

## Graduate Programs

### LLM FAQs

#### What areas of study and degrees does the Graduate Program offer?

The Graduate Program offers five degree programs: a Master of Laws in Intellectual Property Law, a Master of Laws in Taxation, a Master of Laws in Corporate Law & Finance, Master of Laws in Insurance Law, Master of Laws in Homeland and National Security Law and a Self-Directed LL.M.

#### How are classes conducted?

The LL.M. classes are offered entirely “online synchronous.” Courses are live, faculty-led and utilize an online course management system. Students will typically be required to participate in weekly assignment postings, text readings, online research, bulletin board discussions, chat sessions, virtual office hours, and virtual study groups. *For online classes, students are required to attend class at regularly scheduled times each week but they attend online through their home computer. The online synchronous student can interact fully with the instructor and other students in the course; therefore, students are required to purchase a webcam and a headset to participate in class.*

#### When are classes offered?

The classes are typically offered on the weekend, during weeknights or in an accelerated format.

#### What is required to graduate?

Graduation from Western Michigan Thomas M. Cooley Law School with an LL.M. degree requires:

- Completion of 24 credit hours
- An overall cumulative grade point average of at least 3.0 or “B” on the total hours taken and completed.

#### Is there a thesis requirement?

Only [Self Directed LL.M. Program](#) has a mandatory thesis requirement. For the remaining Graduate Programs, the Master's Thesis/Research Project is an **elective** course.

#### Can you study on a part-time or full-time basis?

Either. A graduate student is considered a [full-time](#) student when enrolled in [six credit hours](#) and [half time](#) with [three credit hours](#). Students enrolled in the graduate program cannot register for more than 14 credits during a term. All students must complete the academic requirements for the LL.M. degree within three calendar years after entering the program. The LL.M. can be completed within one calendar year, but the full-time student could be faced with time conflicts between courses offered. Not all courses in the curriculum will be offered every term. Please refer to the Academic Regulations of the Master of Laws Program and the WMU-Cooley Law School Student Policy Manual for specific rules and regulations.

#### When are students admitted?

A student may begin in September, January or May.

#### What are the admission requirements?

[Admission](#) to this program will be based on, among other things, graduation from an approved law school, law school grades, undergraduate major and academic performance, a writing sample, a written personal statement, and a letter of recommendation. Applicants who did not graduate in the top half of their law school class will be asked to demonstrate academic capability not reflected in their law school performance. For admission, the applicant must possess an earned J.D. (or LL.B.) degree from a law school that is approved by the American Bar Association, or be admitted to practice law in one or more states or territories of the United States and have graduated from a law school in the United States determined by Cooley to be reputable and qualified.

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### LLM FAQs

#### Can I take a few classes without earning an LL.M. degree?

Yes as a [guest student](#). The Graduate Program at WMU-Cooley Law School offers qualified applicants the opportunity to take classes without earning a degree. These applicants may be practicing attorneys who want exposure to advanced legal courses or non-Cooley students wanting to transfer course credit to their degree-granting institution. An admitted guest student can earn up to *eight* credits without earning the LL.M. degree.

#### Can international students apply to the LL.M. program?

International students may apply to the LL.M. program at Cooley. International students should plan ahead because of the time required for the application, admission, and enrollment process.

In special cases, the Dean of Faculty or his designee may admit to the LL.M. degree program an applicant who has earned a J.D. or LL.B. degree from a law school in a common law-based country, or an equivalent degree from a law school in a non-common law-based country, at which the applicant has compiled a distinguished academic record or has clearly demonstrated by experience, academic performance or other qualifications the ability to perform well in the LL.M. program. The ability to demonstrate proficiency in speaking and writing English is required of applicants who are not native English speakers. The Law School may establish one or more methods to determine the requisite proficiency.

#### How do I get an application for admission?

To obtain information about the admission process or request an application for the LL.M. Program click on the link Office of Graduate and Extended Programs, or by e-mail at [LLM@cooley.edu](mailto:LLM@cooley.edu) or by telephone at (517) 371-5140 ext. 2703. Also, you can download the LL.M. application from [www.cooley.edu/gradprograms](http://www.cooley.edu/gradprograms).

Term	Application Deadline
Michaelmas	July 1
Hilary	November 1
Trinity	March 1

#### How do I know if I am admitted to my LL.M. program?

You will receive an email *and* a mailing from the Office of Graduate and Extended Programs.

#### How do I enroll once I am admitted to my LL.M. program?

You **must** follow the instructions in the packet of information you receive from the Office of Graduate and Extended Programs in order to enroll in the LL.M. program. It is important to do so in a timely manner. Make sure that you complete all the forms and other paperwork and return them to the designated office.

#### How much are tuition and fees?

There is no application fee. A \$25 non-refundable enrollment fee is charged to reserve a seat. Cooley charges a \$20 non-refundable student activity fee each term. Tuition for graduate courses is **\$825** per credit hour. ***Tuition and fees are subject to change without prior notice.***

#### Is financial aid available?

Applicants who have questions regarding the availability of financial aid for LL.M. students should contact the [Financial Aid Office e-mail](#) ([finaid@cooley.edu](mailto:finaid@cooley.edu)) or telephone at (517) 371-5140, ext. 2248.

#### What courses are available?

Courses are offered on a rotating basis throughout the calendar year. Course length ranges from two days to between three and fifteen weeks. Not all courses are offered every term. The schedule for each term is generally available on the Graduate Program's website roughly two months before the term begins. Students needing to make longer term arrangements should contact the Graduate Program.

## Graduate Programs

### LLM FAQs

#### **How do I register for courses now that I am enrolled in my LL.M. program?**

The Graduate Program Registration Schedule and relevant forms is available on the Cooley Portal. *Carefully review the information in the registration schedule.* Once you have looked over the LL.M. class schedule, complete the registration form [REQUIRED FIRST TERM ONLY] **or** register online for the classes you wish to take. Instructions on how to submit your registration form are indicated on the form.

#### **Self-Directed Applicants (ON CAMPUS ONLY):**

##### **What is the Self-Directed LL.M?**

The Self-Directed LL.M. Program is a 24-credit degree focused on WMU-Cooley's mission of instilling knowledge, skills, and ethics in its students. Also, the program has a robust research and writing component. To earn the degree, the student must successfully complete 17 "knowledge" credits and seven "skills or ethics" credits, and have an overall cumulative grade point average of at least a 3.0 or better. A student who chooses to focus study on a specific legal area must successfully complete at least 18 credits in that legal subject area to have it designated on the LL.M. diploma. The 24 credits of "knowledge" and "skills or ethics" classes are a combination of JD and/or LL.M. required and elective credits.

##### **What is "distance education" in the Graduate Program?**

Distance Education is a videoconference course is taught on a specific day and time in specially equipped classrooms. Faculty teach from a designated location to Cooley's other campuses. Students and faculty see and hear each other with two-way audio and video interaction

##### **What is a JD Plus course?**

In order to take a traditional JD class for LL.M. credit, the student is expected to complete the requirements of the JD class, with an added Graduate Program requirement to accommodate the expectations of the graduate student. Typically, the "plus" portion of the class will consist of an added paper requirement that will be submitted at the end of the class that will combine the subject of the elective with the student's self-directed topic. In some situations, the added requirement for the graduate student may be a topic-related project.

##### **Are any courses required in the Self-Directed LL.M. program?**

The required LL.M. course in the **"skills or ethics" category** is *Scholarly Writing* for LL.M. Students. It is an advanced research and writing course.

In the **"knowledge" category**, the required LL.M. course is the *Master's Thesis*. The Master's Thesis course requires the student to prepare and orally defend a paper of publishable quality on the chosen subject matter before an LL.M. Panel. The Thesis is a dissertation advancing an original point of view drawing on the student's research and observation. The paper can include, in part, the information researched for purposes of preparing papers for the JD Plus classes and any directed study credits. However, the final paper must be an original and cohesive representation of the subject and previous papers cannot be cut and pasted into the Thesis.

##### **How do I know if I am enrolled in my courses?**

You will be able to access your class schedule on the Portal. Also, you can contact the [Office of Graduate & Extended Programs](#) by email [[LLM@cooley.edu](mailto:LLM@cooley.edu)] or telephone at (517) 371-5140 ext. 2703 or ext. 7783.

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### LLM FAQs

#### How do I get my textbooks and first class assignments?

You can obtain your textbooks through the Bookstore's online system on the Portal or by calling them directly at (517) 371-5140 ext. 4129. Also, "First Week's Assignments" listing book requirements are posted during registration on the Cooley Portal. Contact LLM@cooley.edu if you have any questions.

#### Can I take the bar examination after I earn an LL.M. degree?

Completion of the LL.M. degree does not qualify a graduate student to apply for permission to take the bar examination in every state. Each state applies its own criteria for allowing applicants to take the bar examination and for admitting attorneys to practice law.

Lawyers from other countries seeking to practice law in the United States should obtain information regarding the requirements for admission to the bar in the state in which they wish to practice. Information regarding certification for bar examinations is in the Thomas M. Cooley Law School Student Policy Manual.

#### How are grades determined and what is the grading scale?

The grade for the course will be determined based upon performance in the course as demonstrated by a grade on any examination and/or course paper(s) and/or class participation.

Graduate students are graded in all courses, and honor points are assigned to those grades as follows:

Grade Honor Points Per Credit Hour	
A 4.00	C+ 2.33
A- 3.67	C 2.00
B+ 3.33	C- or below 0.00
B 3.00	W Withdrawal
B- 2.67	I Incomplete

#### How do I receive additional information? Contact any of the following for more information.

<b>Lansing Campus</b> Office of Graduate and Extended Programs Catherine McCollum, Director 300 South Capitol Avenue, Cooley Center Lansing, MI 48933 t: (517) 371-5140 ext. 2703 e: LLM@cooley.edu	<b>Lansing Campus</b> Professor Michael McDaniel, Director Graduate Program in Homeland & National Security Law 300 South Capitol Avenue, Cooley Center Lansing, MI 48933 t: (517) 371-5140, ext. 7755 e: mcdanielm@cooley.edu
<b>Lansing Campus</b> Professor Lisa DeMoss, Director Graduate Program in Corporate Law & Finance & Insurance Law 2630 Featherstone Road Auburn Hills, MI 48326 t: (248) 751-7800, ext. 7786 e: demossli@cooley.edu	<b>Lansing Campus</b> Professor Joni Larson, Director Graduate Tax Program 300 South Capitol Avenue, Cooley Center Lansing, MI 48933 t: (517) 371-5140, ext. 2706 e: larsonj@cooley.edu
<b>Auburn Hills Campus</b> Professor Gerald Tschura, Director Graduate Program in Intellectual Property Law 2630 Featherstone Road Auburn Hills, MI 48326 t: (248) 751-7800, ext. 7759 e: tschurag@cooley.edu	<b>Auburn Hills Campus</b> Vanessa Ramakers, Administrative Assistant Graduate & Extended Programs 2630 Featherstone Road Auburn Hills, MI 48326 t: (248) 751-7800, ext. 7783 e: ramakerv@cooley.edu

The Career and Professional Development Office provides a variety of specialized career counseling and services for LL.M. students. Applicants who have questions regarding career services for LL.M. students should contact the Career and Professional Development Office by email [cpdoffice@cooley.edu] or by telephone at (517) 371-5140, ext. 4109.