

Online Master's Programs from Washington University School of Law

A Top 20-Ranked Law School for 2023¹



About the Washington University School of Law

Washington University School of Law has a history of expert leadership and excellence in legal education. As one of the top 20 law schools in the United States — ranked by U.S. News and World Report in 2022 — the School of Law has been American Bar Association-approved since 1923 and has long been led by a team of internationally recognized faculty who are experts and innovators in their fields.

Explore Our Program Offerings

Our ABA-acquiesced degree programs can all be completed **entirely online** and include a range of electives, so you can tailor your education to your career goals:

Master of Legal Studies (MLS):

Designed specifically for non-lawyers and professionals looking to build their knowledge of the U.S. legal system to better perform their law-related tasks at work. Students can earn one of five certificates to specialize in a particular area of law. Complete in as few as 12 months.

Master of Legal Studies (MLS) in Taxation:

Equips students who do not hold a J.D. with an understanding of tax law, including procedural and technical aspects. Students graduate ready to assist individuals and organizations in all major areas of tax law, such as accounting, government and corporate taxation. Complete in as few as 12 months.

Master of Laws (LL.M.) in Taxation:

Designed for lawyers and law school graduates who want to specialize in tax law. Students will learn to solve complex tax issues and adapt to changing tax legislation. Complete in as few as 12 months.

Master of Laws (LL.M.) in U.S. Law:

Designed for international lawyers who would like to improve their understanding of U.S. law in order to practice law in the U.S. or to work at an international law firm. Complete in as few as 12 months.

¹2023 Best Law Schools, US News & World Report. Ranked in 2022

What Can You Do with a Legal Degree?

Master of Legal Studies

Professionals in almost all industries work with legal procedure in some capacity — from risk management to government regulation. With an MLS degree, you will graduate equipped with the foundation in U.S. legal concepts and procedures needed to advance your career. The skills you will gain include:

Building and Negotiating Contracts

Through courses like Contracts and Negotiation, you will learn to understand legal terminology and develop the skills to safeguard yourself and your company. Skills like these are ideal for professionals looking to negotiate client partnerships, build and revise contracts for transactions or start their own businesses.

Advocating for Clients and Patients

Through courses like Trial Advocacy and Health Law, you will gain the legal background to better understand laws and citizen rights so that you can more effectively petition for clients and patients on the job. These are important skills for professionals in health care, social work, nonprofit and advocacy work.

Researching and Consulting

Learning how to adeptly navigate the law, advise clients on legal matters, and use research databases like LexisNexis and Westlaw are skills that are transferrable across a wide variety of industries — including politics and government, dispute resolution and mediation, and business and finance.

Master of Legal Studies in Taxation

This program is meant for professionals who do not hold a juris doctor (J.D.). You will gain a specialized understanding of federal and state tax law so you can help your organization(s) and clients make better decisions. During the MLS in Taxation program, you will be able to:

Learn from tax law experts

Our esteemed faculty will teach you how to apply tax law knowledge and concepts to real-world situations, including procedures for addressing tax disputes at the federal, local and state level.

Gain fundamental knowledge of tax law

Gain expertise in areas like ERISA and corporate tax regulation as well as the critical thinking and analytical skills needed to anticipate and address changing tax legislation.

Advance your career

Leverage your new tax skills to advance within your industry or pursue career roles such as tax professional, CPA, mergers and acquisitions professional, tax specialist government contractor and financial product advisor.

Master of Laws in Taxation

With tax law expertise, recent law school graduates and lawyers will be able to explore positions in public, private or nonprofit sectors and assist clients on matters of compliance, estate planning and corporate taxation. With the Tax LL.M., you will be able to:

Become a tax specialist

Use your comprehensive understanding of tax law to pursue career paths such as a tax attorney or M&A lawyer at law firms as well as clerkship opportunities at tax courts.

Support accounting firms and businesses

Leverage your tax expertise within accounting firms as a legal advisor or tax consultant, and work with corporations as an in-house tax lawyer or financial product advisor.

Work as a lawyer for the government

With a degree in tax law, you will be able to work as a lawyer in the tax department at governmental agencies that include the Department of Justice and the IRS.

Master of Laws in U.S. Law

With tax law expertise, recent law school graduates and lawyers will be able to explore positions in public, private or nonprofit sectors and assist clients on matters of compliance, estate planning and corporate taxation. With the Tax LL.M., you will be able to:

Practicing in the U.S.

Upon completion of the LL.M. in U.S. Law programs, you will be eligible to take the bar exam in California and Washington state. International attorneys often pursue an LL.M. in U.S. Law as a shorter path to becoming a practicing attorney in the United States than a traditional three-year J.D. program.

Working at International Firms

With a solid understanding of U.S. or international law, you will be able to expand your job prospects to international firms and take on clients from around the world.

Practicing at Home With Greater Insight

Understanding the complexities of another country's legal system and how the law works on a global scale can help you bring new

“Distance isn’t an obstacle. This program has helped me meet new people around the world and share knowledge.” — Diana Contreras, Master of Laws (LL.M.)

Explore the Online Learning Experience

Designed to match the rigor of our on-campus programs, this program is led by the same faculty who teach on campus — allowing you to earn your degree from a top-20 law school without relocating or putting your commitments on hold. Our live, face-to-face video technology fosters an intimacy that encourages close collaboration between you and your peers and faculty, just like in a physical classroom.

The learning experience includes:



Live, online classes: Held on our videoconferencing platform, classes enable you to interact directly with your professors, ask questions and collaborate with peers in real time. Class sizes are limited to maintain a small student-to-faculty ratio.



Course work that complements your class sessions: Course work assigned outside of class prepares you for your weekly live class sessions, where you are challenged to apply what you have learned. Materials are available at any time, from any device.



Interactive learning: Faculty conduct class using the Socratic method. This teaching method helps you reach your own conclusions about the course material through discussion and debate — and encourages you to actively engage in class.



LexisNexis and Westlaw access: Throughout the program, you are given access to law databases that allow you to supplement your studies by analyzing real legal cases and research.



Optional in-person learning: You can enhance your online learning experience by attending an optional weekend-long immersion on the Washington University campus in St. Louis, Missouri. During the immersion, you will complete a 1-credit elective course, tour legal landmarks and network with your classmates and faculty.

The School of Law also offers an optional externship. We partner with you to match you with a law firm near your community, where you will apply the skills gained in the classroom to real-world cases in the tax field.

As a student in the program, you will receive dedicated support from the School of Law's Student Services team, who will assist you with the interactive technology, class enrollment and any questions you may have throughout the program. You will also gain access to our career services team, who offer a professional development course, one-on-one advising and information sessions to help you move your career forward.

Ongoing Support

Throughout your time in the program, you will receive dedicated support from our Student Services staff, who are specially trained to assist you with interactive technologies, class enrollment and any questions you may have. You will have access to our Career Services team — before and after graduation — who offer a professional development course, one-on-one advising and information sessions to help you move your career forward.