

Nashville School of Law Curriculum Improvements Starting in Fall 2017

Summary of Improvements

Schedule – First- and second-year students will continue to take classes on Monday and Thursday evenings. Third- and fourth-year students will continue to attend courses on Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday evenings. Schedules will vary depending upon individual selections. See details below regarding course selections and typical schedules for each year.

Trial Practice Series – The introduction of the new Trial Practice Series (TPS) marks an innovation in the School’s moot court program. TPS will allow students to choose from among three different program areas: criminal, civil, or family/juvenile, and then practice the skills needed to successfully navigate a case. Each class TPS course is worth two credit hours and students must take at least one TPS as a requirement to graduate. All TPS courses are pass/fail. Selection of the specific TPS a student enrolls in will be made at registration. Enrollment in TPS classes is limited to 30 students, therefore some sections may close out before later registration windows.

Rigorous Writing Exercise – This is a two-year program of independent study in which each student is matched with a writing mentor who is a practicing attorney or judge. A rigorous writing experience is a required component of a Tennessee legal education per Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 7. The Rigorous Writing Exercise (RWE) commences during the second year and continues through the third year of law school. More detailed information about this curriculum will be provided during the registration period.

Required Courses – The following courses are required for graduation (listed by year in which they typically would be taken)

First Year:

- Constitutional Criminal Law & Procedure (2 credits)
- Contract Law (3 credits)
- Crimes (1 credit)
- Introduction to Law (1 credit)
- Legal Skills & Values I & II (2 credits)
- Torts I (3 credits)

Second Year:

- Civil Procedure (3 credits)
- Constitutional Law (3 credits)
- Evidence (3 credits)
- Property Law (3 credits)
- Rigorous Writing Exercise (1 credit)

Third Year: Domestic Relations (1 credit)
Estate Planning (1 credit)
Ethics & Professionalism (1 credit)
Legal Skills & Values III (1 credit)
Restitution & Remedies (3 credits)
Rigorous Writing Exercise (1 credit)
Trial Practice (2 credits)
Wills (2 credits)

Fourth Year: Advanced Legal Studies (3 credits)
Bar Exam Workshop (3 credits)
Business Associations (3 credits)
Conflicts of Law (2 credits)
Sales (1 credit)
Secured Transactions (1 credit)
Torts II (1 credit)

Electives – Students are eligible for electives after successfully completing 12 credit hours. The number of electives required for graduation will vary depending on where each student’s progress toward graduation as the School transitions to the new curriculum. Different electives are offered each year in an attempt to give students as many choices as possible. The list below details electives offered in the upcoming year. In addition, students have the opportunity to earn elective credits through the Wills Clinic, the Juvenile Court Custody Clinic, or an approved Tenn. Sup. Ct. R. 7 internship. Unless otherwise noted, all electives are worth one credit.

Summer 2017 Electives: Immigration Law; Bankruptcy

2017-18 School Year Electives: Advanced Depositions; Tennessee Constitutional Law; Theory & Practice of Negotiation (2 credits); Leadership; General Sessions Court Practicum

Bar Preparation

A necessary step to becoming a licensed attorney is passing the bar exam. The School structures its program to provide students with the necessary resources to succeed on the exam. This preparation begins on the first day of orientation and continues throughout a student’s entire law school career. However, the School can only provide the tools. It is up to each student to take advantage of what is offered and put those tools to work, honing their skills and building on each successive year.

In addition to core classes that closely follow the subjects tested on the bar exam, first- and second-year students will be required to take a practice multistate bar exam at the end of the first and second years of study. This multiple choice test will not have a grade assigned, but

each student will receive their scores and have the opportunity to meet with school staff to discuss results and objectives for the future.

Addition of Bar Exam Workshop – The Bar Exam Workshop is a partner class to the Advanced Legal Studies curriculum, both designed to prepare students who have completed most of their substantive legal education for the bar and embarking on their legal careers. In the Bar Exam Workshop, students will learn test-taking strategies for the Multistate Bar Exam (MBE), the Multistate Performance Test (MPT), and state essay questions. Students will practice answering questions under timed conditions and enhance their writing and organizational skills.

Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam – In addition to passing the bar exam, every person wishing to become a licensed attorney in Tennessee must pass the Multistate Professional Responsibility Exam (MPRE), which is given three times each year. Scores are good for two years, so timing of the MPRE in relation to a student’s bar exam plan should be considered. The School’s Ethics & Professionalism class offered during the third year of study provides a strong foundation for the subjects tested on the MPRE. In addition, the School provides a separate 4-hour session devoted exclusively to MPRE preparation.

Grading & Course Credit

All classes now will be offered for full credit. Several classes will be offered on a pass/fail basis only, including the Rigorous Writing Exercise and the Trial Practice Series. Nashville School of Law will introduce a new grading scale for those entering the School in 2017, however those already enrolled will continue to follow the current grading scale.

Curriculum Improvement Details

Outlined below are details for each year of study at Nashville School of Law. Current students will have varying requirements for graduation depending upon credit hours and specific classes successfully completed. The School recognizes that some students may have unique circumstances due to part-time status, transfer credits, etc. Any student who wishes to discuss the details of their requirements and schedule are invited to set an appointment or call the office. **Not all of these improvements will affect all current students, so please see the “How will these improvements affect me?” section for details.**

First-Year Curriculum Improvements

Students entering Nashville School of Law in the fall of 2017 will begin their law school career with an orientation program designed to introduce students to the path to becoming an attorney. The School will immerse students in a two-day session that includes segments on notetaking, reading and briefing cases, structuring exam answers, time and stress management, and much more.

Curriculum improvements for first-year students include a newly designed introduction class – Legal Skills and Values, which incorporates legal writing, research, and preparation for success in the years of study ahead. In addition, an Introduction to Law class will comprise 11 sessions in a workshop format interspersed throughout the year to further the themes introduced during orientation in preparing students for careers as attorneys. These workshops will include panel discussions from experts in the legal field and include topics such as ethics, professional responsibility, pro bono, challenges unique to the practice of law, and others.

Multistate Bar Exam – Students will be required to take a practice multistate bar exam before moving on to their second year of study.

A typical class schedule for first-year students would look like this:

Monday	Thursday	
Contract Law	Torts I	
Legal Skills & Values I & II; Introduction to Law	Crimes	Constitutional Criminal Law & Procedure

Students entering in the fall of 2017 will be required to successfully complete a total of 57 credit hours to graduate. This includes:

- 47 credits: required regular-curriculum classes
- 2 credits: Rigorous Writing Exercise
- 2 credits: Trial practice series (criminal, civil, or family/juvenile)
- 6 elective credits (may include clinics, additional trial practice classes)

Second-Year Curriculum Improvements

Addition of the Rigorous Writing Exercise – The exercise commences during the second year and continues through the third year of law school.

Multistate Bar Exam – Students will be required to take a practice multistate bar exam before moving on to their third year of study.

A typical class schedule for second-year students would look like this:

Monday	Thursday
Constitutional Law	Civil Procedure
Evidence	Property Law
Rigorous Writing Exercise I (Independent Study)	

Third-Year Curriculum Improvements

Addition of Trial Practice Series – The Trial Practice Series (TPS) are two-credit classes that take place at a variety of times, depending upon which specialty area class students select.

Continuation of Rigorous Writing Exercise – Students will conclude the two-year RWE in their third year of law school studies. This does not apply to current students who have successfully completed 24 or more credit hours.

A typical class schedule for third-year students would look like this:

Monday		Wednesday		Thursday	
Restitution & Remedies		Open, Electives or TPS	Open or Elective	LSV III	Ethics Estate Planning
Wills	Open or Elective	Open, Electives or TPS		Domestic Law	Open, Electives, or TPS
Rigorous Writing Exercise II (Independent Study)					

Fourth-Year Curriculum Improvements

Addition of Bar Exam Workshop – This is a three-credit required class that takes place on Wednesday nights.

Required Classes – Torts II, previously offered as an elective, now will be a required class. Mortgages will be offered as an elective only and is not a required course for graduation, unless you are a current student that has successfully completed 36 or more credit hours.

A typical class schedule for fourth-year students would look like this:

Monday			Wednesday		Thursday	
Business Associations			Bar Exam Workshop		Advanced Legal Studies	
Sales	Secured Transactions	Torts II	Open or Elective		Conflicts of Law	Open or Elective

How will these Improvements Affect me?

The curriculum improvements will be phased in over the next few years, so not all changes will affect current students. The School has strived to examine everyone’s needs and may have already reached out to discuss your situation. Because everyone’s selection of classes and schedules is different, not every situation will be the same. However, the following guidelines can be used to determine how the improvements affect your own individual situation.

To find out individual requirements to graduate, students can find a personalized degree audit form available in each Sonis account. Navigate to the Sonis homepage; under the “Academics” tab on the left, click on “Degree Audit.” That will lead to a page that defaults to the correct curriculum plan for each individual student. Click the “Select” button and a separate window will open that details the current curriculum requirements.

If you have any concerns or questions, please contact the office to discuss your educational plans. In addition, information sessions will be held to answer questions and address

concerns. The first will be held Thursday, April 6 at 5:30 p.m. at the School. Students may submit questions in advance, or join the session online. Details about how to participate will be shared next week.

Second-Year Curriculum

For current students with less than 24 credit hours completed

- Addition of the Rigorous Writing Exercise
- Addition of Trial Practice Series
- Addition of Bar Exam Workshop
- No moot court
- Torts II, previously offered as an elective, now will be a required class.
- Mortgages will be offered as an elective only and is not a required course for graduation.

Current students with less than 24 credits hours completed will be required to successfully complete a total of 57 credit hours to graduate. This includes:

- 47 credits: required regular-curriculum classes
- 2 credits: Rigorous Writing Exercise
- 2 credits: Trial practice series (criminal, civil, or family/juvenile)
- 6 elective credits (may include clinics, additional trial practice classes)

Third-Year Curriculum

for current students who have completed 24 or more credits hours and have not completed moot court

- Addition of Trial Practice Series
- No moot court
- Addition of Bar Exam Workshop
- Torts II, previously offered as an elective, now will be a required class.
- Mortgages will be offered as an elective only and is not a required course for graduation.

Current students who have completed 24 or more credit hours and have not completed third-year moot court will be required to successfully complete a total of 53 credits to graduate. This includes:

- 47 credits: required regular-curriculum classes
- 2 credits: Trial practice series (criminal, civil, or family/juvenile)
- 4 elective credits

Fourth-Year Curriculum
for current students who have completed 36 or more credits hours
and have completed moot court

- No fourth-year moot court
- Addition of Bar Exam Workshop
- Mortgages remains a required course
- Torts II, while not required, is highly encouraged.

Current students who have completed 36 or more credit hours and third-year moot court will be required to successfully complete a total of 51 credits to graduate. This includes:

- 47 credits: required regular-curriculum classes
- 4 elective credits
- Third-year moot court

Tuition & Fees

The School prides itself on offering the most affordable legal education in Tennessee. A degree from Nashville School of Law can cost the same as just one year of study at any other private law school in the state. Tuition at the School has remained the same since 2013, but due to increasing costs along with investments in technology, curriculum and other improvements, tuition will increase by approximately 5% per credit hour starting with courses in summer of 2017.

The new tuition rate will be \$505 per credit hour. For students paying tuition in full for the entire 2017-2018 school year, tuition will be discounted to \$480 per credit hour. For students taking a full load of 12 credit hours, total tuition will be \$6060. Fees due at enrollment will be \$425 to cover registration, ExamSoft, LexisNexis, and Westlaw. The graduation fee will remain unchanged at \$300.