

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.

With a student-to-faculty ratio of approximately 16 to 1, Ave Maria students benefit from ready access to experienced faculty members who prepare students to practice at the highest level and to succeed on bar exams throughout the country. The quality of Ave Maria's academic program is recognized by judges throughout the nation who have hired graduates as judicial clerks—with 54 clerkships secured by members of the 2003–2007 graduating classes, most of these federal clerkships.

In the summer of 2009, Ave Maria School of Law will relocate from its present location in Michigan to southwest Florida, some 7 miles inland of the Gulf Coast. The new location will enhance the school's ability to fulfill its distinctive mission as a Catholic law school dedicated to professional excellence. In the new location, students will have employment and externship opportunities with courts and law firms in nearby Naples and Fort Myers, while the law school's clinical programs will be able to serve the indigent population in the largely agricultural town of Immokalee. Law students will also benefit from an array of services and facilities provided by Ave Maria University and the family-friendly town of Ave Maria. With no other law school serving this rapidly developing region, which is expected to double its population in the next two decades, the School of Law will be both a catalyst and a beneficiary of the area's dynamic growth.

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

■ Curriculum

Ave Maria School of Law awards the Juris Doctor degree after three years (90 credits) of full-time residential study. The required curriculum of 60 credits 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.

■ 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 19 full-time professors, six legal writing lecturers, and three clinicians. Select upper-level courses are taught by adjunct faculty members drawn from area law firms, corporations, and the judiciary.

■ Enrollment/Student Body

While many of Ave Maria's 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, the military, and education. More than 170 different undergraduate colleges are represented at the School of Law, including Brigham Young University, Christendom College, Franciscan University, Hillsdale College, University of Notre Dame, Princeton University, Thomas Aquinas College, the University of Michigan, and many other fine schools.

■ 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 Akin Gump, Sidley Austin, Butzel Long, Reed Smith, Roetzel and Andrus, Skadden Arps, and Holland and Hart. Graduates have also been successful in obtaining employment with state and federal governmental agencies, including the US Departments of Justice, Homeland Security, and Defense, as well as multiple prosecutor's offices nationwide.

The Career Services Office uses a proactive and individualized approach to assist students during each stage of the career-search process, 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.

■ Library/Physical Facilities

The Ave Maria Law School Library is housed in an environment that is both welcoming and conducive to research and study. Materials are available in all formats; the collection is particularly strong in digital resources. Apart from a fine compilation of US and International primary and secondary legal materials, the Ave Maria Law Library's collection emphasizes the areas of canon law, bioethics and biotechnology, natural law, and related philosophy, history, political science, and economics titles. Seating in the Library includes a variety of carrel, table, group study, and soft-seating. Network connections are available at every seat, and leisure reading in the form of magazines and daily newspapers is provided.

■ Admission

Ave Maria School of Law 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 experience.

■ Student Activities

By providing opportunities for interaction among students, faculty, and the legal community, Ave Maria School of Law 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.

■ Housing

The new Vineyards campus in Naples, Florida offers on-site housing as well as close-by 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.

■ Expenses/Financial Aid

Ave Maria School of Law offers a generous scholarship program that annually provides as many as 50 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. Tuition for members of the fall 2008 entering class is \$33,460.

Applicant Profile

Ave Maria School of Law has chosen not to provide an admission profile grid. This reflects our commitment to consider every applicant from a whole-person perspective. Every component of the application is carefully reviewed,

and, while qualifications as measured by LSAT and GPA are important, equal consideration is also given to the applicant's background, letters of recommendation, and personal statement.