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Southern Methodist University (Dedman)



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Overview^{4,5}

Southern Methodist Law School offers a superior academic environment that stimulates intellectual, professional, and personal development. Faculty members are accomplished scholars as well as dedicated teachers and virtually all of them have had practical experience before entering their teaching careers. Students come from many backgrounds and bring a diverse array of experiences and views; they are intelligent, inquisitive, and eager to take advantage of curricular and extra-curricular opportunities.

The first law school class at Dedman graduated in 1928 with 11 members. Today the school has over 15,000 alumni living in every state in the United States and in over 80 different countries across the world.

The Law School offers an exceptionally rich curriculum that is continually expanding to include emerging areas of law. Although the School is well-known for its strengths in corporate and commercial law, tax law, litigation, alternative dispute resolution, and international law, the depth and quality of the curriculum extends to many specialized interests including intellectual property, internet law, energy law, and environmental law.

Student-Faculty Ratio⁵

14.2:1

Admission Criteria⁶

	LSAT	GPA
25th-75th Percentile	157-164	3.34-3.84
Median*	162	3.72

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 Statistics⁷

Approximate number of applications	1676
Number accepted	692
Percentage accepted	41.3%

The above admission details are based on 2013 data.

Class Ranking and Grades⁸

At SMU Dedman School of Law students are graded on a letter scale from A to F. Students may choose whether or not to list their GPA on their resume. The GPA listed must be the most current GPA as reported by the Office of the Registrar. Students who list their GPA must report the grade to three decimal points. Students may not round their GPA. The grades and their numeric equivalents at SMU are as below:

A	4
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2
C-	1.7
D	1
F	0

Law students are not given an individual class rank until graduation. Class rank percentiles are released for (1) the full-time first year law class, (2) the combined full-time second year law class and the third year, part-time Evening Program law class, and (3) the combined full-time third year law class and the fourth year, part-time Evening Program law class. The law GPA is used for rank and cumulative cut off purposes; this GPA excludes all courses taken outside of the law school.

SMU Dedman School of Law releases the numeric cut off for the top 10%, top 25%, top 33%, and top 50% for each class following the spring semester of each year. No other information about class standing is calculated or made available to students. Visiting students are not included in the calculations, but transfer students who have completed the fall and spring semesters are included.

Grade Normalization (Curve)⁹

1L	2L/3E	3L/4E
Class of 2017	Class of 2016	Class of 2015
182 Students	236 Students	252 Students
Top 33%: 3.187 Top 50%: 3.050	Top 10%: 3.556 Top 25%: 3.366 Top 33%: 3.277 Top 50%: 3.165	Top 10%: 3.608 Top 25%: 3.452 Top 33%: 3.369 Top 50%: 3.191

Honors^{10, 11}

Honor	Criteria
Order of the Coif	Top 10% of graduating class
<i>Summa cum laude</i>	GPA of 3.8
<i>Magna cum laude</i>	GPA of 3.6
<i>Cum laude</i>	GPA of 3.2
The Dean's Lists	Top 25% of each section of the class each semester

Awards¹²

Name of Award	Selection Process
Barristers	Selected by current students
Phi Delta Phi Award	Highest grade in class
Brief Awards	Nominated by Legal Research Writing Professor
Scholarships	From the top 20%

Journals¹³

The **SMU Law Review**, formerly the Southwestern Law Journal, is published four times each year and reaches law schools, attorneys, and judges throughout the United States and abroad. Each issue includes articles by prominent legal scholars and practitioners dealing with significant questions of local, national, and international law. In addition, articles by students analyze recent cases, statutes, and developments in the law. Each year one issue is devoted to an Annual Survey of Texas Law and contains articles concerning current developments in the law of Texas. All editing is done by student members of the board of editors and the staff. The Law Review also sponsors the annual SMU Corporate Counsel Symposium on current developments in corporate law. The symposium attracts corporate practitioners from throughout the United States.

The **Journal of Air Law and Commerce**, a quarterly publication of the School of Law, was founded at Northwestern University in 1930 and moved to SMU in 1961. The oldest scholarly periodical in the English language devoted primarily to the legal and economic problems affecting aviation and space, it has a worldwide circulation of more than 2,300 subscribers in some 54 countries. Articles

by distinguished lawyers, economists, government officials, and scholars deal with domestic and international problems of the airline industry, private aviation, and outer space, as well as general legal topics that have a significant impact on the area of aviation. Also included are student commentaries on a variety of topical issues, case notes on recent decisions, book reviews, and editorial comments. The Journal sponsors an annual symposium on selected problems in aviation law and publishes selected papers from that symposium in one of its issues. More than 500 aviation lawyers and industry representatives annually attend.

The **International Lawyer** is the quarterly publication of the Section of International Law and Practice of the American Bar Association. The ABA published the inaugural issue in 1966 and SMU has been the proud home of this prestigious journal since 1986. With a worldwide circulation in excess of 13,000 in 75 countries, this publication is the most widely distributed U.S. international law review in the world and addresses issues such as international trade, licensing, finance, taxation, litigation, and dispute resolution.

The **Law and Business Review of the Americas** is an interdisciplinary publication addressing the legal, business, economic, political, and social dimensions of the North American Free Trade Agreement, its implementation, its evolution and expansion, and its overall impact on doing business in the Americas. This journal is a quarterly publication produced by the SMU Dedman School of Law (and its Law Institute of the Americas) in association with the Section of International Law and Practice of the American Bar Association, the SMU Cox School of Business, the SMU Department of Economics and Political Science, and the Centre for Commercial Law Studies (Queen Mary and Westfield College, University of London).

The **SMU Science and Technology Law Review**, formerly the Computer Law Review and Technology Journal, is SMU's newest scholarly publication. This journal is published three times a year. The journal is also published on the Internet, allowing worldwide access to its articles. Students serve as the editorial board and staff members. The journal focuses on national and international technology-based legal issues, including the legal use and limits of hardware and software, and patent, copyright, and intellectual property law.

Moot Court^{14, 15}

Students have many opportunities to participate in oral advocacy competitions. The Board of Advocates is an organization led by an Executive Board composed of students and a faculty sponsor. The BOA coordinates intramural mock trial, moot court, negotiation, client counseling, and mediation competitions which are open to all SMU law students, as well as the Jackson Walker Moot Court Competition for all first-year students. These competitions are judged by local practitioners and members of the law faculty. The BOA also sponsors student teams for various state, national, and international interscholastic mock trial, moot court, negotiation, client counseling, and mediation competitions.

Each year, Dedman Law students participate in two of the most prestigious international moot court competitions. The Phillip C. Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition, sponsored by the International Law Students Association and the American Society of International Law, and the William C. Vis International Commercial Arbitration Moot Court Competition held each spring in Vienna, Austria. In the 2007 Vis Competition, a Dedman Law student won the Martin Domke Award for Best Oralist.

Clinical Programs¹⁶

The **Civil Clinic** represents low-income clients in matters ranging from housing disputes to elder advocacy to civil rights litigation.

The **Criminal Justice Clinic** represents Dallas county citizens charged with criminal offenses. Students work with the Dallas Public Defender's Office.

The **Federal Taxpayers Clinic** represents low-income taxpayers needing to resolve tax problems with the Audit, Appeals and Collection divisions of the I.R.S. and the U.S. Tax Court. This was the first tax clinic in the country with the authority to represent clients before the Internal Revenue Service and the U.S. Tax Court.

The **Small Business and Trademark Clinics** provide free legal services to new and existing small businesses and non-profit organizations who cannot afford to pay legal fees. Student attorneys advise clients in the start-up of their business and assist in preparing necessary legal documents. In the Trademark Clinic, students advise clients about trademark matters and draft, file and handle trademark applications with the USPTO.

The **W. W. Caruth, Jr. Child Advocacy Clinic** represents children who have been abused and neglected in Dallas County. The Clinic is appointed by juvenile district court judges to serve as guardian/attorney ad litem.

The Consumer Advocacy Project works with public and private community partners to provide consumer education and engage in research and advocacy on issues important to lower income consumers, especially those in Spanish-speaking communities. Students provide direct representation to consumers to help resolve complaints using formal and informal negotiation and mediation strategies.

The following clinics are expected to begin 2015 or thereafter:

The **Judge Elmo B. Hunter Legal Center for Victims of Crimes Against Women** will provide services for victims of domestic violence, sex trafficking, and other crimes against women. Students will help clients secure protective orders and assist with divorce, custody and child support agreements.

The **VanSickle Family Law Clinic** will provide free legal assistance for low-income North Texas residents in matters such as divorce, annulment, paternity actions, custody and visitation, and child and spousal support.

The **Patent Clinic** will be part of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office's law school clinic certification program. The law school will house two separate clinics, one for patent and another for trademark, and will offer services for small start-up companies and individuals, as well as provide essential skills training for law students.

Placement Facts¹⁷

Starting Salaries (2012 Graduates Employed Full-Time)

Private sector (25th-75th percentile)	\$64,000- \$124,000
Private sector - Median	\$85,000
Public service - Median	\$60,500

Employment Details

Graduates known to be employed at graduation	50.2%
Graduates known to be employed nine months after graduation	80.2%

Areas of Legal Practice

Graduates Employed In	Percentage
Law Firms	60.8%
Business and Industry	24.9%
Government	7.7%
Public Interest Organizations	0.7%
Judicial Clerkships	4.4%
Academia	1.5%
Unknown	0.0%

Externships/Internships

Externships¹⁸

SMU's Externship Program provides students with the opportunity to learn by doing. They work in carefully selected legal settings under the supervision of a mentor-attorney and a member of the law faculty. A large number of externships have been pre-approved and include non-profit organizations, courts, government agencies, corporate counsel's offices, and health care organizations. They give students exposure to the roles of judges, prosecutors, defense attorneys, advocates for the poor, advisers to businesses, enforcers of regulatory systems, and more. Some externships also provide the opportunity to work abroad with international institutions.

Internships¹⁹

SMU Dedman students can pursue internships with national non-profit organizations and governments.:

Student Organizations²⁰

- Aggie Law Students
- American Constitution Society
- Association for Law and Politics
- Association for Public Interest Law
- Black Law Students Association
- Board of Advocates
- Christian Legal Society
- Corporate Law Association
- Criminal Law Association
- Energy Law Association
- Environmental Law Society
- Family Law Association
- Federalist Law Society
- Health Law Association

- Hispanic Law Students Association
- Intellectual Property Organization
- International Law Review Association
- International Law Society
- J. Reuben Clark Society
- Jewish Law Students Association
- Labor and Employment Law Students Association
- Longhorn Bar Association
- Muslim Law Students Association
- Older Wiser Law Students (OWLS)
- OUTlaw
- Phi Alpha Delta Legal Fraternity
- Phi Delta Phi Legal Fraternity
- Real Estate Law Association
- Second Amendment Foundation
- SMU Law Review Association
- Sports & Entertainment Law Association
- Student Bar Association
- Texas Trial Lawyers Association (TTLA)
- Women in Law

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