

## **Master of Legal Studies (M.L.S.) Program Special Rules**

Adopted by the School of Law Faculty, December 15, 2004  
Amended January 23, 2006  
Amended May 4, 2015

These special rules apply specifically to the M.L.S. program and the students enrolled therein. In the absence of language in these special rules governing the program, the general Rules of the School of Law are presumed to apply either directly or by analogy, unless the subject of the general rule is not relevant to the M.L.S. program or its students.

The M.L.S. program also falls under the jurisdiction of the SIUC Graduate School. The graduation requirements set out below fulfill the requirements of the Graduate School; however, students must apply and be accepted independently by both the SIUC Graduate School and the School of Law.

### **Article I — Admission**

#### **1. Admission**

- a. Graduate School Admission. Applicants to the M.L.S. program must apply and be accepted into the SIUC Graduate School. The application process for the Graduate School proceeds independent of the School of Law process.
- b. Admission to the School of Law
  - i. Graduate Admissions Committee. Admission to the M.L.S. Program requires positive action by the Graduate Admissions Committee. The Graduate Admissions Committee shall consist of the Director of Graduate Legal Studies and two members appointed by the Dean. A fourth member of the Committee, who shall be a faculty member teaching in the health law and policy specialization, shall be appointed by the Dean to serve when the Committee considers applications to the M.L.S. program with a specialization in Health Law and Policy.
  - ii. Bachelor's Degree. To be admitted as a candidate for the Master of Legal Studies degree (M.L.S.), an applicant must hold a bachelor's degree from an accredited U.S. college or university, or hold an equivalent degree from a non-U.S. college or university and make

a showing of proficiency in English.<sup>1</sup>

- iii. Academic and Other Achievement. Successful applicants will have a proven record of academic achievement, substantiated by documentation of educational and professional accomplishment. Relevant professional experience after receipt of the bachelor's degree which prepares the applicant for the study of law will be considered.
- iv. LSAT/GMAT/GRE. Applicants must also demonstrate academic ability by completion of the Law School Admission Test, GMAT, or the Graduate Record Examination taken within two years of application. This requirement may be waived for applicants to the Health Law and Policy specialization who have three years of experience in a health care occupation, or under other circumstances which justify such a waiver.
- v. Fee. Applications for admission to the M.L.S. program must be filed with an application fee payable by check or money order in U.S. currency.

2. **Transfer of Current or Former SIU J.D. Students to M.L.S. Program** [added 1/23/06]

- a. Current or former SIU law students may apply for admission to the M.L.S. program. Such applications will be considered on the basis of the earlier J.D. record, and experience and education since enrollment in the J.D. program ceased. Applicants who seek admission under this section must include in their personal statement a declaration that they intend to abandon and not renew study in the J.D. program at any time.
- b. For successful applicants who have completed the first year of J.D. studies, the two "introduction to law" program requirements, specified in art. II, sec. 1.b, will be waived. All M.L.S. students are required to meet the "thesis" requirement through independent (writing) study or a senior seminar as provided in art. II, sec. 1.d.
- c. Successful M.L.S. applicants may also transfer, with the approval of the

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1. Such proficiency will ordinarily be demonstrated by achieving a certain score on the TOEFL examination or proof of having successfully completed college level classes taught in English. A TOEFL score of 600 was contemplated by the New Programs Committee in the development of the LL.M. and M.L.S. programs. This compares to a required score of 550 for admission to the SIUC Graduate School. Specific standards will be established by the Graduate Admissions Committee and reviewed annually.

Director of Graduate Legal Studies, at the time of enrollment, academic credit from the J.D. program in which a grade of at least 2.0 was earned. Any credit earned or transferred from the J.D. program to the M.L.S. program may not later count toward the SIU J.D. program.

## **Article II — Academic Regulations**

### **1. Degree Requirements**

- a. Residence Requirements. A student must complete not less than two semesters of residence in the School of Law for full-time enrollment or three semesters for part-time enrollment.
- b. Required Courses. Students are required to successfully complete four mandatory courses: Introduction to Law and the Legal System (Law 498), Introduction to Legal Research and Writing I (Law 499A), Introduction to Legal Research and Writing II (Law 499B) and M.L.S. Writing Seminar (Law 599-2). [amended 5/4/15]
- c. Credit hour requirement. Subject to the exceptions provided in Art. II, paragraph 4, a student must complete at least thirty semester hours of credits in law courses approved by the Director of Graduate Legal Studies. For students pursuing a concentration in Health Law and Policy at least twelve of these required credit hours must be completed in health law and policy courses.
- d. Research. Candidates must write a thesis that demonstrates an ability to research and write at an acceptable graduate level. The thesis requirement shall be satisfied by successful completion of the M.L.S. Writing Seminar, Law 599-2. [amended 5/4/15]
- e. Time Limitation for Completion of M.L.S. Students must complete all requirements for the M.L.S. program within four years of first matriculation.
- f. Enrollment Status. A student must be enrolled in at least nine credit hours per semester (not Summer term) for full-time enrollment. Less than nine hours is considered part-time enrollment. [added 5/4/15]

### **2. Grades and Grading System**

- a. Scale. Grades for M.L.S. students shall be awarded on the following scale which corresponds to the scale used by the Graduate School.
  - i. A      Excellent      4 grade points.

B	Good	3 grade points
C	Conditional	2 grade points
D	Poor	1 grade point
E	Failing	0 grade points

- ii. Only courses in which a student earns a grade of A, B, or C count toward graduation requirements.
  - iii. Other marks may be entered in a student transcript to indicate course completion status, but only grades of A, B, C, D, or E will be used to calculate grade point average.
- b. Academic Evaluation. M.L.S. students will be evaluated separately from law students. Correlatively, M.L.S. students shall be excluded when determining the mandatory median grade for a course. Although M.L.S. students may be required to take the same examinations and perform the same mandatory exercises as law students, M.L.S. students are not enrolled to become lawyers and a different level of performance is expected of them.

Individual grading policies and course requirements may be established for M.L.S. students by the faculty member for each course. For example, as a substitute for a comprehensive final exam, a paper of high quality could be utilized as a means to academically evaluate the student. M.L.S. students may be required to take the same final examination as J.D. students, but the M.L.S. students examinations shall be graded separately.

3. **Academic Good Standing, Probation, and Dismissal** [amended 5/4/15]
- a. Good Standing. Students with a cumulative grade point average of 3.0 or above shall be considered in good standing.
  - b. Course Credit. A student shall not receive credit toward the M.L.S. degree in any course in which a grade of less than 2.3 is earned.
  - c. Dismissal. A student whose cumulative grade point average is below 3.0 at the completion of any semester shall be dismissed and may not petition for re-admission.
4. **Credit for Courses Earned Outside the SIU School of Law**
- a. Up to six semester hours of credit for course work taken in the SIUC Graduate School or the SIU School of Medicine may be granted with the permission of the Director of Graduate Legal Studies and the appropriate official from the Graduate School or the School of Medicine. For these

credits to count toward the fulfillment of the general thirty credit hour requirement, a grade of “B” or better must be earned.

- b. With the approval of the Graduate Admissions Committee, a student may transfer at the time of initial enrollment up to 6 credit hours for post baccalaureate course work taken in another graduate program prior to application. The student must have earned a grade of “B” or better in such courses, and the courses must have been germane to the course of study the student wishes to pursue in the M.L.S. program. Approved credit hours will count toward the thirty credit hour M.L.S. requirement.
  - c. A student may not have more than a total of six hours of transfer credit for courses taken outside the SIU School of Law. [added 5/4/15]
5. **Attendance**
- a. Faculty may not waive regular attendance policies for M.L.S. students.
6. **Class Availability**
- a. M.L.S. students will not be counted for the purpose of determining maximum enrollment in a specific class.