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University of Southern California Gould School of Law



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Overview²

The University of Southern California Gould School of Law cultivates analytical ability, ethical values, and a spirit of collegiality that prepare students for meaningful careers benefiting society. With more than 100 years of renowned legal education, USC Law is an institution that continues to make history through its philosophy of innovation and through its people. By the students, for the students, that's the founding premise and guiding principle behind USC Law.

At the end of the 19th century, when there was no formal law school in Southern California, aspiring lawyers prepared by "reading law" at local firms. Then, in 1896, a band of ambitious apprentices brought organized legal education to Los Angeles. Their goal: Create "a school of permanent character," and educate lawyers of exceptional quality. Today's USC Law reflects a distinguished past built on the principles of equity and excellence and the courage to break new ground.

Student-Faculty Ratio³

11.4:1

Admission Criteria⁴

	LSAT	GPA
25th-75th Percentile	163-167	3.5-3.79
Median*	166	3.70

The above LSAT and GPA data pertain to the 2013 entering class.

*Medians have been calculated by averaging the 25th- and 75th-percentile values released by the law schools and have been rounded up to the nearest whole number for LSAT scores and to the nearest one-hundredth for GPAs.

Admission Statistics⁵

Approximate number of applications	4338
Number accepted	1269
Acceptance rate	29.3%

The above admission details are based on 2013 data.

Class Ranking and Grades⁶

The Law School grading system uses both numerical grades and letter grade equivalents. Numerical grades range from 1.9 to 4.4 with letter-grade equivalents ranging from F to A+. The system differs from a typical letter-grade system (in which A=4.0, A-=3.7, and B+=3.3, etc.) in that faculty can assign intermediate numbers, such as 3.4. For example, although both 3.3 and 3.4 are grades of "B+", the 3.4 carries a slightly higher numerical value, and therefore contributes to a higher GPA. This combination of letters and numbers was selected because the letters can be easily understood by all potential employers, while the intermediate numbers allow more gradations and therefore more nuance than a simple system of letters only.

The chart linked below shows the current numerical and letter grades as well as the equivalent grades on the old 65-90 grading system used for students entering before the Fall 2001 semester. These equivalents are provided for informal guidance only:

Designation	Numerical Grade	Letter Grade
Highest Honors	4.4	A+
High Honors	4.3	A+
High Honors	4.2	A+
High Honors	4.1	A+
High Honors	4	A
High Honors	3.9	A
Honors	3.8	A
Honors	3.7	A-
Honors	3.6	A-
Honors	3.5	A-
Honors	3.4	B+
None	3.3	B+
None	3.2	B
None	3.1	B
None	3	B
None	2.9	B-

None	2.8	B-
None	2.7	B-
None	2.6	C+
None	2.5	C+
None	2.4	C
None	2.3	C-
None	2.2	C-
None	2.1	C-
None	2	D
None	1.9	F

Other markings which may appear on the transcript or RAP are:

- IP - "In Progress"--No grade is yet reported; IP represents the first half of a two-semester course; grade reported at the end of the second semester.
- MG - Missing Grade; faculty member did not submit a grade for the student for the course; or faculty member submitted a numerical grade when a non-numerical grade is required, or vice versa.
- W - Withdrawal, approved by academic petition to the Registrar, no grade entered.
- IN - Incomplete; assigned when work is not completed because of documented illness or other "emergency" occurring after the twelfth week of the semester.
- IX- If a mark of IN is not removed within one calendar year it becomes a grade of IX, and is calculated into the GPA as a failing grade.

Grade Normalization (Curve)⁷

In order to achieve fairness and consistency across classes and courses, the average and the distribution of grades in Law School courses are controlled following USC Law’s historic grading patterns.

Honors⁸

The University of Minnesota Law School confers the following honors:

	% of Class Receiving	GPA Required	# of Students
Order of the Coif:	10	top ten %	22

Awards⁹

Name of Award	Awarded for/to
Alfred I. Mellenthin Award	Highest GPA after two years of law study
ALI-ABA Scholarship & Leadership Award	Graduating student best representing scholarship and leadership

American Board of Trial Advocates Award	Best third-year student in preparation for trial practice of the law
Barger and Wolen Written Advocacy Award for Best Brief	Best Brief and Best Petitioner Brief in the Hale Moot Court Honors Program
Carl Mason Franklin Award in International Law	Excellence in the field of international law
Deloitte Award	Excellence in the field of corporate taxation
Dorothy Wright Nelson Justice Award	Contribution to the improvement of the administration of justice
Edward S. and Eleanor J. Shattuck Award	Students who are judged by the faculty to exhibit the greatest potential for becoming outstanding members of the bar
Eleanor Klein Merit Award	Outstanding graduating woman
Irmas Fellowship	Assist recent USC Law graduates beginning careers in public interest law
James J. Holbrook Award	Significant contribution to the Southern California Law Review
Judge Barry Russell Federal Practice Award	Significant contribution toward the improvement of the administration of justice
Judge E. Avery Crary Award	Four finalists in the Hale Moot Court Honors competition
Judge Malcolm Lucas Award	Highest scholastic average during first-year
Law Alumni Award	Member of the graduating class with the highest academic average in scholarship
Mason C. Brown Trial Advocacy Award	Commitment to public interest endeavors and an aptitude for trial work
Miller-Johnson Equal Justice Award	Commitment to civil and social justice while at USC Law
National Association of Women Lawyers	Contributing to advancement of women in society
Norma Zarky Memorial Award	Excellence in entertainment law
Peter D. Knecht Memorial Award	Excellence in contract and entertainment law
Roger Sherman Memorial Prize in Intellectual Property	Excellence in intellectual property
Warren J. Ferguson Award	Best essay on a social justice topic, such as labor, poverty, criminal justice, civil rights, or discrimination based on race, gender, or sexual orientation

Journals

The **Southern California Law Review** is an independent and autonomous entity. Each year the Law Review publishes one volume, which is produced in six separate issues. Each issue normally contains several articles written by outside contributors and several notes written by Southern California Law Review staff members. The Law Review strives to publish articles on a wide range of topics and to serve all segments of the legal community. In addition, the Law Review frequently hosts a symposium in order to explore timely or controversial areas of law.¹⁰

The **Southern California Review of Law and Social Justice** is an honors law journal at the University of Southern California Gould School of Law. RLSJ started in 1992 as the Southern California Review of Law and Women's Rights, but in 2006, starting with the sixteenth volume, the journal expanded its focus and renamed itself to reflect a focus beyond just women's rights to all issues of social justice. RLSJ annually publishes one volume, in three separate issues.¹¹

The **Southern California Interdisciplinary Law Journal** was founded in 1978 to assess contemporary society, conceive new and unique legal methodology, and seek solutions to contemporary societal problems. The Journal seeks to do this by challenging traditional legal scholarship through the perspectives of disciplines upon which the law is premised. As a result, the Journal provides a framework upon which the future of the law must grow.¹²

Moot Court²¹

The Hale Moot Court Honors Program, founded in 1948, provides students with an opportunity to develop their written and oral advocacy skills. Participants gain invaluable experience by engaging in oral arguments before judges and practicing attorneys and by drafting their own appellate briefs.

Each spring, all first-year students are invited to compete in Qualifying Rounds conducted by current Executive Board members and the second-year student participants of the Program. During the summer break, the Executive Board then extends invitations to forty first-year students to participate in the next year's program based on their oral argument scores, their grade on a brief from the Legal Research, Writing and Advocacy class, and their grade point averages. The students who accept the Board's invitation become participants in the Hale Moot Court Honors Program as second-year students.

At the end of the academic year, participants may apply for positions on the next year's Executive Board. Third-year students on the Executive Board administer the next Hale Moot Court Honors Program.

Third years may also participate on the National Moot Court team. The National Team is composed of third-year students who represent USC Law in competitions against other law students in moot court competitions across the country.

Clinical Programs¹⁴

USC's clinical training programs are designed to develop lawyering skills of the highest quality. The USC Gould School of Law offers two types of clinical training: classroom courses that include simulated exercises, and supervised casework with actual clients. Through classroom exercises, students use hypothetical case materials in simulated law office and courtroom settings, with actors playing the roles of clients and witnesses. Then students learn legal skills and principles by working on

actual cases for real clients under the supervision of faculty member. The following clinical programs combine classroom exercises with client representation:

- Immigration Clinic
- Intellectual Property and Technology Law Clinic
- International Human Rights Clinic
- Mediation Clinic
- Post-Conviction Justice Project
- Small Business Clinic
- Clinical Perspectives Newsletter

Placement Facts¹⁵

Starting Salaries (2012 Graduates Employed Full-Time)

Private sector (25th-75th percentile)	\$100,000 - \$160,000
Private sector - Median	\$160,000
Public service - Median	\$60,000

Employment Details

Graduates known to be employed at graduation	58.8%
Graduates known to be employed nine months after graduation	72.4%

Areas of Legal Practice

Graduates Employed In	Percentage
Law Firms	65.6%
Business and Industry	16.4%
Government	3.2%
Public Interest Organizations	4.2%
Judicial Clerkships	7.9%
Academia	2.6%
Unknown	0%

Externships/Internships^{20, 21}

Judicial and Clinical Externships

The Office of Public Service is responsible for the coordination and administration of the Judicial and Clinical Externship programs. Students can receive academic credit for clinical externships by working for a non-profit public interest office or government agency. Students also receive academic credit through an externship with a judge.

Internships

Clinical Internship Program

USC Law sponsors a host of internships with government and non-profit organizations.

Student Organizations¹⁸

- American Civil Liberties Union
- American Constitution Society (ACS)
- Armenian Law Students Association (ALSA)
- Art Law Society
- Asian Pacific American Law Students Association (APALSA)
- Black Law Students Association (BLSA)
- Business Law Society
- Criminal Law Association
- Energy & Environmental Law Society (EELS)
- Entertainment Law Society (ELS)
- Entrepreneurship & Venture Capital Association
- Federalist Society
- Government Law Organization (GLO)
- Intellectual Property & Technology Law Society (IPTLS)
- International Law & Relations Organization (ILRO)
- Iraqi Refugee Assistance Project (IRAP)
- Jewish Law Students Association (JLSA)
- Latino Law Students Association (LLSA)
- Legal Aid Alternative Break (LAAB)
- OUTLaw
- Phi Alpha Delta (PAD)
- Public Interest Law Foundation (PILF)
- Real Estate Law Society
- South Asian Law Students Association (SALSA)
- Sports Law Society
- Street Law
- Student Bar Association (SBA)
- Bike & Transit Law Society
- Protection & Animal Welfare Law Society (PAWLaw)
- Women's Law Association (WLA)

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