreign Law Graduates from the LL.M. Program to the J.D. Program

LL.M. candidates with a foreign law degree who subsequently matriculate into the J.D. program may apply credits earned as an LL.M. student toward the J.D. degree with the written consent of the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. If the student subsequently re-enters the LL.M. program after being awarded the J.D., credits earned in the J.D. program above the minimum required for award of the J.D. degree may be applied toward the LL.M. degree.

15.9 Transfer of Students from Other Graduate Law Programs

Candidates wishing to transfer from a graduate law program from another accredited law school should follow the procedure listed for new applicants. The applicant needs to provide transcripts showing the grades of all law-related coursework attempted in any institution, a class rank and a letter of good standing from the last law school attended by the applicant. Subject to approval by the Program Director, up to nine (9) semester hours of courses in which the student earned a grade of 2.5 (on a 4.0 scale) or above usually can be transferred to Drake University Law School. Grades from transferred courses, however, will not be calculated into the student’s cumulative grade point average at the Law School.

15.1.0 Accelerated LL.M. Program

15.1.1 With the approval of the Program Director, candidates who have taken relevant courses at Drake Law School as part of their J.D. program (including students earning a J.D. from another ABA-accredited law school who visited Drake Law School for two semesters or participated in the summer programs sponsored by Drake Law School) may be permitted to apply up to nine (9) semester hours for credit toward the LL.M. degree.

15.1.2 This accelerated option makes it possible for students to earn both the J.D. and LL.M. degrees with substantial savings in time and money. J.D. coursework can be used to satisfy the basic, LL.M. paper, and experiential training requirements. Students who have
claimed nine (9) credits toward the LL.M. degree under the J.D./LL.M. option and need to complete the experiential training requirement will be able to count their internship or clinic participation toward the 12 required in-house credits of regularly scheduled class sessions.

15.2.0 Nondiscrimination Policy

15.2.1 Drake University does not unlawfully discriminate on the basis of sex, race, color, religion, creed, national or ethnic origin, age, disability, or veteran or veteran disability status in administration of its employment and personnel policies, educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other University-administered programs. Further, Drake University reserves the right to take affirmative action in connection with this policy in accordance with applicable law.

15.2.2 Drake University admits students, without regard to sexual orientation, to all rights, privileges, programs and activities generally accorded to or made available to students at the University, and does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation in administration of its employment and personnel policies, educational policies, admission policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other University-administered programs, except when such discrimination is required by Federal or State law or regulations.