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The College of William & Mary Marshall—Wythe School of Law



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Overview³

Legal education began at William & Mary in 1779, at the urging of Thomas Jefferson. He was governor of Virginia at the time and a member of the College's Board of Visitors. Jefferson believed that aspiring members of the profession should be trained to be citizen lawyers –passionate legal advocates and honorable human beings. John Marshall, the nation's fourth chief justice, studied at William & Mary, as have many human rights activists, community leaders and defenders of the wrongfully accused.

The school's remarkable history is matched only by its commitment to building the legal skills of its students, equipping them to become excellent lawyers who make a difference in the world.

The faculty are experienced mentors who exemplify the citizen-lawyer ideal. In every course, they use their professional and personal insights to emphasize the human element of the practice of law. Students arrive with sharp intellects and wildly diverse talents and dedicate their time to collaborating on projects of real worth.

Student-Faculty Ratio⁴

11.0:1

Admission Criteria⁵

	LSAT	GPA
25th-75th Percentile	161-165	3.46-3.88
Median*	164	3.73

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 Statistics⁶

Approximate number of applications	5564
Number accepted	1727
Acceptance rate	29.5%

The above admission details are based on 2013 data.

Class Ranking and Grades⁷

In the first year, faculty may grade solely on examinations or may also consider class participation when assigning the final grade.

In upper-level elective and seminar courses, academic work may be graded entirely by an exam or paper or the professor may factor in various assignments, quizzes, and/or classroom participation.

If a professor bases the final grade in a course in whole or in part on written assignments other than “traditional” exams, these written assignments should be graded anonymously except where the assignment involves student-faculty interchange that in the faculty member’s judgment makes anonymity for all students impossible.

Law grades in courses graded by standard letter grades have quality points from which GPA is determined:

A+	4.3
A	4.0
A-	3.7
B+	3.3
B	3.0
B-	2.7
C+	2.3
C	2.0
C-	1.7
D	1.0
F	(fail -- 0 quality points that will factor into your grade point average, no credit is earned)

As an alternative to these standard letter grades, two different versions of pass-fail grades may be used:

1. “Standard Pass-Fail” grading means that only two grades are possible, “P” for pass and “F” fail. Students must earn a “P” in order for the course credits to count towards the total number of credits required for graduation.

2. "Extended Pass-Fail" grading means that the following four grades are possible: "H" (honors), "P" (pass), "LP" (low pass), and "F" (Fail).

Other grades that have no effect on a student's grade point average are:

- "T" (transfer credit from another institution)
- "NG" (no grade or credit earned)
- "I" (incomplete)
- "O" (audit)

Grade Normalization (Curve)⁸

Mandatory Grade Policy:

Type of Class	Minimum GPA	Target GPA	Maximum GPA	Grade Distribution (described below)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First-year Doctrinal Courses • Professional Responsibility (regardless of size) 	3.25	3.30	3.35	Must substantially follow distribution as determined by the Vice Dean.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper-level courses of 30 or more 	3.25	3.30	3.35	Should follow distribution to the extent practicable.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper-level courses of 10-29 • All sections of Legal Practice Program • (regardless of size) 	3.20	3.30	3.40	Should follow distribution to the extent practicable.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Upper-level courses of 9 or fewer • Clinics (regardless of size) • Courses classified as satisfying the writing requirement (regardless of size) 	3.20	n/a	3.70	n/a

- Faculty shall ensure that the mean GPA of each class falls between the maximum and minimum GPAs described above.
- Faculty should not treat the upper (or lower) bounds as the target GPA for their classes and should seek a target mean GPA of 3.30 in classes enrolling 10 or more students.

The distribution of grades is as follows:

A (including A+ if available)	10%
A-	20%
B+	35%
B	20%
B- or below	15%

Honors^{9,10}

Honor	Criteria
Order of the Coif	Top 10% of the graduating class.
<i>summa cum laude</i>	Top 3% of the graduating class.
<i>magna cum laude</i>	Top 10% of the graduating class.
<i>cum laude</i>	Top 25% of the graduating class.

Awards¹¹⁻¹⁵

Name of Award	Awarded for/to
Drapers' Scholarship	For a scholarship from Queen Mary College of the University of London for a year of post-graduate study.
Dean's Certificate	For students who have initiated new projects, led organizations, participated enthusiastically in Law School or community activities, or demonstrated special initiative on behalf of the Law School.
Ewell Award	For well-rounded graduating students - both graduate and undergraduate - who best exemplify a liberal arts education through their activities as well as studies.
The Lawrence W. l'Anson Award	For evidence of great promise through scholarship, character and leadership.
The Herrmann Prize	For the student who has demonstrated the greatest potential for making future contributions to the enhancement of the efficient administration of justice through the innovative use of technology.
Order of Barristers	For graduating law students who excelled in written and oral advocacy activities.
The Thurgood Marshall Award	For that member of the William & Mary Law School community, whether student, faculty, friend or alumnus, who best exhibits the ideals of distinguished public service exemplified by Justice Marshall.
National Association of Women Lawyers	For a student who contributes to the advancement of women in society; promotes issues and concerns of women in the legal profession; exhibits motivation, tenacity and enthusiasm; demonstrates academic achievement; and earns the respect of the dean and faculty.
Spong Professionalism Award	For a third-year law student who best exemplified professionalism and ethics in the Legal Skills Program.
The George Wythe Award	For a member of the graduating class for his or her deep devotion and outstanding service to the Law School.
ABA-BNA Award	Excellence in Health Law.
The American Bankruptcy Institute Award	Excellence in Bankruptcy.

American Bar Association State and Local Government Award	Excellence in State and Local Government.
Rachel Carson Award	Excellence in Environmental Law.
The William Hamilton Prize	Excellence in Legal History.
The Kruchko & Fries Prize	Excellence in Employment Law.
William and Mary Journal of Women and the Law	Outstanding Member.
William and Mary Law Review	Best Student Note.
William & Mary Bill of Rights Journal	Best Student Note.
William and Mary Environmental Law and Policy Review Award	Excellence in Scholarship.
William and Mary Business Law Review	Best Student Note; Outstanding Member.
CALI Excellence for the Future Award	For the most significant contribution to legal scholarship in any law school course.
The Kaufman & Canoles Prizes	For outstanding performance in the Legal Skills Program.
Wayne M. Lee Endowed Book Award	For the member of the first-year class with the highest GPA.
Gambrell Legal Skills Award	For the top student in each of the Legal Skills program.
The Family Law Book Award; Robert R. Kaplan International Financial Law Award; Legal Skills Scholars Award; Special Education Advocacy Award; Virginia Trial Lawyers Award;	Awarded at graduation to deserving students.

Journals¹⁷

The **William and Mary Law Review** has become one of the top general interest law journals in the country. The Law Review, published entirely by students, includes six issues per academic year and features the work of noted scholars and William & Mary students. The Law Review provides a forum for academic treatment of a variety of legal issues, offers a unique educational opportunity for its student members, aids practitioners in understanding recent developments in the law, and enhances the life of the Law School.¹⁸

The **William & Mary Bill of Rights Journal** has been named among the leading student-edited constitutional law journals by Washington and Lee's law library. The Journal is published in four issues per annual volume, adding almost 1,400 pages to scholarly discourse each year. The Journal contains both student-edited professional articles and student-written notes. The Journal also publishes articles generated through symposia on topics involving the Constitution and Bill of Rights.¹⁹

The **William & Mary Business Law Review** is a scholarly publication of professional articles and student notes, edited and operated by students of the Law School. BLR is dedicated to the nexus between business, law, and ethics. The mission of BLR is to publish articles that analyze new laws and challenge existing laws; provide lawyers, students, judges, politicians, and scholars a practical research tool; and provide students of the William & Mary Law School an opportunity to receive a more comprehensive legal education through participation as student staff members of BLR.²⁰

The **William & Mary Environmental Law and Policy Review** began in 1975 as a newsletter entitled Environmental Practice News. By 1990 the publication evolved into the William and Mary Journal of Environmental Law, and in 1995 took on its current manifestation. Published three times a year, ELPR focuses on current topics in environmental law.²¹

The **William & Mary Journal of Women and the Law** was established in 1993 to provide a forum for scholarly debate on gender-related legal issues. The Journal does not promote a fixed ideology, but is instead a forum for open discussion and varying viewpoints. The Journal has attained its goal of becoming one of the nation's top specialty journals, and strives to remain in that position by continuously publishing cutting edge pieces.²²

Moot Court¹⁵

The Moot Court Program is one of William & Mary Law School's best opportunities for students to develop and refine oral advocacy and brief writing skills. Team members participate in moot court tournaments, which require each team to research and write an appellate brief, then defend it before a panel of judges in an oral argument.

The William & Mary Moot Court Team annually hosts the William B. Spong Invitational Moot Court Tournament. Now in its forty-fourth year, the Spong Tournament focuses on current issues in constitutional law. Rounds are judged completely by panels of federal and state court judges. The Virginia Trial Lawyers Association is the tournament's co-sponsor, and its representatives also serve as judges for the tournament. Competitors at the Spong Tournament represent schools from across the United States.

Each year William & Mary's Moot Court Team sends its members to approximately fifteen inter-collegiate moot court tournaments around the nation, including the Judge Brown Admiralty Law Competition in New Orleans, Louisiana; the Vale Corporate Securities Law competition in Wilmington, DE; the Kaufmann Securities Moot Court Tournament in New York; the National Championships of the American College of Trial Lawyers/New York City Bar Association National Moot Court Championship; the Andrews Kurth Moot Court National Championships; and the Stetson University International Environmental Moot Court Competition.

Clinical Programs²⁴

The **Domestic Violence Clinic** enables students to represent victims of domestic violence.

The **Federal Tax Clinic** enables students to assist in the representation of low-income Virginia taxpayers before the IRS, U.S. Tax Court, and U.S. District Court.

The **Innocence Project Clinic** enables students to participate in the legal investigation and research of inmate claims of actual innocence.

The **Family Law Clinic** allows students to provide legal services to indigent people in a variety of civil matters.

The **Special Education Advocacy Clinic** allows students to assist children with special needs and their families in special education matters.

The **Lewis B. Puller, Jr. Veterans' Benefits Clinic** offers students the opportunity to help military veterans file, adjudicate and appeal disability claims with the Veterans Administration.

The **Virginia Coastal Policy Clinic** gives students the chance to assist in science-based legal and policy analysis of environmental and land use issues affecting the state's coastal resources.

The **Appellate and Supreme Court Clinic** introduces 3L students to appellate practice in the federal Courts of Appeals and the United States Supreme Court.

The **Elder Law Clinic** enables second- and third-year students to help represent the elderly in various kinds of cases.

Placement Facts²⁵

Starting Salaries (2012 Graduates Employed Full-Time)

Private sector (25th-75th percentile)	\$60,000 - \$95,000
Private sector - Median	\$75,000
Public service - Median	\$53,000

Employment Details

Graduates known to be employed at graduation	45.6%
Graduates known to be employed nine months after graduation	68.1%

Areas of Legal Practice

Graduates Employed In	Percentage
Law Firms	31.3%
Business and Industry	16.0%
Government	23.3%
Judicial Clerkships	20.2%
Public Interest Organizations	4.9%
Academia	4.3%
Unknown	0%

Externships/Internships

Externships²⁶

William & Mary encourages students to earn academic credit through externships. Several types of externships are available:

Federal Government Externships with executive or legislative agencies of the U.S. government, Congressional committees, and members of Congress excluding lobbying or partisan political activities.

Judicial Externships with judges, courts, and organizations that provide research, educational, and management services to judges and courts.

Nonprofit Organization Externships with civil legal services/legal aid organizations and private, nonprofit, 501(c)(3) organizations. Organizations outside the U.S. qualify if they are nonprofit organizations that would qualify for 501(c)(3) status if they were U.S. organizations.

Private Practice and In-house Counsel Externships with solo practitioners, law firms, in-house law departments of corporations, and trade associations.

Prosecutor Externships with state and local prosecutors.

Public Defender Externships with federal, state, and local public defenders.

State and Local Government Externships with city or county attorneys; attorneys general; executive or legislative agencies; and legislators (excluding lobbying or partisan political activities).

U.S. Attorney Externships with civil or criminal divisions of U.S. Attorney offices.

Virginia Attorney General Externships with divisions and sections of that office.

Washington, DC, Fall Semester Externship with federal, state, and local government agencies, courts/judges, prosecutors, public defenders, legal aid offices, or 501(c)(3) organizations in Washington, DC, or the Northern Virginia or Maryland suburbs of DC.

Internships²⁷

International Public Service Internships

William & Mary students receive hands-on field experience by participating in international internships all over the globe. Over the past years, students have interned in Argentina, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Belize, Brazil, Cambodia, China, Dominican Republic, England, Ghana, India, Iraq, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Mauritania, Mexico, Myanmar, Pakistan, Poland, Russia, Rwanda, South Africa, Swaziland, Switzerland, and Washington, DC.

Student Organizations²⁸

- American Civil Liberties Union, W&M Chapter
- American Constitution Society

- Asian-American Law Students Association
- Black Law Students Association
- Business Law Society
- Children's Advocacy Law Society
- Christian Legal Society
- De Vecino A Vecino
- Election Law Society
- I'Anson-Hoffman American Inn of Court
- Institute of Bill of Rights Law--Student Division
- International Law Society
- J. Reuben Clark Law Society
- Jewish Law Students Association
- Learn more: Election Law Society
- LGBT Equality Alliance
- Military Law Society
- Multicultural Law Students Association
- Sports and Entertainment Law Society
- Student Environmental & Animal Law Society
- Student Intellectual Property Society
- Students for the Innocence Project
- The Federalist Society
- The George Wythe Society
- Venture Capital and Entrepreneurship Legal Society
- Virginia Bar Association, W&M Chapter
- W&M Women's Law

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