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## SIU LAW M.L.S. FAQ'S

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### *What is the M.L.S. program?*

The Master of Legal Studies (M.L.S.) program is a post-baccalaureate degree program designed for those who wish to obtain an advanced knowledge of the law and the legal system but who do not wish to become lawyers. SIU Law offers two distinct concentrations in the M.L.S. program: the general M.L.S. providing customizable specialization and the specialized M.L.S. in Health Law and Policy.

If you already have a J.D. degree, the M.L.S. is not an appropriate choice. In that case, the LL.M. degree program may be a more appropriate choice.

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

The M.L.S. degree is not a substitute for a law degree. Rather, it is designed to train non-lawyers to be able to identify, understand and respond to commonly-encountered legal issues. Program graduates will be able to perform basic legal research and write clear, analytical, and publishable papers. Graduates will understand the process of judicial and legislative decision making, the effects of the decisions, and how to evaluate current legal authority, and how to apply it to factual situations. Educational administrators, law enforcement administrators, human resource managers, government regulators, hospital administrators, and risk management specialists, among many other professions, would benefit greatly from the program.

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

There are two sets of admissions criteria. First, the SIU Graduate School has requirements based on, among other things, undergraduate and graduate grade history. Information is available on the [Graduate School website](#). Also, the School of Law has guidelines for admissions based on test scores, work experience, and extracurricular involvement. All applicants must possess a bachelor's degree and demonstrate academic ability, ordinarily by completion of the LSAT, GRE or GMAT takes within two years of application. Test scores 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. 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.

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

Candidates first submit an application to the SIU Graduate School. Next, an application with supporting materials must be submitted to the M.L.S. program. Admission to the M.L.S. program requires positive action by the SIU School of Law Graduate Admissions Committee. Completed applications for the Health Law and Policy specialization will also be reviewed by the Director of the Center for Health and Policy.

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

The M.L.S. program requires the completion of 30 semester hours of credit in law courses approved by the Director of Graduate Legal Studies. The curriculum is designed to introduce students to legal study through two courses: Introduction to American Law and Legal System, and Legal Writing and Research for Non-Lawyers. In addition to these required courses (three credit hours each), student will complete the remainder of their course work by taking regular law school classes. Those opting for the Health Law and Policy concentration complete essentially the same curriculum as other M.L.S. students, but are required to complete a minimum of 12 hours in health law related courses.

Up to six credit 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 credit hours to count toward the fulfillment of 30 semester hour requirement for graduation, a grade of "B" or better must be earned.

The three credit hour thesis requirement may be satisfied by successful completion of Law 590 (Senior Writing Seminar). Such completion demonstrates the candidate's ability to research and write at an acceptable graduate level.

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

The tuition rates for the M.L.S. program are currently the same as the tuition rates for the Southern Illinois University Graduate School. [Current tuition rates](#) can be found on the Graduate School webpage.

***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 is the application deadline?***

Our preferred deadline is May 1.

***Can the M.L.S. 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 four 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.