

THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**MEMPHIS**

Cecil C. Humphreys  
School of Law



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## **Introduction to Curriculum and Program of Study**

The law school offers a full-time day program and a part-time day program for a limited number of students whose other responsibilities make full-time study difficult. The law school's curriculum is designed to challenge its students and prepare them for the modern practice of law. The curriculum reflects a commitment to traditional legal education and academic emphasis is placed on fundamental lawyering skills and areas of knowledge.

The school operates on the semester system and requires 90 semester hours for the J.D. degree. A full-time student is required to enroll in at least 12 hours each semester. Students in the full-time program normally graduate in three years, although summer classes are available and some students graduate after five semesters and two summer sessions of full-time study.

Part-time students will normally graduate in four and one-half years. Graduation requirements for those enrolled in the part-time program are the same as those for the full-time program. A part-time student is required to enroll in at least 8 hours each semester.

The first-year curriculum in the full-time program consists of 30 hours of required courses in civil procedure, contracts, property, torts, criminal law, and legal method. In the part-time program, the first-year curriculum consists of 18 hours in contracts, torts, and civil procedure. All first-year students are divided into sections of 80 to 85 students, a class size that facilitates active student participation in the case and problem methods of instruction. The legal method course focuses on the skills required to practice law, including legal analysis, legal research and legal writing. The Director of Legal Methods teaches part of the

course in lecture format, and adjunct professors teach the other part of the course in small discussion sections of approximately 12 students. The adjunct professors are accomplished attorneys working in a wide variety of legal venues throughout Memphis.

The second-year curriculum for the full-time program consists of 24 hours of required courses in federal income taxation, business organizations, federal constitutional law, criminal procedure, the law of evidence, the law of secured transactions and the law of decedents' estates. Most students also enroll in required courses of professional responsibility during their second year. Students in the part-time program take the same courses as full-time students in roughly the same sequence.

All students, whether full-time or part-time, are required to successfully complete an advanced research and writing project in a seminar setting of 12 to 14 students. This permits students to refine and advance their legal research and writing skills and provides an opportunity to work under the close supervision of a faculty mentor.

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