

Mercer University—Walter F. George School of Law

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■ Introduction

The Walter F. George School of Law of Mercer University is located in Macon, Georgia, about 80 miles south of Atlanta. Founded in 1873, it is one of the oldest private law schools in the nation. Named for a distinguished alumnus who served as a United States senator for 36 years, the school became a member of AALS in 1923 and has been ABA-approved since 1925. In 1987, George Woodruff bequeathed the school \$15 million. Two major initiatives were pursued as a result of Mr. Woodruff's beneficence: Enrollment was reduced to approximately 400 students, and a new curriculum was put in place. The new curriculum emphasizes small classes, an innovative progression in the course of study, and a unique sixth semester designed to facilitate the transition from student to lawyer.

■ Admission

Mercer University's Walter F. George School of Law accepts applications between September 1 and March 15 from prospective students wishing to begin their studies in the fall semester. The requirements for application are straightforward. Applicants must have completed a bachelor's degree prior to law school enrollment. They must register with LSDAS and take the LSAT, preferably in the summer or fall before application is made. Applicants must submit two letters of recommendation, an application fee, and a personal statement candidly discussing their strengths and weaknesses as prospective law students.

LSAT performance and undergraduate grades are very important in determining admission to Mercer law school, but other factors will be considered to arrive at a fair evaluation of an applicant's potential to become a competent and ethical attorney. Postgraduate work, employment, community and military service, leadership ability, personal circumstances, and other relevant background information will be evaluated.

■ Library Facilities

The Furman Smith Law Library is the primary resource center of the law school. The law library and computing facilities are accessible to students 24 hours a day. The library's over 330,000-volume collection is enhanced by a wide array of online services that supports the curricular and research needs of the law school community. Students are able to access network resources from any of the more than 69 computers and 769 network access points throughout the law school. In addition, each first-year student receives a laptop computer to use during his or her legal education at Mercer law school. The law library staff of 15 includes 7 professional law librarians who teach legal research courses and provide superior service to students and the legal community.

■ Curriculum

Mercer's Woodruff Curriculum and the atmosphere of the law school work together to provide students with the four Measures of Mercer: a thorough intellectual foundation, strong practical skills, professional relationships, and a commitment

to ethical behavior. The combination of these measures offers the strongest possible foundation for success in the practice of law. Mercer is one of a few select schools in the country to receive the prestigious Gambrell Professionalism Award from the American Bar Association. The award cites the depth and excellence of the Woodruff Curriculum and its obvious commitment to professionalism.

Implemented in 1990, the practice-oriented Woodruff Curriculum helps ensure that Mercer graduates develop problem-solving, counseling, and trial and appellate advocacy skills, and acquire the legal knowledge to become exceptional practicing attorneys. Each year begins with an introductory week-long course exploring one role of the practicing lawyer.

One pervasive skill needed for law practice is the ability to write clearly and convincingly. All students take research and writing courses during at least four semesters of law study, and many take a research or writing course each term. Mercer is the first law school in the nation to offer a Certificate in Advanced Legal Writing, Research, and Drafting. Students are selected into the certificate program through a lottery system; those who complete the certificate program will have earned the equivalent of 17 credit hours in research and writing—by far the most intense and thorough training in legal writing anywhere. In 2003, in recognition of Mercer's nationally known Legal Writing Program, the Legal Writing Institute selected Mercer as its host school. The Legal Writing Institute is the world's largest organization of lawyers, judges, and law professors devoted to improving legal writing.

The last semester of study is the most distinctive component of the Woodruff Curriculum as it offers students a unique opportunity to make the transition from law school to law practice. An intensive session features advanced courses in a variety of practical lawyering skills such as Advanced Counseling, Pretrial Practice, and Advanced Trial Practice.

■ Joint JD/MBA Program

Mercer's School of Law and Mercer's School of Business and Economics offer a joint program leading to both the Juris Doctor and Master of Business Administration degrees. An applicant to the program must indicate on the application to the law school his/her intent to also apply to the School of Business and Economics. Both units will share the information on the application, including required standardized test scores (LSAT and GMAT). The applicant must be admitted separately to each school.

■ Business Certificate Program

Students in good standing in the Walter F. George School of Law may choose to take up to three graduate courses in the School of Business and Economics without applying for admission to the MBA program. Currently, two specific combinations of courses can be taken for a certificate, Certificate in Practice Management or a Certificate in Corporate Finance.

■ Special Programs

The Woodruff Curriculum is one of the most innovative and exciting education programs available, and it is offered to every Mercer student. A more complete description of the program is listed under the “Curriculum” heading.

Since 1985, the National Criminal Defense College (NCDC) has held its Summer Trial Practice Institute every year on the Mercer law school campus. NCDC conducts 2 two-week trial skills sessions for nearly 200 public defenders and criminal defense attorneys from across the country.

■ Student Activities

In Mercer’s moot court program, students improve their written and oral advocacy, negotiation, and client counseling skills. The team members’ commitment and superior preparation are evident in our moot court competition victories.

The Mercer Law Review (the oldest continually published law review in Georgia) has been edited and published quarterly by law students since 1949.

Students may also gain editorial experience in connection with the *Journal of Southern Legal History*, which is published by the law school.

■ Financial Aid

Mercer awards over \$2 million in scholarship aid every year to students whose academic records, LSAT scores, and personal

achievements demonstrate the potential for outstanding performance in the study of law. Two of our most prestigious scholarships are the George W. Woodruff Scholarship (full tuition plus a \$5,000 stipend) and the Walter F. George Foundation Public Service Scholarship (full tuition plus a \$3,500 summer community service grant). In order to be considered for these scholarships, you must have your admission application and scholarship application completed and received in our office no later than February 1. A complete list of scholarships is available on our website at www.law.mercer.edu under Prospective Students. In addition to scholarship aid, students may qualify for student loans, and work-study is available after the first year of law school.

■ Career Services

Mercer law school has an active career services office. Alumni and faculty members support students in their efforts to find satisfying employment. The office assists students in obtaining permanent, summer, and part-time employment.

Services of the office include arranging on-campus interviews with employers, career-planning seminars, and off-campus interviewing consortia. Individual career counseling and résumé and cover-letter writing workshops also comprise much of the work of the office. An extensive library of career resources is available for student use.

The Office of Career Services reports that 98.5 percent of the Class of 2004 was employed or pursuing LLM degrees within six to nine months after graduation.

Applicant Profile

Mercer University—Walter F. George School of Law

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

LSAT Score	GPA																						Total	
	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		Apps	Adm		
	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	0	
170-174	0	0	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	2	
165-169	3	3	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	6	
160-164	15	13	11	10	16	16	14	13	15	13	8	4	7	4	4	3	0	0	0	0	0	90	76	
155-159	34	31	65	61	64	52	80	50	27	13	28	9	6	1	8	1	0	0	2	1	314	219		
150-154	56	36	99	46	138	17	101	9	74	8	38	4	23	3	4	0	3	0	3	1	539	124		
145-149	14	5	52	4	63	6	61	6	43	1	30	0	10	0	5	0	4	0	3	0	285	22		
140-144	8	1	26	0	22	0	34	0	35	0	24	0	14	0	5	0	4	0	6	0	178	1		
135-139	1	0	4	0	11	0	20	0	12	0	18	0	5	0	3	0	3	0	2	0	79	0		
130-134	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	7	0	6	0	2	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	24	0		
125-129	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	5	0		
120-124	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0		
Total	132	89	259	122	318	94	315	78	216	36	154	17	68	8	32	4	15	0	17	2	1526	450		

Apps = Number of Applicants
Adm = Number Admitted
Reflects 99% of the total applicant pool.

This chart is to be used as a general guide only. Nonnumerical factors are strongly considered for all applicants.