

## Vanderbilt University Law School

131 21st Avenue South

Nashville, TN 37203

Phone: 615.322.6452; Fax: 615.322.1531

E-mail: admissions@law.vanderbilt.edu; Website: www.law.vanderbilt.edu

### ■ Introduction

Vanderbilt is recognized among the nation's leading law schools for its faculty of renowned scholars, its talented student body drawn from across the nation and around the world, and its rigorous curriculum with an array of joint-degree, specialized, and interdisciplinary programs. Building on this tradition of excellence, Vanderbilt has established itself as a leader in designing innovative programs that connect outstanding theoretical training to real-world skills, information, and experience necessary for effective law practice in the twenty-first century. A legal education that translates the best scholarly research and policy analysis into effective lawyering provides an immediate advantage to Vanderbilt graduates upon entry to the profession.

Relative to other national centers for legal education, Vanderbilt's student body is modestly sized, fostering a tradition of challenging intellectual inquiry in an atmosphere of respect for individuals and ideas. This small-school sense of collegiality combined with an accessible and distinguished faculty creates an exceptional environment for intellectual and professional growth. With state-of-the-art facilities situated on a beautiful and vibrant university campus in a sophisticated, friendly, and affordable city, Vanderbilt offers a first-rate legal education in a setting that promotes a first-rate quality of life.

### ■ Faculty

Widely respected for the quality of both their scholarship and their teaching, Vanderbilt professors have open doors for students. The faculty includes leading experts in an array of fields, including corporate and business law, constitutional law, litigation, torts, criminal law, international law, law and biology, dispute resolution, and intellectual property. Professors draw on their cutting edge research to create engaging and valuable classroom experiences and extend their availability to students well beyond class times.

### ■ Curriculum

Outstanding foundational courses reinforced by innovative and interdisciplinary approaches to advanced training are the hallmarks of a Vanderbilt legal education. First-year requirements include core subjects and an innovative course on legal process and institutions. The year-long legal writing course is taught in small groups and focuses on the fundamentals of legal writing, analysis, and research.

With the exception of professional responsibility and a seminar, upper-level courses are electives, and students may choose what they wish from a broad curriculum. By combining law school courses, clinics, independent studies, and courses outside the law school, students can tailor their education to their individual needs and interests.

### ■ Special Programs, Joint Degrees, and Clinics

Vanderbilt is a leader in designing innovative programs that connect rigorous intellectual training to the skills, information, and experiences that benefit graduates immediately upon entry to the legal profession. The Law and Business Program is

designed to produce lawyers who understand how complex corporate finance and regulatory environments impact businesses and their managers. Courses are co-taught by law school and business school professors, and a program certificate can be completed during the three years of law school. The Cecil D. Branstetter Civil Litigation and Dispute Resolution Program is directed at translating scholarly research on litigation and court systems to practice-based skills and strategies that litigators use to settle disputes. The International Law Program offers advanced coursework in international law and a unique International Law Practice Lab that emphasizes the theoretical foundations of pragmatic skills needed to practice in the international domain. Students undertake specific projects for real-world clients such as the Iraqi Special Tribunal, the International Criminal Court, and Human Rights Watch.

Other special programs at Vanderbilt include the First Amendment Center where journalists and legal scholars work to promote better understanding of First Amendment values, and the Vanderbilt Institute for Public Policy Studies, which offers faculty and students throughout the university a place to collaborate on issues ranging from health care policy to international trade.

The Law School's clinical programs provide opportunities to earn academic credit while gaining valuable experience and serving the public by representing clients in civil, family, criminal, domestic violence, business, and juvenile cases.

Joint-degree programs at Vanderbilt include JD/MBA, JD/MD, JD/MDiv, JD/MTS, JD/MPP, JD/MA, and JD/PhD. Advanced degrees in law include the LLM for international lawyers and the LLM/MA in Latin American Studies.

### ■ Library and Physical Facilities

Recently renovated and expanded, the Law School facilities are among the best designed in the nation. Situated on a park-like campus that has been designated a national arboretum, the building is designed for twenty-first century legal studies and research with wireless connectivity, state-of-the-art classrooms and Trial Courtroom, and on-site and remote access to a host of electronic resources. The law library provides a variety of comfortable study spaces, including two reading rooms and nearly 200 carrels. The service-oriented library staff oversees a collection of over 565,000 volumes and more than 250 electronic databases, and all other Vanderbilt libraries, containing more than 2.3 million volumes, are available to law students.

### ■ Student Life

One of the reasons that students choose Vanderbilt is the congenial and collaborative atmosphere they experience during campus visits. Spirited competition in an atmosphere of mutual respect creates an intellectual vibrancy and a sense of community that is rare. The activities of more than 40 student organizations are enhanced by Hyatt Fund financial support for speakers, symposia, and conferences. Three journals—the *Vanderbilt Law Review*, the *Vanderbilt Journal of Entertainment and Technology Law*, and the *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law*—provide opportunities to strengthen legal research and writing skills.

In the natural beauty of middle Tennessee, Vanderbilt's hometown has emerged over the last two decades as a vibrant and progressive place that offers numerous professional opportunities, wide-ranging cultural and recreational options, and a great quality of life. Among the nation's most livable cities, Nashville is known as Music City for its entertainment industry, as the Athens of the South for its 14 colleges and universities, and as the Silicon Valley of Health Care for its many health care enterprises. Nashville, the state capital with a metropolitan population of 1.3 million, is a major center for legal activity, with the US Attorney's Office, federal and state courts, and many federal and state agencies.

## ■ Career Services

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Vanderbilt Law graduates are in high demand throughout the US and abroad for their outstanding legal training. During fall 2005, employers representing 550 law offices in 39 states, the District of Columbia, and London, Beijing, Shanghai, and Tokyo came to the law school to interview students. In addition to on-campus recruiting, hundreds of employers solicit resumes from Vanderbilt students annually.

## Applicant Profile

Admission to Vanderbilt is competitive. More than 3,400 men and women applied for 200 spaces in the class entering in 2005. The admission process reflects our belief that the quality of the educational environment at the law school benefits from considering a range of information about each prospective student that is far broader than GPA and LSAT. Our practice is to review each file in its entirety, looking for indicators of academic excellence, intellectual curiosity, hard work, interest in others' welfare, obstacles overcome, professionalism, and

Vanderbilt's national reputation affords graduates wide-ranging opportunities in private firms, public agencies, nonprofit organizations, business, and teaching. The Office of Career Services staff of professional counselors assists students individually with their career goals.

The faculty takes an active role with students interested in judicial clerkships, and about 10 to 20 percent of graduates obtain clerkships each year. Over the last seven years, Vanderbilt graduates have clerked in all but one of the US Courts of Appeals and three have clerked for the Supreme Court of the United States during the same period.

## ■ Financial Aid and Loan Repayment Assistance

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Vanderbilt provides generous need- and merit-based financial aid with more than 50 percent of students receiving scholarships and about 85 percent receiving government-backed or private loans. Vanderbilt's Loan Repayment Assistance Program provides financial support to graduates who choose to practice law in low-paying public service organizations.

other characteristics of successful law students. We believe that talented students with a mix of backgrounds, perspectives, interests, and aspirations promote a vibrant and civil teaching and learning environment and that full file review in the admission process is essential to that objective. Vanderbilt does not provide a two-factor chart to describe a multifaceted process in which admission decisions ultimately are based on experienced judgment applied to individual cases.