



<b>Title</b>	Graduation and Academic Requirements
<b>Category</b>	Academic Policies and Graduation Requirements
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<b>Responsible Party</b>	Associate Dean for Academic Affairs

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### ***Graduation and Academic Requirements.***

(1) **STUDENTS ENTERING IN OR BEFORE FALL 2014.** To be eligible for graduation, students must: (a) pass at least 90 semester credit hours (55 of which are required courses); and (b) have a cumulative grade average for all credits taken of 2.000 or better.

(2) **STUDENTS ENTERING IN OR AFTER JULY 2015. To be eligible for graduation, students must: (a) pass at least 90 semester credit hours (55 of which are required courses); and (b) at the time of graduation have a cumulative grade average for all credits taken of 2.250 or better.**

#### ***Required Courses.***

(1) **STUDENTS ENTERING IN OR BEFORE FALL 2014.** A student must complete successfully all courses designated in the curriculum as required. If a student has taken a required course for a grade *before* matriculation in law school and received a grade of C+ or better, the student will not receive law school credit for the course but may not be required to repeat the course if approved by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs when another course is available in the same subject area, which may be taken in substitution for equivalent credit hours and then be a part of such student's required first year curriculum. A student who fails a required course must retake and pass that course when it is next offered. Any exception to this rule for a particular required course must be approved by the faculty. If another section is available, the student must not enroll with the same professor from the failed class.

(2) **STUDENTS ENTERING IN OR AFTER JULY 2015.** A student must complete successfully all courses designated in the curriculum as required. If a student has taken a required course for a grade *before* matriculation in law school and received a grade of C+ or better, the student will not receive law school credit for the course but may not be required to repeat the course if approved by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs when another course is available in the same subject area, which may be taken in substitution for equivalent credit hours and then be a part of such student's required first year curriculum. A student who fails a required course must retake and pass that course when it is next offered. Any exception to this rule for a particular required course must be approved by the faculty. If another section is available, the student must not enroll with the same professor from the failed class. **A student who fails a first-year or advanced-required course may only retake the course once. If a student**

**fails the course a second time, he or she will be dismissed for academic deficiency, regardless of the student's cumulative GPA.**

**Course Requirements.** The first-year required courses are:

**Fall**

<i>Course</i>	<i>Credit hours</i>
Civil Procedure	4
Contracts	4
Legal Practice I	3
Torts	4

**Spring**

<i>Course</i>	<i>Credit hours</i>
Constitutional Law	4
Criminal Law	3
Legal Practice II	3
Property	4

The advanced required courses are:

<i>Course</i>	<i>Credit hours</i>
Business Entities	4
Criminal Procedure	3
Commercial Law	4
Evidence	4
Income Taxation	4
Professional Responsibility	3
Wills and Trusts	4

**Except as authorized by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs, students must take at least 15 of the 26 semester credit hours of advanced required courses in their second year.** This requirement applies also to transfer students to the extent practicable. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will determine the number of advanced required credits which each transfer student must take in his or her first year here.

All students must complete an advanced research and writing requirement and an advanced skills course requirement.

The preceding general graduation requirements are subject to specific rules pertaining to time limits, scholastic requirements, and number of credit hours.

**Advanced Research and Writing Requirement.** Each student must complete the Advanced Research and Writing Requirement before the J.D. degree can be awarded. To satisfy the requirement, a student must write an original work consisting of criticism, analysis, synthesis or history of law or a law-related topic. The student must evaluate a theory critically, provide a distinctive perspective on the matter, and

take a creative approach to the topic, rather than merely restate legal development or others' ideas. This requirement is in addition to the mandatory first year legal writing program and may be met by any of the following:

- 1) Successfully completing a supervised Independent Legal Research Project (Law 7001); or
- 2) Successfully completing any elective or advanced required course in which a substantial supervised research and writing requirement is imposed, providing the paper is certified by the professor as being of requisite scholarly merit; or
- 3) Successfully completing any elective or advanced required course in which the professor permits a supervised research paper to be submitted in lieu of an examination, providing the student opts not to take the examination, and providing the paper is certified by the professor as being of requisite scholarly merit; or
- 4) Completing a signed law review comment for publication in the *Law Review*, the *Texas Tech Administrative Law Journal*, the *Texas Tech Estate Planning & Community Property Law Journal*, or the *Business and Bankruptcy Law Journal* (whether subsequently published or not) which in the judgment of the faculty advisor exhibits research and writing effort and achievement comparable to the foregoing; or
- 5) When approved in advance by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs and a faculty member willing to supervise and evaluate it, satisfactorily completing any other research and writing project of comparable scope to the foregoing (such as submitting a credit worthy essay in a writing competition) even though no course credit is given in connection therewith.

In any situation listed above wherein the student may fulfill the research and writing requirement, the faculty member involved will certify in writing at the end of the semester or other appropriate time the names of the student or students who have successfully fulfilled the requirement. An adjunct faculty member may supervise an Independent Legal Research Project in his or her area of expertise that a full-time faculty member does not have, as approved in advance by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs. Faculty members will indicate in advance of registration whether research and writing work fulfilling the requirements of this rule will be required or permitted in each elective course being offered. The law school cannot make opportunities available to all students to do paid research. Consequently, papers or projects for which compensation has been received by the student (other than prizes received in essay contests open to all students) will not be considered for compliance with the advanced research and writing requirement.

Students who seek to fulfill their advanced writing requirements through supervised independent legal research project or elective courses must notify their professors in advance of beginning the project or course. The Law School Registrar will accept notification that a student has fulfilled the advanced writing requirement in one of the following ways: (1) by notation on the professor's final grade roll; (2) by e-mail or written memorandum from the professor; or (3) by the professor's signature on the appropriate form which can be located at the front counter in the Administration suite.

***Scholarly Writing Series Requirement.*** In the semester in which a J.D. student registers to receive credit for the upper-level writing requirement, the student must complete Texas Tech University School of Law's online Scholarly Writing Series.

The Scholarly Writing Series will consist of three one-hour online presentations that will focus on important aspects of preparing a scholarly research paper.

**Class 1:** Selecting a topic (including where to look for a topic and how to evaluate a topic), researching a scholarly paper (including research strategies and suggestions on where to start).

**Class 2:** Developing a thesis (including the difference between a topic and a thesis and thesis originality), organizing your research, and formatting a scholarly paper.

**Class 3:** Attribution (including where citations fit into the writing process, incorporating footnotes or endnotes, the frequency of footnotes/endnotes and the number of sources that should be cited, the three primary functions of footnotes/endnotes, adding text to the footnotes/endnotes, and defining and preventing plagiarism).

Professors will be provided with the names of students who have completed all three components of the online series. Professors have flexibility to determine how to deal with noncompliance. Penalties for noncompliance might include a grade reduction on a certain assignment, a reduction in class participation credit, or a reduction in the final course grade.

**Duplication of Academic Credit Forbidden.** Any writing that is substantially the basis for academic credit in any class or graded activity will not be used in any way for academic credit in any other class or graded activity.

**Advanced Skills Requirement.** The American Bar Association requires that each student in accredited law schools receive instruction in "professional skills generally regarded as necessary for effective and responsible participation in the legal profession." Standard 302(a)(4), Standards & Rules of Procedure for Approval of Law Schools. Each student must complete successfully an advanced skills course to satisfy graduation requirements. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs includes in the annual registration materials a list of the courses that will be taught each year that will satisfy this requirement.