

## Samford University, Cumberland School of Law

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### ■ Introduction

The Cumberland School of Law, established in 1847 as a part of Cumberland University in Lebanon, Tennessee, is one of the oldest law schools in the country. The law school was acquired by Samford University in 1961. Today, Samford University is the largest privately supported and fully accredited institution of higher learning in Alabama. The beautiful campus is located in a suburban area of Birmingham, Alabama's largest city. Birmingham is the state's industrial, business, and cultural center. The Cumberland School of Law has been a member of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) since 1952 and has been accredited by the American Bar Association (ABA) since 1949.

### ■ Library and Physical Facilities

The Lucille Stewart Beeson Law Library, an \$8.4 million, freestanding, Georgian structure, is visually stunning, as well as superbly functional. This 61,000-square-foot, three-and-one-half-story building is connected to the law school by a second-story breezeway. The building's design is intended to make all facilities easily accessible to students with disabilities.

Complete training on Westlaw, LexisNexis, and LegalTrac is part of the first-year curriculum through the Lawyering and Legal Reasoning course. All study carrels and conference rooms are wired for data transmission. In addition, law students have full access to the university's four campus libraries, as well as six computer labs. Wireless Internet access is available in many areas around campus.

### ■ Joint-degree Programs

To broaden their thinking or help them prepare for careers in special fields, Cumberland students may opt to pursue six different joint degrees: JD/MAcc, JD/MBA, JD/MPH, JD/MPA, JD/MDivinity, and JD/MS in Environmental Management.

### ■ Center for Biotechnology, Law, and Ethics

Dedicated to furthering practical training in the legal disciplines critical to biotechnology, Cumberland's unique program builds on a base of intellectual property, health care, environmental, tort, and natural resources law. The center's specific focus on biotechnology includes issues related to the medical, pharmaceutical, and agricultural sectors and offers students research opportunities.

### ■ International Law

Cumberland conducts three ABA-approved international summer programs that are offered at Sidney Sussex College, Cambridge, England; the University of Victoria, British Columbia, Canada; and Federal University of Ceara, Fortaleza, Brazil. The graduate degree of Master of Comparative Law (MCL) is offered to international law school graduates.

### ■ Advocacy and Skills Training

Cumberland's emphasis on teaching students the art and science of courtroom advocacy begins in the first-year curriculum, where a six-credit, two-semester course titled Lawyering and Legal Reasoning provides students with hands-on, practical instruction in prelitigation skills, such as client interviewing, counseling, memorandum preparation, and negotiation; pretrial litigation skills, including summary judgment motions and making compelling oral arguments; and appellate litigation skills. This intensive course prepares students to work effectively in their first summer clerkships, where they may be expected to research cases and write briefs in their first week.

The new state-of-art Advanced Trial Advocacy Courtroom provides students with access to modern technology found in courtrooms across the country. In Cumberland's Advanced Trial Advocacy course, students can access databases and the Internet at each counsel table and learn how to reproduce evidence with three-dimensional digital presenters, video, and DVD reenactments. By mastering this technology and completing the hands-on training in the Advanced Trial Advocacy course, students will be equipped for success in any courtroom.

Cumberland has an exceptional record of recent trial-advocacy competition victories, winning both the ABA and Association of Trial Lawyers of America national championships (including several national second- and third-place awards); winning 33 regional championships; and winning the coveted American College of Trial Lawyers' Emil Gumpert Award for Excellence in Teaching Trial Advocacy. The law school also offers a Certificate in Trial Advocacy to recognize students' achievements. Cumberland students have the chance to get class credit and a professional leg up working for Birmingham's major law firms, judges' offices, and corporate legal departments. The clinical curriculum offers second- and third-year students judicial and corporate externships, as well as externships in the offices of the IRS, US Attorney, and organizations that serve underrepresented or economically disadvantaged groups. In addition, the Alabama Third-Year Practice Rule gives third-year students a chance to practice law under the supervision of a licensed attorney.

### ■ Flex Program

Cumberland's flex program allows students a maximum of five years to complete their studies. A limited number of students will be enrolled in the flex program, which requires students to take a minimum of eight credit hours each semester. Flex students attend classes during the day and pay the hourly tuition rate.

### ■ Admission

Cumberland School of Law does not use a number index system or formula when choosing who will be admitted. Every applicant's file is thoroughly reviewed by the Faculty Admissions Committee. In addition to the Law School Admission Test score and undergraduate grade-point average, other important factors considered are undergraduate school;

grade trend and difficulty of major; extracurricular activities and/or employment while in undergraduate school; whether economic, physical, or other challenges have been overcome; graduate work; scholarly achievements; employment experience; personal statement; and letters of recommendation. Applicants who because of their backgrounds will bring to the School of Law different and enlightening perspectives will be recognized by the committee. The law school seeks a diverse student body that will make a contribution to the law school and to the legal profession.

Admitted applicants are required to pay a nonrefundable \$650 seat deposit that is credited toward tuition. The first installment of \$150 is due April 1; the second installment of \$500 is due June 15.

## ■ Student Activities

The Student Bar Association (SBA) functions as the first professional organization of a law student's career. Since many students in the entering class come from other states, student bar chapters keep students in touch with job opportunities and bar requirements.

In addition to many outstanding organizations, students may also be invited to join one of three national legal fraternities and be inducted into two honorary societies, Order of the Barrister and Curia Honoris. Student-run publications include *Cumberland Law Review*, *American Journal of Trial*

*Advocacy*, and *Pro Confesso*. Cumberland is also home to the *Southern Regional Black Law Students Association Journal*.

## ■ Scholarships

All admitted applicants are automatically considered for merit- and recruiting-scholarship awards. Various other scholarships are available to outstanding students who distinguish themselves academically, make outstanding contributions through leadership in the law school's program, or demonstrate financial need.

## ■ Career Services

Through the Career Services Office, the law school assists all law students in locating summer clerkships and part-time and permanent employment upon graduation. Students also receive individual counseling and take part in workshops. The office schedules on-campus interview programs during the fall and spring semesters. Cumberland students and graduates are encouraged to attend well-known recruiting conferences in Chicago, Atlanta, Nashville, and Washington, DC. The Career Services Office surveys each graduating class nine months after graduation; based on data collected from the most recent graduates (Class of 2004), 97.3 percent had successfully obtained employment or were attending graduate school.

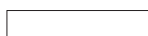
## Applicant Profile

Samford University, Cumberland School of Law

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
175-180									
170-174									
165-169									
160-164									
155-159									
150-154									
145-149									
140-144									
135-139									
130-134									
125-129									
120-124									



Good Possibility



Possible



Unlikely