Students and Programs

Responding to the needs and interests of our students is at the heart of the School of Law’s mission. We have a long-standing tradition of respect, recognition, and strong interactions between faculty and students. Faculty and students work together on special projects, fund raising, skills training, traveling, and competitions.

Diversity

The School of Law, which comprises almost 400 students, has a minority enrollment of 20 percent.

Each year, the School of Law offers a Wal-Mart Legal Diversity Scholarship to a first-year law student whose presence adds to the diversity of the law school. The scholarship was established in 2004 through collaboration between the late Dean Richard B. Atkinson and Thomas Mars, ’85, senior vice president and general counsel for Walmart Stores Inc.

Competitions

The University of Arkansas School of Law is home to an exceptionally strong advocacy skills competition program. Our success is largely attributed to the enormous investment of resources by students, faculty coaches, advisers, School of Law administrators, and members of the local bench and bar.

The skills competition program includes an impressive range of intramural and interscholastic competitions. The School of Law hosts two intramural appellate advocacy competitions that cumulatively lead to the selection of five appellate moot court interscholastic competition teams through the Board of Advocates and a sixth team selected by the Black Law Student Association. While most team members are third-year students, exceptional second-year students have successfully participated in various competitions.

The intramural fall moot court is an exercise in oral advocacy skills. Students compete individually on a “canned” problem, and the top 32 students are invited to participate in the Ben J. Altheimer Spring Moot Court Competition, which requires finalists to form two-person teams, write a brief, and argue both sides of a case before three judges. Winners are eligible to represent the School of Law in the National Moot Court Competition, sponsored by the New York State Bar Association. The School of Law has sent teams to the National Trial Competition two years in a row, with impressive performances from the University of Arkansas students.

During the fall, the School of Law sponsors the William H. Barrister’s Union Trial Competition, out of which top competitors are invited to try out for two teams. The teams compete in the Henry C. Woods Trial Competition, sponsored by the Arkansas Board of Trial Advocates, against the University of Arkansas at Little Rock William H. Bowen School of Law and in the National Mock Trial Competition, sponsored by the American Board of Trial Advocates and the Texas Young Lawyers Association. The School of Law also sponsors two teams to compete in the Student Trial Advocacy Competition in association with the Association of Trial Lawyers of America. Another team competes in the Black Law Student Association Thurgood Marshall Mock Trial Competition. In addition, each year the School of Law sends several national traveling teams to regional and national competitions.

School of Law students also have the chance to participate in an intramural negotiations competition and client counseling competition, both of which are open to first-year students. Winning teams are selected to compete against other schools in our region and may advance to nationals.

Student Organizations

Student organizations are vital to the School of Law. Whether the Black Law Student Association, the Women’s Law Student Association, the Student Bar Association, or any of the myriads of organizations at the School of Law, incoming students will find a group that suits their interests.

Publications

Arkansas Law Review

The Arkansas Law Review is a legal periodical published quarterly by the students of the School of Law, in cooperation with the Arkansas Bar Association. Candidates for the Arkansas Law Review are selected from second-year law classes by the Arkansas Law Review editorial board on the basis of academic qualifications and writing ability.

The Arkansas Law Review offers an excellent opportunity to students with the ability and industry to do legal research and writing. All material published in the Arkansas Law Review is edited by a student board of editors, and some is written by students.

The Arkansas Law Review is sent to each member of the Arkansas Bar Association and to lawyers and law libraries in every state. Review articles and student writings have been relied on by Arkansas courts, courts in other jurisdictions, and legal scholars. A recent issue of the Arkansas Law Review includes articles by former President Bill Clinton, U.S. Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton, and Justice Antonin Scalia.

Journal of Food Law & Policy

The first issue of the Journal of Food Law & Policy was published in July 2005 and signaled the inauguration of the country’s first student-edited legal journal devoted to the study of relationships that exist among food, law, and society. The first issue featured articles by several prestigious authors, including renowned food law expert Peter Barton Hutt. Other issues have featured articles on a variety of topics, such as the Fourth Amendment and the FDA’s authority to take photographs under FDCA, a comparison of the American and European approaches to beef regulation, and the legal effects of food technology. In October 2006, the Journal of Food Law & Policy was recognized by the American Agricultural Law Association for the best scholarly article published on agricultural law.

Journal of Islamic Law & Culture

The Journal of Islamic Law & Culture is printed semiannually through cooperation between the School of Law and the King Fahd Center for Middle East & Islamic Studies at the University of Arkansas.

The purpose of the Journal of Islamic Law & Culture is to encourage scholarship and dialog that fosters a deeper understanding of the law and public policy that result from Islamic religion and culture. The journal is deeply concerned with the Muslim experience with the West, particularly as this exchange has been expressed in law, whether in Iraq, Britain, Saudi Arabia, the United States, or elsewhere.

The following topics are emphasized: the interpretation of classical Islamic law; the application of principles of the major schools of fiqh to contemporary questions; the intersection of Sharia and culture; the
application of Western laws to Muslims as a group; the intersection of
Western laws and Islamic laws; the problems of comparative law between
Islamic and Western laws; the difficulties of integrating Sharia principles
into Western legal systems; and the problems of constitutional and legal
development in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other Muslim states of particular
Western presence.

The journal invites submissions from legal and non-legal communities
and from Muslim and non-Muslim researchers. The Journal of Islamic
Law & Culture includes articles written by scholars, lawyers, government
officials, activists, and other professionals, along with student-written
notes, essays, and book reviews.