

UNT DallasTM

College of Law

Admissions Policy

Admissions Policy

The procedures herein implement the Admissions Policy of the University of North Texas at Dallas College of Law (the “COL”), or as later revised or amended.

I. Goals and Approaches of the UNTDCOL Faculty Admissions Committee

- A. The Admissions Committee seeks to select a well-qualified student body, committed to the ethical practice of law, and to representing an array of clients, including those underserved by the legal profession. The Admissions Committee will review and make admissions decisions on first-time entering and transfer student applications.
- B. The Admissions Committee in consultation with the Dean of the College of Law will set an enrollment target for each academic year. The target number of students for enrollment will be at a minimum 80 students in the full-time division and 40 in the part-time division.
- C. The Admissions Committee will employ strategies that will heighten a focus on LSAT percentiles.
- D. The Admissions Committee will use a holistic approach to review applications in order to afford opportunities to a student body that serves the COL’s mission of promoting justice and advancing human potential through the enterprise of legal education.
- E. The Admissions Committee will work closely with and support the Assistant Dean of Admissions and Scholarships in the development and implementation of pipeline programs, recruiting strategies, and outreach activities to students who have received offers of admissions.

II. Entering Student Applicants

1. Responsibilities of the Admission Committee

A. Applications:

1. The Admissions Committee establishes the following requirements. Each applicant:

- i. must register with the Law School Data Assembly Service, now known as Credential Assembly Service (CAS), to submit transcripts and letters of recommendation for authentication and a summary CAS report to be generated for the Office of Admissions.
- ii. must complete and submit the Law School's online application, which is accessed from either/both the COL or LSAC websites.
- iii. must have earned a baccalaureate degree from an accredited undergraduate institution or be able to complete the degree requirements by the time they begin law school. Applicants are required to use CAS for direct transmission of their academic transcripts sent to the COL.
- iv. must take the LSAT and have the score submitted to the COL. Only LSAT scores from tests taken within three (3) years of applying to the law school will be accepted. If multiple LSAT scores are reported, the Assistant Dean for Admissions and Scholarships will use the highest of the scores to place applicants in the Groups described in paragraph B.7 below.
- v. must submit with their application a personal statement in the form of an essay not to exceed three, typed double-spaced pages, highlighting their individual attributes that demonstrate their ability and commitment to studying law including but not limited to work experiences, maturity, overcoming adversity, leadership and civic-mindedness.
- vi. must provide at least two (2) letters of recommendation (LOR) that will be submitted to CAS from individuals knowledgeable of the applicant's work ethic, character, and potential to successfully study and practice law. The maximum allowed is four (4) LORs for any applicant. The Committee strongly encourages applicants to submit at least one recommendation from an academic reference. The LOR must not be more than three (3) years old from date of the application to the COL.
- vii. must answer questions regarding their character and fitness for the study and practice of law. The Committee, through its designee, may follow-up with applicants requesting additional information regarding character and fitness disclosures. Applicants who answer affirmatively to the law school's questions

will be particularly encouraged to consult the rules for any state in which they may have an interest in practicing law.

- viii. may submit with their application an optional essay titled "Why UNT Dallas College of Law," addressing why the applicant is specifically interested in UNT Dallas College of Law. The optional essay must not exceed two, typed double-spaced pages.
- ix. applicants who have been academically disqualified from this or another law school must:
 - 1. provide a letter of standing from the prior law institution attended and a transcript of law course work;
 - 2. submit a written statement detailing the reason(s) for the disqualification and why the applicant believes he or she will be successful in the COL's program of legal education and able to be admitted to the bar; and
 - 3. demonstrate to the Committee's satisfaction that the prior disqualification does not indicate a lack of capacity to complete the COL's program of legal education and be admitted to the bar.

B. Management and Review of Applications:

- 1. The Committee, in its discretion, will establish appropriate deadlines for admission to the COL.
 - a. Deadlines: The deadline for applications is March 15. The COL reserves the right to extend the deadline out should circumstances compel the extension.
- 2. The Admissions Committee will employ a holistic approach to review each application that assures quality consideration of each individual applicant, giving consideration to LSAT scores, undergraduate GPA, academic record, rigor of undergraduate course of study, and evidence of overcoming/adversity or hardship, leadership experience (including service in the Armed Forces and extensive public service/community activities), and/or special skills or achievements (including work experience, exemplary letters of

recommendation, academic honors/awards, demonstrated writing background and/or publication experience, strength of personal statement, and significant work towards or achievement of an advanced or professional degree).

- a. An applicant's performance on the LSAT may not be used as the sole criterion for consideration of admission. It will be used in conjunction with the other enumerated factors listed in B.2.
- b. The Admissions Committee will not establish a minimum requirement for the LSAT or UGPA. However, LSAT scores and UGPA should be given strong

consideration and can offset each other. For evaluative purposes, a relatively higher LSAT score can offset a lower UGPA and a higher GPA can offset a lower LSAT score. Applicants with at least a 150 LSAT and at least a 3.0 UGPA will be especially encouraged to apply.

3. The Admissions Committee requires that four of the five committee members vote to approve admission of any applicant having an LSAT score below 148.
4. The Admissions Committee requires that any applicant who has been academically disqualified from this or any other law school will be approved only upon *unanimous vote* from the committee and must make an affirmative showing that the prior disqualification does not indicate a lack of capacity to complete our program of legal education and be admitted to the bar.
5. The Admissions Committee, by majority vote, may exercise its right to request an interview of any applicant for whom it determines that additional information is necessary to clarify questions or enable an admissions decision. A Committee member who is a faculty member, where appropriate, shall conduct such interviews to discuss the applicant's application and interest in attending the COL.
6. The Admissions Committee will retain the authority and discretion, upon the request of a member, to ask that an applicant supply information in addition to that which is required on the application.
7. The Admissions Committee will utilize the "grouping" approach described below to manage and facilitate the review of applications.
 - i. *Group 1: presumptive admission:* applicants with an LSAT score greater than or equal to 158 and a UGPA of 3.6 or higher, provided the applicant has no more than two (2) LSAT scores below 158. The Admissions Committee delegates to the Assistant Dean of Admissions and Scholarships to admit any applicant with an LSAT score 158 or greater and a UGPA of 3.6 or higher, no more than two (2) LSAT scores below 158, and who, based upon complete review of the application including GPA, academic record, personal statement, addenda, letters of recommendation, and consideration of overcoming adversity, leadership, and special skills or accomplishments, demonstrates the

ability to be successful in the COL program and in the practice of law.

- ii. *Group 2: supermajority approval required:* all applicants with a highest LSAT score at or below 148 regardless of UGPA, **and** all applicants with a highest LSAT score at or below 151 and an UGPA at or below 3.000. The Assistant Dean of Admissions and Scholarships will perform an initial review of all files in Group 2. If the Assistant Dean of Admissions and Scholarships votes “yes” to admit an applicant in Group 2er, the file is then assigned to full committee for review. The admission of an applicant in this group will require that four of the five committee members (supermajority) vote to admit the applicant.
- iii. *Group 3: character and fitness - supermajority approval required:* all applicants with an affirmative answer to questions relating to character and fitness, including academic probation and/or dismissal (other than law school) and criminal matters. Applicants in this group will be reviewed by the entire committee. The committee will determine whether a candidate in this group should be offered admission based on whether the candidate is an otherwise strong candidate who demonstrates the ability to be successful in our law program based upon complete review of application including GPA, academic record, personal statement, addenda, letters of recommendation, and consideration of overcoming adversity, leadership, and special skills or accomplishments. The admission of an applicant in this group will require that four of the five committee members (supermajority) vote to admit the applicant.
- iv. *Group 4: academically disqualified from a prior law school – unanimous approval:* all applicants who were academically disqualified from a law school. Applicants in this group will be reviewed by the entire committee. In order to qualify for admission, an applicant in this group must be an otherwise strong candidate who demonstrates the ability to be successful in our law program based upon complete review of application including GPA, academic record, personal statement, addenda, letters of recommendation, and consideration of overcoming adversity, leadership, and special skills or accomplishments. In addition, the candidate must demonstrate the ability to be successful in our law program and to be admitted to the bar and provide adequate explanation of prior law experience and reasons for disqualification. The admissions of an applicant in this group will require that five out of the five committee members unanimously vote to admit the applicant.

- v. *Group 5: applications not included within any other group:* all applicants who do not meet the requirements, as specified above, for groups one through four. A candidate from this group will be admitted if the committee determines that the candidate is a strong candidate who demonstrates the ability to be successful in our law program based upon complete review of application including GPA, academic record, personal statement, addenda, letters of recommendation, and consideration of overcoming adversity, leadership, and special skills or accomplishments. The admission of an applicant in this group will require that three of the five committee members (simple majority) vote to admit the applicant.
- vi. *Group 6: transfer applicants.* See Section III below for required qualifications. The admission of an applicant in this group will require that three of the five committee members (simple majority) vote to admit the applicant.

- 8. The Admissions Committee may hold meetings to review and discuss disposition of applications.

C. Monitoring the Recruiting and Admissions/Enrollment Process

1. *Recruiting:*

- a. The Admissions Committee supports the current practice of the Assistant Dean of Admissions and Scholarships to counsel prospective applicants as to the significance of the LSAT score. If the Law School learns that an applicant has only taken the LSAT once and has received a score of 143 or lower, the applicant will be counseled that their application may not be deemed competitive and will be strongly encouraged to consider retaking the LSAT to become more competitive with the projected applicant pool.
- b. The Admissions Committee will be informed by the Assistant Dean of Admissions and Scholarships about programming with commercial LSAT preparation firms such as Kaplan, Princeton Review, and Power Score to offer Saturday LSAT preparation sessions for potential applicants.
- c. The Admissions Committee will be informed about the continued development of pipeline programs and will actively assist the Assistant Dean of Admissions

and Scholarships in those efforts.

1. The Law School, under the guidance of the Assistant Dean of Admissions and Scholarships, will:
 - a. continue its development of relationships with the Historically Black Colleges and Universities located in Texas. From such outreach efforts, the Law School will work with these institutions to identify potential law school applicants and work with them during their undergraduate experience to strengthen their LSAT performance and overall application.
 - b. identify professional organizations with memberships who may have interest in pursuit of a legal education as a complimentary or secondary career.
 - c. build pipelines with Texas undergraduate and community colleges to encourage enrollment at COL;
 - d. continue support of LSPI programs at University of Texas Rio Grande Valley, University of Texas at San Antonio and University of Texas El Paso to encourage enrollment at COL.
 - e. build a relationship with CLEO program and support activities to promote prospective student success with the LSAT and enrollment.

2. *Admissions/enrollment process:*

- a. The Admissions Committee will monitor the LSAT percentile medians during the admissions cycle. The Admissions Committee has adopted a requirement that a bi- weekly review of the LSAT percentile data will occur to assure that the Law School is meeting its LSAT target percentiles.
- b. The Admissions Committee authorizes the Assistant Dean of Admissions and Scholarships to make admissions offers consistent with the criteria and goals established by the faculty as set forth in the Admissions Policy, including use of the following strategies:

1. Make targeted offers of admissions through the complete admissions cycle.
 2. Utilize a wait list for applicants as a principal function of enrollment management.
 3. Manage class size to maintain the 25th LSAT percentile. The Law School has set 147 as the target LSAT score for the 25th percentile.
- c. The Dean of the Law School will review all applicants reviewed by the Committee for admission to make a final determination whether an offer of admission will be extended to such applicants.

3. Admitted Students:

- a. The Admissions Committee requires admitted applicants to submit a non-refundable, seat deposit to reserve their place in the upcoming class in the amount of \$350 to be received by April 1st and applied to the student account once matriculated. If the applicant is admitted after April 1st, the Assistant Dean
Admissions and Scholarships has discretion to set an appropriate date for submission of the seat deposit commensurate with the offer.
- b. All entering students who complete their intention to enroll and submit their seat deposit are required to send official transcripts to the Office of Admissions or the Law School Registrar's Office by July 1.
- c. Admitted deposited applicants must inform the Office of Admissions and the Law School Registrar's Office of any delays in receiving transcripts by the deadline. Delays of any kind will be handled by Admissions or the Law School Registrar's Office on a case by case basis. Transcripts not received by prescribed or amended deadlines may cause enrollees to be subject to administrative withdrawal. They may also be responsible for tuition and fees in accordance with the State of Texas Refund policy (54.100). If official transcripts are not received by the first day of class for the fall semester, the registrar shall be notified and shall allow a reasonable time for the student to provide the official transcript, but no later than October 15th. If the official transcript is not received by that date, the student shall be administratively withdrawn from classes by the registrar and could be subject to a bill for tuition and fees according the State of Texas refund policy (54.100).

- d. The Assistant Dean for Admissions and Scholarships will review any request for deferment of an admission in accordance with the following procedures:
 - i. Individual consideration will be given to any request for a deferment by an admitted incoming first-year student. Visiting or transfer students are not eligible for deferments.
 - ii. The Assistant Dean for Admissions shall review all documented requests for deferment of matriculation to the COL to determine whether good cause has been demonstrated that such deferment is consistent with the needs of the student and the COL.
 - iii. The Assistant Dean for Admissions and Scholarships may grant a deferment request for up to one academic year.
 - iv. A student may be granted only one deferment.
 - v. The maximum number of deferments granted for any given enrollment year is 10% of the total admitted seats for the class, unless otherwise authorized by the Dean of the COL. This maximum level may be considered by the Admissions Committee in its review of any deferment request.

D. Monitoring Any Relationship Between Admissions Decisions and Academic Performance

1. The Admissions Committee will assess the relationship between its decisions and law school performance by utilizing the following procedures:
 - a. work closely with designated COL personnel to assess admissions decisions relative to law school performance and bar passage.
 - b. utilize the LSAC First Year Performance/LSAT and UGPA Correlation Study.

E. Character and Fitness

1. Application

- a. The College of Law's application for admission will include the questions the Texas Board of Law Examiners asks to law students on the Declaration of Intention to Study Law related to criminal history.
- b. False, misleading, or incomplete answers on an application for admission may constitute a violation of the UNT Dallas Code of Student's Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct 7.001, may provide grounds for sanctions ranging from a letter of reprimand to revocation of admission, and may be reported to the Law School Admissions Council.
- c. If the Admissions Committee becomes aware that a student has provided false or misleading answers or has withheld required information on an application, it may provide a Code of Conduct complaint regarding the student who falsified or withheld the required information to the College of Law Assistant Dean of Student Affairs for referral to the Office of Community Standards.

2. Continuing Obligation to Amend Application

- a. Students admitted to the College of Law have a continuing obligation through graduation to amend their application to disclose any previously undisclosed information required by the application. Such amendment must be provided in writing to the Assistant Dean for Admissions and must include a statement providing complete details of the change and supporting documentation.
- b. The Admissions Committee will review student amendments on a regular basis.
- c. After reviewing a student's application amendment, the Committee will provide

either a letter of acknowledgment or a letter of admonishment to the student. The decision to provide a letter of admonishment, rather than a letter of acknowledgment, will depend on

(1) whether the student is providing information that the student knew or should have known needed to be provided on the application, and (2) the seriousness of the omission.

- d. As set out above, if it becomes clear from an application amendment that the student provided false information or withheld required information on an application, the Committee may lodge a Code of Conduct complaint with the College of Law Assistant Dean of Student Affairs for referral to the Office of Community Standards.
- e. Students are under a continuing obligation to report any arrest, citation, ticket, or charge of any violation of the law, excluding minor traffic violations (arrests, citations, tickets, or convictions for failure to maintain financial responsibility must be disclosed), regardless of whether charges were formally brought against the student, regardless of whether charges against the student were dismissed, regardless of whether the student was acquitted, and regardless of whether adjudication was withheld or a conviction was reversed, set aside, or vacated. This obligation begins from the date of acceptance by the College of Law and continues until graduation. Students are obligated to make this report in writing to the College of Law Assistant Dean of Student Affairs and must include a statement providing complete details of the arrest, citation, ticket, or charge and supporting documentation.

III. Transferring Applicants

1. Responsibilities of the Admission Committee

a. Applications:

- 1. The Admissions Committee establishes the following requirements.
 - a. The Admissions Committee will admit transfer applicants who appear capable of satisfactorily completing the law school's program of legal education and being admitted to the bar and who possesses the qualities of an ethical lawyer.
 - b. The COL will accept applications from students seeking transfer from

another law school to the COL. Transfer applications will be accepted consistent with the schedule for applicants to start in in any semester.

- c. COL will admit transfer students on a space-available basis as determined by the needs and availability of space between the full-time and part-time upper divisions.

Eligible transfer applicants

- b. To be eligible to seek transfer to the COL, an applicant must meet the following:
 - 1. Have completed at minimum one year of coursework at an ABA accredited law school; and
 - 2. Be in good standing at the law school from which the student is transferring;
- c. A student seeking transfer to the COL must submit the following for consideration by the Admissions Committee:
 - 1. A completed application for transfer;
 - 2. A letter from applicant explaining the reasons for applying for transfer to COL;
 - 3. An official transcript from every law school attended;
 - 4. A letter from the school last attended, certifying that the applicant is in good standing and is eligible to continue studies at that school, that the applicant's class rank (this last requirement will be waived only in cases where the other law school does not calculate a class rank), and that the applicant does not have any character and fitness referrals at the law school last attended;
 - 5. A photocopy of the applicant's CAS Report submitted to the law school last attended;
 - 6. A resume; and
 - 7. Any other information as requested by the Admissions Committee.
- d. Offers to transfer applicants will be made with the goal of the general admissions plan to enroll a class that will contribute to the mission and strategic development of the law school. Through holistic review, the COL Admissions Committee will evaluate a transfer applicant's

1. Cumulative First-Year Law School GPA;
2. Coursework taken at the home law school;

3. Other factors relevant to assessing the probability of success in law school and beyond, including:
 - a. Whether the applicant will make a positive, ethical contribution to the COL, legal profession, and state of Texas;
 - b. Whether the applicant will be a positive contribution to the diverse student body and the law school that promotes widening legal access to all— especially to the underserved middle class—and supports cross-cultural understanding, promotes access to justice in all communities in the state of Texas and nationally, and helps to break down racial and ethnic stereotypes enabling students to better understand persons of all races, ethnicities, and backgrounds; and
 - c. Whether the applicant displays characteristics or qualities that evidence probability of success as demonstrated by one who (i) possesses a unique socioeconomic or educational background, (ii) is a first-generation college student, (iii) had extraordinary personal responsibilities while achieving high academic honors or professional experience, and/or (iv) participated in community or civic activities that promotes high value and ability in multiple segments for legal services.

2. Management and Review of Applications:

- a. The Committee, in its discretion, may grant an application for transfer if:
 1. Space is available in the class to which admission is sought based upon a fall semester enrollment;
 2. The applicant is in good standing at the law school last attended and is eligible to continue in such school; and
 3. The applicant is found by the Committee, on the basis of the applicant's whole record, to have a likelihood of success in completing the requirements of the J.D. degree at this law school and meets one of the following:
 - i. ranks in the top third of the class at the law school last attended; or

- ii. has a cumulative law school GPA of 3.0 or higher at the last law school attended; or
- iii. desires to transfer to this law school for reasons of hardship or extenuating circumstances, if the Admissions Committee is satisfied with the legitimacy of the plea of hardship or extenuating circumstance upon consideration of the applicant's entire record

3. Determination of Transfer Credits:

- a. Although the Admissions Committee uses its best judgment in determining the applicant's eligibility, the Admissions Committee does not determine which credits will be granted by the COL for the prior coursework.
- b. The Associate Dean of Academic Affairs will grant credit to an applicant accepted for transfer toward the J.D. degree of this school for courses taken at an ABA-accredited school in which the applicant received graded credit with grades of "C-" or higher (or the equivalent). The amount of transfer credit granted for any such course will not exceed the semester hour credit (or equivalent) earned at the school where the course was taken. The Associate Dean may deny or reduce transfer credit in the following circumstances:
 - i. Transfer credit may be denied for courses in subjects not reasonably comparable to the courses offered at this law school and not considered to be of substantial value as preparation for entry into the legal profession in common law jurisdictions.
 - ii. Transfer credit granted for any course taken at another law school may be limited to such number of semester hours as are granted for a comparable course offered at this school, or, in the case of a course not comparable to any course offered at this law school, to such number of semester hours as the Associate Dean deems appropriate.
 - iii. Transfer credit granted for courses successfully completed at an ABA accredited law school is not to exceed one-third of the

total hours required for successful completion of the J.D. degree at this law school.

- iv. Transfer credit will be ordinarily denied for credit earned more than three years prior to the date of admission to this law school.

4. Requirements for transfer students to graduate from UNT Dallas College of Law

- a. Each transfer student, in order to qualify for the J.D. degree, will be required to complete successfully:
 - i. at least half of the total number of hours of course work required for the UNT Dallas COL J.D. degree must be completed in residence at this law school, and
 - ii. all courses required by UNT Dallas COL for graduation, except for those courses for which transfer credit has been granted from the last law school attended and are deemed to be the subject-matter credit equivalents of required courses at this law school.

IV. Visiting Applicants

1. Requirements for Application

- a. The Admissions Committee delegates authority to the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs to admit visitor students. The Associate Dean for Academic Affairs will admit visitor students who are currently enrolled at an accredited law school.
- b. COL will admit visitor students on a space-available basis as determined by the needs and availability of space between the full-time and part-time upper divisions.

2. Eligibility of visiting applicants

- a. To be eligible to visit the COL, an applicant must meet the following:
 - i. be in good academic standing, and

- ii. have no issues with student conduct at the student's home law school.
 - b. A student seeking to visit the COL must submit the following for consideration by the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs:
 - i. A completed visitor application;
 - ii. A letter from applicant explaining the reasons for requesting to visit the COL;
 - iii. A law school transcript;
 - iv. A professional resume;
 - v. A letter from the appropriate law school authority (i) certifying that the applicant is in good academic and conduct standing at the applicant's current law school and (ii) indicating that the applicant has permission to take certain courses at the COL; and
 - vi. Any other information as requested by the Associate Dean for Academic Affairs.
3. **Visiting applications can be granted on a semester (fall, spring, or summer term) basis.**
4. **Visiting students are not candidates for the J.D. Degree from the COL.**