



Overview and Application Instructions for the Master of Science – Legal Studies Program

CLS-2009/2010

These instructions and all required forms are also available at www.lawschool.cornell.edu/admissions/apply

Overview. The Master of Science – Legal Studies (MSLS) degree is a one-year nonprofessional degree intended for Cornell University graduate Ph.D. students and post-doctoral fellows who have no prior legal training and seek an introduction to the foundations of legal systems, legal reasoning, argumentation and analysis, legal procedure, and substantive law in selected areas. The program requires that a student be in residence at the law school for at least two semesters (32 law school credits – generally 16 credits per semester). The basic program for MSLS candidates consists of the current first year J.D. curriculum, which is the following: Civil Procedure (6 credits); Constitutional Law (4 credits); Contracts (6 credits); Lawyering (4 credits); Torts (4 credits); Criminal Law (4 credits); and Property (4 credits). There are four qualifications to this basic structure: (1) MSLS students would be required to take the librarian-taught legal research portion of the Lawyering class, but would not take the legal writing component; (2) MSLS students will not be enrolled in “small sections” of first year courses; (3) MSLS students can petition to substitute law school courses related to their field of study for required first year courses; and (4) MSLS students must complete a 4-credit thesis supervised by their law school advisor(s) with input from the home field advisor(s). This thesis, which is to be independent of the student’s Ph.D. dissertation, should integrate the student’s law school work with their primary field of graduate research. MSLS students will be graded in the same manner as students in the law school’s J.D. program and in all other regards will be bound by the same requirements, procedures, and principles of good standing as J.D. students.

Applying. The standard for admission to the MSLS program will be similar to that applied to applicants for admission to the law school’s regular J.D. program. However, for MSLS applicants who have not taken the Law School Admission Test, their general GRE test score may be substituted. Applications need to be completed no later than **May 1, 2010**. For an application to be complete, the following must be submitted to the Cornell Law School Office of Admissions, Myron Taylor Hall, Ithaca, N.Y. 14853.

- An application form (available online at www.lawschool.cornell.edu/admissions/apply)
- A non-refundable application fee of \$80.00
- A detailed resume, including academic publications and presentations
- Official transcripts from all colleges, universities, and graduate/professional programs attended
- Recommendation letters from: (1) the applicant’s Cornell graduate faculty advisor (normally a graduate student’s Special Committee Chair or a post-doctoral fellow’s supervising or

hosting faculty member; and (2) the law school faculty member who has agreed to serve as the applicant’s law school faculty advisor (for more information on this requirement and on contacting possible advisors, please make arrangements to meet with the law school’s Assistant Dean for Graduate Studies by calling 607-255-5850)

- A signed consent form authorizing law school access to the applicant’s graduate program records (a pdf version of the required consent form is available at www.lawschool.cornell.edu/admissions/apply)
- If the Law School Admission Test has been taken, an official score report from the Law School Admission Council (www.lsac.org or 215-968-1001)
- A Statement of Interest explaining the applicant’s reasons for seeking admission and providing any supplemental information relevant to the applicant’s qualifications

Once an application to the MSLS program is complete, it will be submitted to the law school Admissions Committee for consideration. Incomplete applications will not be considered. Tuition for the program is the same as the tuition charged to first year J.D. students. Financial aid is not available for the MSLS program.