

Washington and Lee University School of Law

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■ Introduction

Washington and Lee University School of Law, founded in 1849, is located in Lexington, Virginia, approximately three hours southwest of Washington, DC, in the Blue Ridge Mountains. The School of Law is fully accredited by the ABA and is a member of the AALS. Washington and Lee is known for providing its students with an academically rigorous and professionally challenging legal education in an environment characterized by a commitment to students, small classes, a generous student-to-faculty ratio, and a collegial community.

■ The Honor System

The W&L community is governed by an Honor System that is the foundation for academic and student life at the university. The Honor System is an integral part of a professional education that fosters a sensitivity to the ethical imperatives of the legal profession. The Honor System means that the library is always open, exams are unproctored, the exam schedule for upper-class students is flexible, and professors are free to give take-home examinations. The Honor System contributes significantly to a law school environment characterized by mutual respect, trust, and collegiality.

■ Curriculum and Clinical Programs

All first-year classes are required. The second- and third-year curriculum is almost entirely elective, and students choose from over 120 upper-class courses. Offerings in corporate and business law, international law, health law, public policy and regulatory reform, and civil and criminal litigation are particularly strong. A wide variety of public interest clinical programs and externships provide students with opportunities for hands-on client contact experience as part of the academic program. Clinics include the Virginia Capital Case Clearinghouse, established to assist attorneys representing clients charged with or convicted of capital crimes; the Black Lung Administrative Law Clinic, in which students represent coal miners seeking disability benefits under federal law; the Community Legal Practice Center, which provides a range of legal services to qualified area residents; the Legal Aid Society, which provides legal services to indigent clients in a range of civil matters; the Public Prosecutors Program, in which students assist federal and state prosecutors with investigations, trial preparation, pretrial and trial practice, and appeals; and the Judicial Clerkship Program, through which students act as law clerks to trial, appellate, juvenile and domestic relations, and federal bankruptcy judges.

■ Special Programs

JD/MHA. With Virginia Commonwealth University in Richmond, W&L Law offers a program through which students can receive a JD and a master's in Health Administration on an accelerated basis. Dual-degree candidates must be accepted for the program by both VCU and W&L; a portion of the degree requirements are taken on the campus of each university.

LLM in United States Law. W&L Law offers a one-year program in United States law to attorneys who hold a foreign law degree.

■ Student Activities

Students have three journal opportunities: the *Washington and Lee Law Review*, a quarterly journal for scholarly discussion of legal issues; the *Journal of Civil Rights and Social Justice*, focusing on legal issues with an impact on racial and ethnic minorities; and the *Environmental Law Digest*, a practitioner-oriented newsletter covering environmental case law and legislation in Virginia and the Fourth Circuit. A variety of moot court and advocacy competitions allow upper-level students to hone advocacy, counseling, negotiation, and trial skills.

W&L Law students have established numerous groups such as the Black Law Students Association, Asian Pacific American Law Students Association, Women Law Students Organization, OUTLaw, Jewish Law Students Association, Christian Legal Society, Rationalist Society, Law Families, Federalist Society, American Constitution Society, National Lawyers Guild, and chapters of three national professional fraternities. Practice-oriented groups include the Environmental Law Society, International Law Society, Tax Law Society, Sports and Entertainment Law Society, Public Interest Law Students Association, Students for an Innocence Project, and Intellectual Property and Tech Law Society. Student groups foster a rich intellectual environment at the School of Law by presenting programs that address issues of special concern to their members.

■ Admission and Financial Aid

W&L Law actively seeks a diverse student body whose members are of different religious, racial, ethnic, economic, and geographic backgrounds. The admission process is highly individualized. Students are not ranked by any numerical index, nor is there an assigned weight given to any objective or subjective factor presented in the application. The Admissions Committee considers not only the cumulative undergraduate grade-point average, but also trends in grades, the rigor of an applicant's academic program and the quality of the school attended, the LSAT score, extracurricular activities, community service, evidence of leadership, graduate study, work experience, assessments of recommenders, and any information presented in the applicant's personal statement. An applicant may request an interview with a member of the admission office staff. Applicants are encouraged to visit the school to sit in on classes, tour the facility, and talk with students and faculty. A generous scholarship endowment allows W&L Law to assist a large percentage of its students with merit-based grant funds.

■ Career Planning and Professional Development

W&L Law graduates practice in every state and throughout the world. More than 70 percent of recent graduates practice outside Virginia. The two counseling professionals in the Office of Career Planning and Professional Development hold JD degrees and work with each student individually to develop a

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unique career plan. OCP&PD provides instruction in résumé and cover letter writing, networking, and other career development skills. It also provides programming on a wide variety of practice specialities and settings, and acts as a liaison between students and legal employers. Law students interview with prospective employers on campus, at a satellite location in Charlottesville, and at programs throughout the United States. An active alumni network assists students with contacts in every state.

■ Law Library and Physical Facilities

Sydney Lewis Hall, home of the School of Law, was built in 1976 and expanded in 1991 with the addition of the Lewis F. Powell Jr. Archives, which house the Supreme Court and professional papers of retired Supreme Court Justice Powell, a graduate of the university's college and law school. Wireless Internet access is available throughout the building. Every classroom has been renovated within the past five years and is equipped with state-of-the-art technology; the moot courtroom was completely renovated in 2006. The building, including the law library, is open 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Students have access to the library collection on an open-stack basis.

Applicant Profile

Washington and Lee University School of Law

This grid includes only applicants who earned 120–180 LSAT scores under standard administrations.

LSAT Score	GPA																						Total	
	3.75 +		3.50–3.74		3.25–3.49		3.00–3.24		2.75–2.99		2.50–2.74		2.25–2.49		2.00–2.24		Below 2.00		No GPA		Apps	Adm		
	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm		
175–180	3	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	10	
170–174	48	47	31	30	26	24	23	23	6	6	4	1	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	140	131	
165–169	148	148	153	143	129	99	75	33	31	13	11	2	2	0	2	2	0	0	4	2	555	442		
160–164	272	128	334	82	253	14	135	5	39	4	19	2	5	1	2	0	0	0	4	0	1063	236		
155–159	83	6	122	14	107	4	63	3	32	2	13	0	6	1	1	0	0	0	3	0	430	30		
150–154	45	7	78	4	60	4	51	0	31	0	18	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	286	15		
145–149	15	0	31	1	35	1	35	0	15	0	7	0	6	0	3	0	0	0	4	0	151	2		
140–144	5	0	8	0	13	0	21	0	11	0	5	0	5	0	1	0	0	0	3	0	72	0		
135–139	0	0	4	0	4	0	8	0	6	0	4	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	30	0		
130–134	1	0	2	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	10	0		
125–129	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	0		
120–124	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Total	620	339	765	276	629	148	416	66	173	26	83	5	29	2	11	2	0	0	23	2	2749	866		

Apps = Number of Applicants

Adm = Number Admitted

Reflects 99% of the total applicant pool.