

Ave Maria School of Law

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■ Introduction

Ave Maria School of Law offers students a distinctive legal education that focuses on professional excellence, the moral foundations of the law, and the harmony of faith and reason. As a national Catholic law school, Ave Maria is committed to producing highly competent graduates who are able to reflect critically on the law, the principles that undergird it, and their role within the legal system.

The student body of Ave Maria School of Law is drawn from 47 states and several other nations. With a student-faculty ratio of approximately 14 to 1, students benefit from ready access to experienced faculty members who have served as attorneys in private practice and governmental service, and as judicial clerks. The faculty prepares students to practice at the highest level and to succeed on bar exams throughout the country. Graduates from the 2003–2005 classes achieved an overall bar-pass rate of 88 percent in 33 states. The quality of Ave Maria's academic program also is recognized by judges across the country who have hired graduates as judicial clerks—with 34 clerkships secured by members of the 2003–2006 graduating classes.

Ave Maria encourages applications from students of all faiths who seek a distinctive legal education enriched by the Catholic faith and the Catholic intellectual tradition.

■ Enrollment/Student Body

While many of Ave Maria's 380 students come to the School of Law directly from their undergraduate institutions, others have earned postgraduate degrees and have work experience in fields including business, medicine, engineering, military, and education. More than 200 different undergraduate colleges are represented at the School of Law, including Boston College, Christendom College, Cornell University, Franciscan University, Notre Dame, Princeton, the University of Michigan, the University of Pennsylvania, and many other fine schools.

■ Faculty

At the core of the Ave Maria School of Law education is the faculty who teach and mentor students. Faculty members bring to the classroom experiences as attorneys in private practice, judicial clerks, and teachers and administrators at other law schools. In hiring faculty, the law school administration has sought individuals who will be able to translate the mission of the School of Law in the classroom, in their scholarship, and in their service. Ave Maria faculty members actively contribute to the profession through their legal research, writing, and involvement in professional and civic organizations. Our faculty includes 21 full-time professors and Judge Robert H. Bork. Professional skills courses are taught by six legal writing lecturers and two clinicians. Select upper-level courses are taught by adjunct faculty members drawn from area law firms, corporations, and the judiciary.

■ Library/Physical Facilities

The Ave Maria Law Library is the intellectual heart of the law school, offering students and faculty access to a rich and varied collection of materials and online resources in an environment

that is conducive to study and research. The library's collection is both broad and deep. The collection is composed of book, electronic, and microform formats and is especially strong in US Supreme Court materials and natural law, canon law, legal history, and legal ethics. Contemporary titles in political science, economics, history, and philosophy augment the collection. The library provides a comfortable, inviting, and technologically advanced environment for study and research. All study spaces, including carrels, table- and soft-seating, and a suite of group-study rooms, have data and electrical outlets for accessing online resources. The library's student-friendly environment allows food and beverages to be enjoyed everywhere in the library except the computer labs.

■ Curriculum

Ave Maria School of Law awards the Juris Doctor degree after three years (90 credits) of full-time residential study. The required curriculum ensures that all students develop those skills that are fundamental to the effective practice of law—analysis, reasoning, problem solving, research, writing, oral advocacy, and others. Through elective courses, students have the opportunity to focus on specific subject areas of interest, such as commercial law, employment law, international law, and intellectual property law. A central tenet of the educational philosophy at Ave Maria is that law and morality are inherently intertwined. Ave Maria School of Law affirms Catholic legal education's traditional emphasis on the natural law written on the heart of every human being.

■ Admission

Ave Maria enrolls talented individuals from diverse backgrounds who seek a rigorous and distinctive legal education. To this end, Ave Maria evaluates applicants from a whole-person perspective and considers many factors, including work experience, activities, background, obstacles overcome, accomplishments, undergraduate and graduate school records, Law School Admission Test (LSAT) scores, letters of reference, and the applicant's personal statement. Ave Maria recognizes that a diverse student body, drawn from throughout the United States and internationally, enriches the educational atmosphere.

■ Student Activities

By providing opportunities for interaction among students, faculty, and the legal community, Ave Maria ensures a vibrant, professional atmosphere and a constructive law school experience. A five-day Orientation Program, a Distinguished Speaker Series, conferences, and the Ave Maria Mentor Program, together with a challenging and comprehensive curriculum, provide Ave Maria students with an exceptional law school experience. A multitude of student organizations offer students the opportunity to pursue their specific areas of interest and augment their law school education.

■ Career Services/Placement

Ave Maria School of Law graduates accept employment with an array of employers in all regions of the country, including

national and regional law firms, such as Sidley Austin; Butzel Long; Shook, Hardy & Bacon; and Holland & Hart. Other graduates have been successful in obtaining employment with state and federal governmental agencies, including the US Departments of Justice and Defense. A number of Ave Maria graduates choose to begin their legal careers with public interest law organizations such as the Thomas More Law Center, the Spanish Catholic Center, and the Bioethics Defense Fund.

The Career Services Office uses a proactive and individualized approach to assist students during each stage of the career-search process—exploration, counseling, strategizing, résumé and cover letter preparation, interviewing, and consideration of employment offers. The full-time staff of three, two of whom are attorneys, is dedicated to expanding employment opportunities for students through the cultivation of relationships with legal employers throughout the region and the nation.

Applicant Profile

Believing that the undergraduate record and the LSAT results are only two of many important facets of an applicant's qualifications for admission to the profession, the Admissions Committee at Ave Maria School of Law has chosen not to

■ Expenses/Financial Aid

Ave Maria offers a generous scholarship program that annually provides more than 40 full- and three-quarter tuition scholarships to members of the entering class. Additionally, the School of Law annually awards as many as 15 scholarships to entering students who have a record of service and leadership in select areas. Ave Maria School of Law is among a select group of professional schools that has adopted a "tuition pledge," whereby tuition does not increase for the student's second or third years of law school. This tuition pledge ensures that students are in a better position to create a three-year financial plan for law school. Tuition for members of the fall 2006 entering class is \$30,345.

■ Housing

Ave Maria's 11-acre campus is within walking distance of apartments, condominiums, and single-family homes. The law school Admissions Office staff provides assistance to students during their search for housing and, if applicable, roommates.

provide a data grid. Prospective applicants who wish to obtain greater information regarding admission standards are welcome to contact a member of the Admissions Office staff at 734.827.8063.