

Liberty University School of Law

1971 University Boulevard

Lynchburg, VA 24502

Phone: 434.592.5300; Fax: 434.592.5400

E-mail: law@liberty.edu; Website: www.law.liberty.edu

■ Introduction

The inaugural class of Liberty University School of Law graduated in 2007. Its first-time bar passage was 83 percent in Virginia (where 72 percent of all examination takers passed) and 89 percent overall. Distinctively Christian, the law school has attracted national attention for its innovative program of legal education and for its practice opportunities for its students. The school expects its student body to reach approximately 450 within a few years, maintaining the collegiality that students and faculty now enjoy. The law school and adjoining law library are advantageously located on one level in Liberty University's million-square-foot Campus North complex. The 330-seat ceremonial courtroom features a 9-seat bench, which replicates the US Supreme Court bench and is designed to prepare students to argue before the nation's highest court. Two other mock trial courtrooms, all classrooms, and the law library include the latest technologies, including SMART technology and wireless connectivity throughout. The 4,900-acre campus of Liberty University rests in the eastern foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains in Central Virginia, approximately 180 miles southwest of Washington, DC.

■ Program of Legal Education

Liberty's ground-breaking law program has three distinct but related components: foundations of law, substantive law courses, and lawyering skills. In keeping with the law school's mission "to equip future leaders in law with a superior legal education in fidelity to the Christian faith expressed through the Holy Scriptures," the foundations courses explore the thoughts and writings of those who shaped the American legal system. The Christian worldview permeates the curriculum. The six-semester skills program has two threads: a litigation thread and a planning thread. Each student moves a simulated case from the initial client interview to the court verdict and develops the practice skills essential to planning client affairs. While the core courses look much the same as at other law schools—same course names, same subject matter coverage, same casebooks—Liberty's distinction is in the linkage of the substantive law courses to the foundations and lawyering skills courses. Typical course integration would be learning contract law in Contracts, drafting contracts in Lawyering Skills, and exploring the origins of contracts in Foundations of Law. The law faculty is highly accessible to students throughout each day. In addition to academic advising and support from faculty, many Liberty law students take advantage of the Academic Support Program.

■ Academic Support

The Academic Support Program begins with an intensive four-day Barristers' Orientation for entering students. During the academic year, the program staff assists law students in achieving their full academic potential, helping them with class preparation, class participation, and examination strategies. Support includes post-class reviews prior to taking law school examinations and practice-exam workshops. The program director holds workshops on case briefing, note taking, time and stress management, outlining, exam preparation, and legal writing. All students may take advantage of one-on-one

tutorials to help them assimilate course material and apply classroom knowledge to law school examinations. The Academic Support Program also provides training to assist students with bar examination preparation.

■ Clinics, Externships, and Centers

The law school places a high priority on equipping students with the skills necessary to practice law, as evidenced in its Lawyering Skills program. Its externship and clinical programs provide the next step in the continuum of classroom learning, from simulation to live-client and other real-life practice experience. The Constitutional Litigation Clinic works in conjunction with Liberty Counsel, a nonprofit legal organization specializing in constitutional law, which has offices on the Liberty University campus. Students work on cases with a heavy constitutional law component. They experience all phases of newly filed and ongoing Liberty Counsel cases, including having direct client contact, attending attorney strategy sessions, drafting legal documents, and, where permitted by local rules, participating in hearings and trials.

The Criminal Law Externship Program is the flagship of the law school's externship offerings. It places law students as externs in county and federal prosecutors' offices under the supervision of experienced practitioners. Students are placed in a host of field-study venues including state and US attorney's offices; local, state, and federal courts; state supreme courts; and public interest organizations. The public service externship component gives students a wide variety of individualized experiences in public service law and pro bono legal assistance. In addition, Liberty students are obtaining summer positions ranging from the White House and the Department of Homeland Security to private law firms and corporations.

The School of Law has formed a partnership with Liberty Counsel in founding the Liberty Center for Law and Policy. The Center trains law students who have career plans in public interest litigation with a focus on constitutional and religious liberty advocacy.

■ Cocurricular and Student Activities

In addition to the Student Bar Association (SBA) and other student organizations, the law school has competitive teams in moot court, mock trial, and alternative dispute resolution, along with a transactional competition program. Students produce the *Liberty University Law Review*. Student life includes attending the wide range of events on the campus of Liberty University and enjoying the sociability of the law school community. Law students have access to all of the university's recreational facilities. Many law students volunteer their time in pro bono activities, such as the Street Law program, which is designed for local youth involved in the juvenile justice system. The law school also matches students with private practitioners engaged in pro bono work and notifies students of opportunities to intern in legal aid offices, public defender offices, and prosecutorial offices.

■ Career Services

The Center for Career and Professional Development serves law students and alumni by providing tools to develop skills essential

for career development, by cultivating a lifelong commitment to professionalism and community service, and by promoting regional and national awareness of the law school's distinctive program of legal study. The Center cultivates internship and pro bono opportunities and works cooperatively with the school's clinical and externship programs to foster relationships with members of the bench and bar to the benefit of students and alumni. Alumni are working in all sectors of law practice, and placement statistics to date are available at the Center.

■ Information Resources and Technologies

With many comfortable seating areas and easy access from the classrooms, Ehrhorn Law Library provides an environment conducive to research, study, and writing. To its growing collection of approximately 255,000 volumes and volume equivalents, the law library is continually adding titles that support the curriculum and undergird the law school's mission. Along with its extensive microform archives, the law library provides access to law-related and general databases via the Internet through any Web browser. These electronic databases are available to law students on or off campus. Reliable wired and wireless access to the Internet is provided throughout the law school facility. Every classroom has SMART technology. The law school community benefits from a high level of university support for its state-of-the-art computing, instructional, informational, and audio-visual technologies.

■ Admission and Financial Aid

Many law schools have developed courses of study that give expression to a particular jurisprudential perspective, be it law and economics, legal realism, or policy-oriented jurisprudence.

Liberty University School of Law has chosen to do the same, developing its curriculum and standards of conduct consistently with the Christian worldview. Its admission process is designed to identify those who desire to receive a legal education from this perspective. Each completed applicant file is reviewed by a law faculty committee. That committee gives careful attention to a full range of factors that indicate the applicant's likelihood of success in law school and the legal profession. It attempts to identify strengths and indicators of success that may not show up in test scores and to ensure that students make fully informed decisions in deciding to attend Liberty University School of Law.

Written applications and letters of recommendation are used to identify applicants with strong communication skills, levels of interest, personal traits, and life experiences that exhibit a calling to law and potential for success in legal education and the practice of law. The personal statement, which addresses prescribed discussion points noted in the application for admission, is of particular importance in the admission decision.

Institutional scholarships are awarded on the basis of prior academic excellence and indicators of law school success, and for demonstrated leadership and service in keeping with the law school's mission. Qualified Virginia residents receive the Virginia Tuition Assistance Grant (VTAG). Committed to debt management, the law school assists each student with a financial aid package to meet individual needs.

The Office of Admissions and Financial Aid assists prospective students and law students with the law school admission process, financial aid, and other matters related to relocation and matriculation. To schedule a visit, call 434.592.5300 or e-mail law@liberty.edu.

Applicant Profile

Liberty University School of Law

Entering Class	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008
LSAT 25%-75%	148-157	150-155	148-153	148-154
LSAT Median	153	152	150	150
UGPA 25%-75%	2.98-3.65	2.97-3.61	2.75-3.57	2.85-3.49
UGPA Median	3.27	3.26	3.35	3.16
Average Age	27	25	28	25
Minorities	10%	18%	16%	18%
Women	40%	34%	38%	32%
Married	32%	30%	26%	22%
Advanced Degrees	18%	10%	10%	10%
Enrolled from outside VA	73%	74%	80%	68%