

Florida International University, College of Law

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■ Introduction

The Florida International University, College of Law was established by an act of the Florida legislature in June 2000. Its first class was admitted in the fall of 2002. In August 2004, the College of Law was awarded provisional accreditation by the American Bar Association, assuring that its graduates would be eligible to apply for admission to the practice of law in all 50 states and the District of Columbia. The law school plans to apply for full ABA approval in the fall of 2006 and hopes to achieve such approval in 2007, the earliest time it will be eligible for such consideration.

Florida International University is a public research university which enrolls approximately 35,000 students, most on its beautiful University Park campus where the College of Law is located. This campus will be the site of a new law building designed by nationally and internationally renowned architect Robert A.M. Stern; the anticipated occupancy date is the summer of 2006. The campus enjoys nearby access to South Florida's beaches, Everglades National Park, and the Florida Keys.

The College of Law reflects the diverse character and the international perspective of the city of Miami. The curriculum incorporates important developments in the globalization of both public and private law. The academic program takes a pervasive approach to both international and comparative law, incorporating their perspectives into all domestic law classes.

■ Curriculum and Special Programs

The FIU College of Law's academic program, while devoted to all the historic building block components of excellent American legal education, places a special emphasis on international and comparative law. The required curriculum includes a three-hour first-year course entitled Introduction to International and Comparative Law. Further, all domestic law courses include an international or comparative law dimension. This pervasive approach to international and comparative law encourages students to analyze legal systemic, political, economic, social, and other cultural differences that may contribute to different legal treatment of comparable problems in different countries. The College of Law offers foreign summer programs in Sevilla, Spain, and Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.

The curriculum also emphasizes instruction in the legal skills and values of the profession. The Legal Skills and Values Program combines demanding traditional instruction in legal research and writing with an introduction to other lawyering skills, like interviewing and counseling, and issues of professionalism.

The Clinical Program advances the law school's goals of educating lawyers for the ethical and effective practice of law and of promoting community service through the representation of real clients. Presently, there are three clinics available, the Carlos A. Costa Immigration and Human Rights Clinic, the Community Development Clinic, and the Criminal Law Clinic.

As a public, urban law school, the College of Law is committed to serving the community of which it is a part by educating future lawyers who will understand the value—to

the community and to them personally—of helping those in need. In recognition of this important mission, students must satisfy a community service requirement.

As the state of Florida's public research university in South Florida, FIU offers a broad range of high quality graduate-level degree programs. Law students interested in interdisciplinary study may take advantage of these curricula through one of the following joint-degree programs: JD/Master of Business Administration, JD/Master of International Business, JD/Master of Latin American and Caribbean Studies, JD/Master of Public Administration, JD/MS in Psychology, JD/Master of Social Work, JD/MS in Criminal Justice, and JD/Master of Science in Environmental Sciences.

■ Admission

The FIU College of Law offers both a full-time day and part-time evening program. The review of applications is done on a rolling basis. An LSDAS report, three letters of recommendation, and a personal statement are required.

While a prospective student's academic record and LSAT performance are weighted heavily in the evaluative process, the Admissions Committee considers other factors, including leadership ability, commitment to public service, command of global issues, work history, military service, any history of criminality or academic misconduct, and evidence of obstacles that an applicant may have overcome (for example, English is not the applicant's native language, discrimination, economic or family hardship, and severe medical conditions, etc.). The Admissions Committee encourages each applicant to answer all questions with candor, detail, and, where appropriate, to give specific examples of relevant background experiences.

Transfer students from other ABA-approved law schools may apply if they are in good standing at their current institutions. Visit our website at <http://law.fiu.edu> for additional information.

■ Financial Aid

The primary financial aid resources available to students are loans and need- or merit-based scholarships. Students must apply for financial aid (FAFSA) to be considered for any type of loan or need-based scholarships. No separate application is needed for merit-based scholarships. Eligible students will be considered based on the information provided in their admission application. Financial aid is granted on an annual basis, and awards are subject to student eligibility and availability of funds. Tuition is comparable to other Florida state-supported law schools at \$267 per credit for Florida residents and \$727 per credit for nonresidents. An additional \$14,500 (approximate) can be expected to cover room and board, books, transportation, and personal expenses. Please call 305.348.8006 for further information.

■ Library

The Law Library supports the law school curriculum and research of its students and faculty. It contains approximately 195,000 volumes in book and microform format. The Law Library also provides law students with a full range of

electronic legal information resources, including Westlaw, LexisNexis, and an extensive array of web-based databases. When doing other research, law students also may use the FIU Green Library's 1.5 million volumes and extensive electronic resources. The law library is staffed by six professional librarians, three with JD degrees. In addition to a comprehensive collection of core US materials, the library is developing an extensive collection of international, comparative, and foreign law materials, with a particular focus on Latin America and the Caribbean.

■ Career Planning and Placement

The Office of Career Planning and Placement is committed to providing law students with the skills and resources necessary to identify their career goals and assisting students in tailoring strategies for reaching those goals. The office facilitates both on- and off-campus recruitment for summer and permanent legal positions as well as an active internship program. Other services include individual career counseling sessions; workshops and handbooks regarding resume preparation,

interview skills and techniques, and job searches; and mock interviews with local attorneys.

■ Student Activities

Success in law school involves more than just intellectual curiosity and a sense of purpose. It involves the refining of time management skills, handling stress proactively, and forging relationships with faculty and peers. It also involves making the best possible use of available services and opportunities. Students bring a wealth of distinctive educational and professional experiences to the College of Law. However, they all share a common interest and goal: service to the law school, the local community, and the profession. Together with the support of the faculty and the administration, students have created a number of organizations and cocurricular activities reflective of this commitment. In its brief but productive history, the College of Law has established a student-edited law review; an award winning Moot Court Program, competing locally and nationally against teams throughout the country; and 12 student organizations, including the Student Bar Association.

Applicant Profile

The Florida International University College of Law Admissions Committee seeks to enroll a diverse group of students who have demonstrated academic and personal achievement. While a prospective student's academic record and LSAT performance are weighted heavily in the evaluative process, the Admissions Committee considers other factors, including leadership ability, commitment to public service,

command of global issues, work history, military service, any history of criminality or academic misconduct, and evidence of obstacles that an applicant may have overcome (for example, English is not the applicant's native language, discrimination, economic or family hardship, severe medical condition, disability, etc.).