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## SIU LAW LL.M. FAQ'S

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### ***What does the abbreviation LL.M. stand for?***

It derives from the Latin phrase *Legum Magister*, which means *Master of Laws*.

### ***What is the LL.M. program?***

The Master of Laws (LL.M.) degree is recognized in legal education as the first advanced degree beyond the Juris Doctor (J.D.). The SIU School of Law offers two distinct educational opportunities to receive the LL.M.: a general LL.M. providing customizable specialization and a high specialized LL.M. in Health Law and Policy.

If you do not have a J.D. or equivalent degree, you are not eligible for LL.M. study at SIU School of Law. A more appropriate choice might be the Master of Legal Studies program.

### ***What are the benefits of obtaining an LL.M. degree?***

The LL.M. degree benefits lawyers with an established practice who desire to add a graduate level law degree to increase their expertise in a particular field, to qualify for a different position, or to establish a credential to enter the field of legal education. The degree may benefit those who have recently completed the basic J.D. degree and who desire to add a graduate level law degree to enhance their marketability as they enter into the practice of law or into the highly specialized area of health law and policy. The LL.M. degree also benefits graduates of law schools in other countries who desire to learn about the American legal system either as a prerequisite to sitting for a bar examination in select states or to enhance their marketability as a practicing lawyer in their native country.

### ***What are the criteria for admissions?***

An applicant for the LL.M. program must either hold a J.D. degree from an ABA accredited school or an equivalent degree from a law school located in an English speaking country that follows the common law system. Applicants who hold an equivalent law degree from a school located in a non-English speaking, non-common law country may be admitted only upon

showing a proficiency in English. Successful applicants will have a proven record of academic achievement, ordinarily having graduated in the upper one-half of their graduating J.D. class. Professional experience after receipt of the J.D. degree which prepares the applicant for advanced study of law will be also considered.

Foreign trained lawyers who wish to apply to the LL.M. program are required to register with the Law School Admission Council (LSAC). LSAC collects and authenticates the applicant's transcripts and TOEFL or IELTS scores, and mails an evaluation of those documents to SIU School of Law.

### ***What is the process for admission?***

Candidates will be evaluated by the School of Law Graduate Admissions Committee. In the case of application to the Health Law and Policy specialization, the candidate must be approved by the Director of the Center for Health Law and Policy.

### ***What are the curriculum requirements?***

Both the general LL.M. and the specialization in Health Law and Policy require the completion of 24 semester hours of credit in law courses approved by the Director of Graduate Legal Studies. Of these 24 hours, at least 3 semester hours must be earned in producing a substantial research paper of publishable quality. 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. A grade of "B" or better must be earned for the credits to count toward the 24 credit hour requirement.

Students enrolled in the Health Law and Policy specialization are required to complete at least 12 of the required 24 hours in specialized health law and policy classes and to participate in two externship placements. Placements may be waived by the Director of Graduate Legal Studies based on previous or contemporaneous employment in the health care field. An SIU J.D. graduate may apply for up to six hours of credit earned in health law related courses in which a grade of "B" or better was earned in the SIU J.D. program.

With approval of the Graduate Admissions Committee, a student may transfer at the time of initial enrollment up to 6 credit hours for post J.D. course work taken at another ABA accredited law school or in a non-law graduate program. The student must have earned a grade of "B" or better in the post J.D. courses, and the courses must have been germane to the course of study the student wishes to pursue in the LL.M. program.

***What is the cost of obtaining an LL.M. degree?***

The tuition rates for the LL.M. program are the same as the tuition rates for the Southern Illinois University School of Law J.D. degree program. Current rates can be found on our [Admissions page](#).

***Is there an application fee, and may I obtain a waiver?***

The application fee of \$50 must be paid by check or money order in U.S. currency. Candidates whose checks are drawn from banks outside of the U.S. should provide a money order or cashier's check in lieu of a personal check. The fee is non-refundable and cannot be waived.

***When are the application deadlines?***

Our preferred deadlines are May 1 for candidates wishing to begin the program in the Fall term, October 1 for candidates wishing to begin in the Spring term, and March 1 for candidates wishing to begin in the Summer term.

***Can the LL.M. degree be pursued on either a full-time or part-time basis?***

Yes. Students may elect either full or part-time status. The program must be completed within five years of matriculation.

***Are there any scholarships available? Can I obtain financial aid?***

At this time there are no scholarships available. Questions concerning financial aid should be directed to the Southern Illinois University Carbondale [Financial Aid Office](#). Additional information is available on the [Graduate School website](#).

SIUC Financial Aid Office  
900 South Normal Ave.  
Woody Hall, B- Wing, Third Floor  
Southern Illinois University  
Carbondale, IL 62901-4702  
618.453.4334  
[fao@siu.edu](mailto:fao@siu.edu)

***Is there student housing available on campus?***

Yes, some graduate student housing is available through [University Housing](#). They may be reached by phone at 618-453-2301 or their [online contact form](#).

***Are guided tours of the law building available?***

Yes. Contact Lisa David at [ldavid@law.siu.edu](mailto:ldavid@law.siu.edu) or by phone at 618-453-8858. Several days notice would be appreciated.

***Does the University offer English language classes for those whose primary language is not English?***

The study of law depends on fluent use of the English language. All applicants need to be able to demonstrate a mastery of written and spoken English prior to admission. However, through the SIU [Center for English as a Second Language](#) (CESL), an intensive curriculum in the English language is available to prospective University students. They may be reached via phone at 618-453-2265 or by email at [cesl@siu.edu](mailto:cesl@siu.edu).

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