

# JD/MS

## LAW & ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY

**T**HE LAW SCHOOL AND THE SCHOOL FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY offer a dual degree program, allowing interested students the opportunity to study concurrently for the Juris Doctor (JD) and the Master of Science (MS) in Natural Resources & Environment degrees. The goal of this program is to encourage more effective integration of knowledge of natural resources and environmental problems with the methodology and skills of a lawyer. The program is designed so that all requirements for both degrees can be completed in four years.

Most students enrolled in this dual program begin at the Law School. They then take a mixture of Law and Natural Resources coursework during the remaining three years of the program, which concludes with the master's project (thesis or practicum may be permitted by petition) required for the Master of Science degree. During the third and fourth years of the program, students are permitted to elect courses in both schools.

Career options for program graduates are varied. Among the alumni, one has served as an attorney for the U.S. Department of the Interior, supervising the implementation of natural resource laws and regulations; another has been a member of the legal staff of a large power company; and a third has served as director of a major state environmental action council. The dual JD/MS program might also be attractive to students interested in the practice of law for corporate clients who are engaged in the use of natural resources, and to students who foresee careers in trial practice in which use of expert witnesses in the fields of ecology and natural resources may be necessary.

### **BASIC REQUIREMENTS FOR THE JD**

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Students entering the Law School must complete the required first-year law curriculum. Fall starters must take one elective course of three or four credit hours during their second semester. All students must complete the following before graduation: at least one international or comparative law course of two or more credit hours, at least one upper-level course with a rigorous writing component, one statutory or regulatory course of three or more credit hours, one course in professional responsibility of two or more credit hours, and two credit hours of experiential learning. Separate courses must be taken to fulfill the upper-level course with a rigorous writing component, the professional responsibility course, and the experiential learning course.

The JD requires a minimum total of 83 credits earned between Law School courses and courses through the school for Environment and Sustainability, which is affiliated with the Rackham School of Graduate Studies. Students must earn at least 70 credits toward the JD through courses taken in the Law School.

Twelve (12) credit hours may be taken from the satisfaction of requirements toward the MS degree. Instructions for requesting Law School credit for non-law courses are posted on the CTools site for dual degree students.

### **REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MS**

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Completion of a total of 42 credit hours along with a master's Opus (project, practicum, or thesis) is required for the Master of Science degree. Up to 9 of the required 42 credit hours may be earned for appropriate environmental law courses taken in the Law School.

**GENERAL DUAL DEGREE ITEMS OF NOTE**

*Any JD who enrolls concurrently in another degree program will be awarded the JD degree after completing all of the requirements for the dual, joint, or combined degrees. (As a practical matter, this means that the student will receive the JD degree either after or at the same time as he or she receives the degree(s) in the other program(s).) This policy will not affect the student's class year for purposes of the Law School's commencement ceremony or alumni events, and it will not apply if a student discontinues the other degree program(s). A law student who believes that he or she will experience some hardship as a result of this policy may petition the Associate Dean for Academic Programming for an exception.*

*JD courses traditionally have a later grading deadline than other degree programs. In some occasions, this later JD grading deadline may affect a student in his or her final term if another degree program desires all of the student's grades prior to the JD grading deadline.*

**ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS**

Applicants must gain separate and independent admission to both the Law School and the School for Environment and Sustainability, affiliated with the Horace H. Rackham School of Graduate Studies, and should contact the admissions office of each school for application and admission information. The applicant's LSAT score may be used in place of the GRE. However, a valid GRE score is preferable.\*

Students must satisfy the requirements of each school for each degree and should consult with advisers in each school for the precise graduation requirements for each degree and for information about course offerings. Students will find a few courses available in the School for Environment and Sustainability during the summer, but should not expect any Law School courses beyond first-year courses to be offered in the summer term. Students will not receive credit toward the JD for coursework taken prior to matriculation at the Law School. Students should consult with the adviser at the School for Environment and Sustainability concerning credit toward the MS for Law course work.

During the third and fourth years of the program, students are permitted to elect courses in both schools. Tuition will be assessed at either the Law

School or the Graduate School rate, whichever is higher, when courses toward both degrees are taken in one term.

**At the beginning of their final year of study in the combined program, students should consult with the SNRE Registrar and the Law School Registrar regarding forms that need to be completed prior to graduation. Also at this time, students should submit a Dual/Joint Degree Election Form ([www.rackham.umich.edu/current-students/policies/academic-records/dual-joint-degree-programs](http://www.rackham.umich.edu/current-students/policies/academic-records/dual-joint-degree-programs)) for approval from both the Law School and the School for Environment and Sustainability. Students should review the completed sample forms on the CTools page prior to filling out the form. Students may also consult with the Office of Student Affairs if there are any questions regarding completion of this form.**

The combined degree is not open to those who have already earned either the JD or the MS. Students who are registered in the first or second year at the Law School or the first year of the SNRE's program may apply for admission to the dual degree program.

**CONTACT INFORMATION****LAW SCHOOL**

Admissions Office  
University of Michigan Law School  
South Hall, Suite 2200  
701 S. State St.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1215  
734.764.0537  
Email: [law.jd.admissions@umich.edu](mailto:law.jd.admissions@umich.edu)  
Website: [law.umich.edu](http://law.umich.edu)

**DUAL DEGREE PROGRAMS**

Office of Student Life  
University of Michigan Law School  
316 Hutchins Hall  
625 S. State St.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1215  
734.764.0516  
Email: [law.dual.degrees@umich.edu](mailto:law.dual.degrees@umich.edu)

**SCHOOL FOR ENVIRONMENT AND SUSTAINABILITY**

SNRE Admissions  
School for Environment and Sustainability  
1520 Dana Building  
440 Church St.  
Ann Arbor, MI 48109-1041  
734.764.6453  
Email: [snre.admissions@umich.edu](mailto:snre.admissions@umich.edu)  
Website: [snre.umich.edu](http://snre.umich.edu)

*\* Information contained herein is valid as of 2/7/18 and is subject to change. Contact with the appropriate admissions office is advised.*