

## University of Montana School of Law

32 Campus Drive

Missoula, MT 59812

Phone: 406.243.4311

E-mail: lawadmis@umontana.edu; Website: www.umt.edu/law

### ■ Introduction

The University of Montana (UM) School of Law is located in Missoula on the west slopes of the Rocky Mountains. Missoula is situated halfway between Yellowstone and Glacier national parks and is surrounded by several of the largest designated wilderness areas in the continental United States. The city is known for its outdoor opportunities and quality of life.

The School of Law was established in 1911 and serves as a legal center for the state. It has been accredited by the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) since 1914 and by the American Bar Association (ABA) since 1923. As one of the smallest law schools in the nation, the University of Montana School of Law offers students a congenial academic, intellectual, and social environment.

As the School of Law enters its second century of preparing students for the practice of law and community leadership, we have embarked on a project to substantially renovate and expand our building. We are scheduled to complete this project in July 2009. The 2009 entering class will be the first to enjoy our new facilities that include new classrooms, formal and informal study spaces, clinic and student-group offices, and student lounge and community areas.

### ■ UM's Program

The University of Montana School of Law integrates theory and practice throughout its curriculum to instill entry-level practice and competence in its graduates. The School of Law's curriculum, teaching methodology, and assessment techniques are designed to address the following components of a lawyer's work: (1) knowledge of the law, (2) ability to apply legal rules to solve problems, (3) ability to use lawyering skills (e.g., negotiation and client counseling), (4) perspective on the societal role and responsibility of lawyers, and (5) sensitivity to the dynamics of social and interpersonal interaction.

The school has created three distinctive programs to acquaint first-year students with the ways lawyers think and work: (1) the Introductory Program, (2) the Lawyer Skills Program, and (3) the Law Firm Program. In the Introductory Program, students are initiated into the legal culture by surveying legal history, the American legal system, the litigation process, legal writing, and legal analysis and jurisprudence. The School of Law is one of the few to introduce first-year students to the skills involved in dispute resolution, including client counseling, legal document drafting, and oral argument. UM's program encourages students to cooperate and collaborate rather than compete as they begin to think and work as lawyers. Entering students belong to "law firms"—groups of seven students (called "associates") directed by upper-class students.

The school has long emphasized performance in its curriculum. The school's Legal Writing and Dispute Resolution programs represent a coherent and comprehensive approach to lawyering skills. Students master specific transactional skills such as planning an estate, drafting a contract, and creating a small business.

The upper-division clinical training program provides students with a wide range of opportunities to earn required academic credit by working on actual cases under the supervision of faculty and practicing attorneys in Missoula.

The clinical offerings include the Natural Resource Clinic, ACLU Clinic, Federal Judicial Clinic, Indian Law Clinic, Montana Legal Services Association Clinic, Prosecutory clinics (federal, state, county, and municipal), Defense clinics (federal, state, county, and municipal), University of Montana Legal Counsel Clinic, Child Support Enforcement Division, ASUM Legal Services Clinic, Land Use Clinic, Mediation Clinic, USDA General Counsel Clinic, and Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation Clinic.

### ■ Special Programs

The School of Law offers a certificate program in Environmental and Natural Resource Law, natural resource clinics, and the opportunity to participate on the *Public Land and Resources Law Review*.

The School of Law also offers a certificate program in Alternative Dispute Resolution and the opportunity to participate in the Mediation Clinic. In conjunction with the School of Law, UM's graduate school offers a certificate in Natural Resources Conflict Resolution. It is the only graduate-level certificate program in the Rocky Mountain West specifically designed to provide students a working knowledge of the theory and practice of collaboration, consensus building, and conflict resolution as they apply to natural resources and the environment.

The School of Law also offers concentrations in the areas of Trial Advocacy and Dispute Resolution, Indian Law, and Business and Tax Law. Montana is home to seven Indian reservations. The School of Law's Indian law courses, Indian Law Clinic, and Native American Law Student Association provide opportunities for students to learn about and participate in the administration of justice for Montana's Native Americans.

The School of Law offers three joint-degree programs. Students can combine their law degrees with a Master of Science in Environmental Studies, a Master of Business Administration, or a Master of Public Administration. These programs can lead to completion of the joint degree in as little as three years.

### ■ Admission

A committee of law faculty reviews applications. Candidates must be of good moral character, have intellectual promise, and have a baccalaureate degree from an approved college or university prior to matriculation. Applicants are considered in resident or nonresident pools. The School of Law seeks a diverse student body and welcomes applications from members of groups historically underrepresented in the legal profession.

The School of Law recommends that you submit your application as soon as possible. We begin reviewing completed applications as they are submitted. Applications are not considered complete until all application materials, including the LSDAS report, are received. If your file is completed by February 15, you will be notified of a decision (admit, deny, or retain for further review) by March 15. If your file is completed by March 15, you will be notified of a decision by April 15. Files completed after March 15 may be considered on a space-available basis.

The most important admission criteria are the cumulative undergraduate GPA and the LSAT score. If the LSAT is

repeated, all scores will be used in evaluating the applicant. The admission committee weighs such factors as writing ability; college attended; trend in grades; quality of work in difficult courses; experience prior to application to law school, including graduate study; ability to overcome economic or other disadvantages; and change in performance after an absence from school.

The school recognizes a commitment to provide full opportunities for the study of law and entry into the legal profession of qualified members of groups (notably racial and ethnic minorities) who have been victims of discrimination.

### ■ Student Activities

All students are members of the Student Bar Association. Its programs contribute to the professional development and the social life of the student body. Clayberg Inn of Phi Delta Phi national law fraternity encourages scholarship, promotes fellowship, and fosters the ideals of the profession. Other organizations include student chapters of the American Association for Justice (AAJ), the ACLU, Christian Legal

Society, Environmental Law Group, Federalist Society, International Law Student Association, Military Law Society, Montana Public Interest Law Coalition, Native American Law Student Association, Rural Advocacy League, and the Women’s Law Caucus. The *Montana Law Review* and the *Public Land and Resources Law Review* afford supplementary training in analyzing legal problems precisely and presenting legal issues cogently.

The University of Montana School of Law is proud of its performance in interscholastic competitions. Nearly every year, the School of Law fields teams that compete at the national level. Most recently, UM won the 2000 National Moot Court Championship. UM won the ATLA trial competition national championship in 1992 and the national ABA Client Counseling Competition championship in 1990.

Additionally, the Environmental Law Moot Court Team, which competes at the Pace Moot Court Competition each year, won the Best Oralist Award in 2002, and competed in the final round in 2005. Likewise, the Indian Law and Jessop International Law Moot Court teams have won oralist and brief honors in their respective national, and in the case of the Jessop team, international, competitions.

## Applicant Profile

University of Montana School of Law

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

LSAT Score	GPA																						
	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		Total		
	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	Apps	Adm	
175–180	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
170–174	2	2	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	2
165–169	5	5	3	3	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	10	9
160–164	3	3	12	11	8	5	4	3	3	2	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	32	24
155–159	11	11	18	14	28	21	19	10	10	3	9	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	98	62
150–154	18	14	28	20	44	15	29	8	23	6	9	1	9	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	162	64
145–149	8	6	18	5	16	3	29	4	16	0	11	1	2	1	2	0	1	0	2	0	0	105	20
140–144	1	0	16	3	11	2	8	1	3	0	6	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	4	0	0	53	6
135–139	1	0	2	0	4	0	5	0	3	0	0	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	19	0
130–134	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0
125–129	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
120–124	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Total	49	41	98	56	113	47	97	26	61	11	37	4	18	2	9	0	2	0	6	0	490	187	

Apps = Number of Applicants  
 Adm = Number Admitted  
 Reflects 100% of the total applicant pool.