

St. Thomas University School of Law

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■ Introduction

St. Thomas University School of Law, a fully accredited law school by the American Bar Association and the prestigious Association of American Law Schools, was founded in 1984 and is one of the most culturally diverse and technologically advanced law schools in the country. St. Thomas emphasizes professional ethics throughout its programs, provides intensive academic support on an individual and small-group basis, and offers a broad curriculum, including an array of clinical experiences.

St. Thomas University is located on a 140-acre campus several miles northwest of Miami. Fifteen miles southeast, in downtown Miami, stands the federal courthouse, the location of the United States District Court for the Southern District of Florida. State trial and appellate courts are several blocks away. Approximately 20 miles to the north of the law school is the city of Ft. Lauderdale, another venue for state and appellate courts.

■ Library and Physical Facilities

The St. Thomas University Law Library furnishes students with an online catalog to assist them in locating both digital content and traditional materials. The library meets the needs of students in the twenty-first century by providing them with a wide array of online databases to assist with their research and allow them to pursue their interests in scholarship. Moreover, the library has a large microform collection to provide added collection depth. A wireless network enables students, through their laptops or one of 30 library workstations, to access digital information resources from anywhere on campus. Students may also access most of the databases from home through the school's proxy server. A professional reference staff provides instruction in performing online and traditional research. Reference services are also available to assist students in the evenings and on weekends.

■ Clinical Legal Education Programs

St. Thomas University School of Law requires six credits of professional skills courses to graduate. Students are eligible to participate in any of the law school's 10 clinical offerings in an effort to meet that requirement.

Bankruptcy Clinic—The Bankruptcy Clinic offers a comprehensive set of legal services focused on assisting and empowering low-income individuals in their interaction with the bankruptcy system.

Family Court Clinic—This clinic allows third-year students an opportunity to represent clients in both Family Court and the Domestic Violence Court. The Family Court Clinic is a two-semester, two-track, four-credits-per-semester course. The family division track allows students to learn about family law matters, including the dissolution of marriage, paternity, custody, and adoption cases. In the domestic violence division, students are given the opportunity to provide in-court representation to victims of domestic violence in civil permanent injunction hearings.

Appellate Litigation Clinic—This is a year-long clinical program open to third-year students that provides experience in handling criminal cases in state appellate courts. Each student will have primary responsibility for at least two cases

from inception through record preparation, all relevant motions, and the writing of briefs and oral arguments. The program also features a weekly seminar in the appellate process.

Immigration Clinic—Third-year law students will represent asylum seekers, battered spouses and children who have fled their native country, and other noncitizens seeking immigration relief in Immigration Court before the Board of Immigration Appeals and the Department of Homeland Security (formerly the INS).

Judicial Internship—Judicial internships provide an opportunity for students to hear arguments, discuss cases with judges, and apply research and writing skills to real facts. Interns will work closely with supervising staff attorneys and judges.

Tax Clinic—The Tax Clinic, offered to second- and third-year students, is one of the components of the law school's skills training program. The student represents clients before the Internal Revenue Service (IRS), the District Counsel, and the United States Tax Court. In addition, the student is expected to attend conferences with the IRS, job fairs in the community, and Tax Court sessions.

Civil Practice Clinic—This course can be taken full-time or part-time in one semester and is available to second- and third-year students. Those students whose placement requires they be a Certified Legal Intern must be in their third year. Typical placements include Legal Aid, City Attorney, County Attorney, Attorney General, Human Rights Institute, School Board, or other public sector agencies handling civil matters.

Criminal Practice Clinic—This course can be taken full-time or part-time in one semester and is only available to incoming third-year students. Typical placements include the offices of the State Attorney, US Attorney, and Public Defender. The externship also contains a classroom component in which students discuss their cases and review relevant law.

Students learn through a combination of actual trial practice and classroom work. Under the supervision of an assistant state attorney, the students engage in plea bargain negotiations and try cases.

Placement in the Public Defender's office provides students with the opportunity to defend indigent adults and minors charged with felonies and misdemeanor crimes such as assault, theft, or drug and weapons possession.

Elder Law Clinic—This course covers the growing legal needs of the elderly. Students will work with the Probate Division of the Circuit Court and members of the Elder Law Bar on case management issues and strategies to deal with a continually aging population.

Florida Supreme Court—For one semester, the intern will function as a law clerk to an individual justice or as a central staff law clerk working for all of the justices.

■ Graduate-degree Programs

The LLM/MA in Intercultural Human Rights offers in-depth instruction on a critical issue of our time: the protection of human dignity across political, cultural, and religious lines. The faculty of global distinction includes top-level United Nations experts, outstanding scholars, judges, and practitioners in the field.

The JSD Program in Intercultural Human Rights provides a premier opportunity for budding human rights scholars to

make a lasting contribution to this dynamic and action-oriented field.

■ Special Programs

- Summer-in-Spain Program—Law students have the opportunity to take six credits at the Royal College University Escorial Maria Cristina, a part of the University of Madrid. The program is designed to prepare participants for practicing law in the globalized twenty-first century.
- Summer Conditional Program—Applicants who may not have strong academic credentials, but nonetheless possess the abilities necessary to succeed in a rigorous program of legal study, may be invited to participate in a summer conditional program. Students who successfully complete the summer conditional program are offered admission to the fall entering class. This program is usually offered each year but, under special circumstances, may not be available.
- Joint-degree Programs—The law school offers four joint-degree programs in cooperation with other graduate divisions of the university. A JD/MBA in Accounting couples lawyering skills with those traditionally in great demand in the corporate, tax, and accounting worlds. The joint JD/MBA in International Business opens the burgeoning field of international transactional law to the new attorney. The JD/MS in Marriage and Family Counseling, one of the only programs of its kind in the country, fills a serious need in the family lawyer’s repertory of skills. A joint JD/MS in Sports Administration prepares participants for a diverse set of positions in the world of sports.
- Academic Support Program—The law school is committed to the success of its students, and offers a comprehensive support system including Dean’s Fellows, tutors, practice examinations, lectures, a director for academic support, and a program to assist graduates with the bar examination.

■ Career Services

The Office of Career Services is dedicated to assisting students in identifying and attaining their professional goals. It offers a range of traditional and innovative services, including a career services resource center, on-campus interviews with major law firms and government agencies, interviewing and résumé-writing workshops, networking opportunities, and speakers drawn from various areas of legal practice.

■ Student Activities

The *St. Thomas Law Review* is a student-operated scholarly journal, publishing articles submitted by law faculty and members of the bench and bar nationwide. Membership is determined on the basis of academic excellence and demonstrated writing ability.

The Student Bar Association sponsors various social and educational programs for the student body and otherwise represents student interests. In the student-run Moot Court Program, teams of student advocates compete in interscholastic tournaments across the country, preparing written briefs and presenting oral arguments in simulated appellate cases presided over by members of the bench and bar. Numerous student organizations are active on campus.

■ Housing

Law students can reserve on-campus housing at the University Inn or Villanova Hall, which offer private rooms with private baths and a choice of meal plans.

For law students desiring to live off campus, numerous apartment complexes are located within minutes of the law school.

Applicant Profile

St. Thomas University 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	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
165–169	0	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	4
160–164	0	0	5	5	1	1	3	3	2	2	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	12
155–159	7	7	11	11	25	22	21	20	18	17	13	13	13	12	2	1	2	1	1	1	113	105
150–154	27	27	43	40	63	60	67	60	86	83	49	44	27	26	14	12	0	0	4	4	380	356
145–149	30	24	75	55	124	89	178	135	135	72	112	53	59	22	20	8	7	1	12	7	752	466
140–144	22	5	55	15	88	20	109	14	99	6	89	6	36	2	15	2	8	0	17	4	538	74
135–139	8	1	26	1	31	0	45	1	45	1	43	0	27	0	8	0	2	0	18	3	253	7
130–134	1	0	4	0	8	0	12	0	15	0	16	0	19	0	2	0	5	0	8	1	90	1
125–129	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	3	0	1	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	13	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	96	64	220	128	340	192	435	233	405	181	327	118	183	62	64	24	25	2	61	20	2156	1024

Apps = Number of Applicants

Adm = Number Admitted

Reflects 98% of the total applicant pool.