

B. DEGREE REQUIREMENTS

I. Computing the Hours Required for Graduation

You are required to **complete and pass a total of 90 hours**.

NOTE: In computing the number of hours completed for graduation, the following limits apply:

1. All grades of "I" (Incomplete) must be completed no later than two weeks after your last final exam unless an extension has been granted by the Office of Student Services. Incompletes that are not made up within one calendar year are automatically converted into an F).
2. No credit is given for Legal Research and Writing unless it was taken and passed no later than the semester in which you completed your 25th hour of credit (Transfer students may be permitted to take the course later than the 25th hour. See Transfer Policy, page 35).
3. Limits on Special Course Hours: Absent a waiver by the Office of Student Services, (J.D. degree candidates may count no more than 18 hours (25 hours for joint degree candidates) in the aggregate of the following courses towards the credit hours required for graduation:

Advocates/Teams	Houston Law Review
All Advanced Legal Research	Law Office Management/Practice
All Clinics	Law and Social Science
All "Journals" (HJIL, Journal of Texas	Legal Interviewing & Counseling
Consumer Law, HJHL&P, Tax Law	Legal Negotiations
Journal, etc.)	Master Advocacy
Attorney Communication &	Mediation
Persuasion Techniques	Mock Trial
Basic Appellate Advocacy	Moot Court
Basic Civil Advocacy	Pretrial Litigation
Basic Criminal Advocacy	Special Research and Writing
Criminal Trial Practice	<u>Directed Research, including Special</u>
	Problems (AEP, etc.)

Note: This requirement does not restrict how many hours of special courses that a student may take -- just the number that may be credited toward graduation.

4. No more than 4 hours of total credit will be counted for any combination of 5199, 5299, 5399 designated as **Special Problems courses.** (This includes Directed Research Assistance credit and Academic Enrichment Assistant credit.)
5. **No more than 4 hours of total credit** will be counted for any combination of 5198, 5298, 5398 designated as **Special Research and Writing courses.**

NOTE: See section on RESEARCH AND WRITING CREDIT (pp. 29-31), describing the difference between Directed Research Assistance (maximum 4 credit hours) and Special Research and Writing (maximum 4 credit hours).

6. **No more than 15 hours of credit** will be counted for **Clinics, Internships and Externships**. Please see the Clinic Director, Professor Ellen Marrus, if you are interested in enrolling in one or more clinical courses.
7. **No more than 4 hours of credit** will be counted for various types of **Advocates** credit (moot court, mock trial, teams, competitions, etc.). **Exception:** *Students may receive an additional 2 hours of credit for serving on the Advocates Board.*

II. Computing Residency Hours

RESIDENCY CREDIT

A. Basic Requirements:

Full-time students -- Must have 90 residency credits to graduate

Part-time students -- Must have 120 residency credits to graduate

Full-time students are required to complete 90 weeks of law study and part-time students must complete 120 weeks. For this purpose, each regular semester counts for 16 weeks and each summer session counts for 6 weeks. To receive full residence credit for any term, a full-time student must enroll in and pass at least 10 hours (6 hours for a summer term), while a part-time student must enroll in and pass 6 hours (3 hours for a summer term).

NOTE: Students changing classification will be pro-rated accordingly.

B. Accreditation Requirements and Rules:

For accreditation purposes, AALS-membership law schools are subject to the following requirements:

- 2.1 Hours and credits required. A full-time program should require as the minimum for its first professional degree in law the successful completion in residence of at least ninety full weeks of work consisting of at least 1,080 class hours of at least 50 minutes each, without regard to the organization of the school year into semesters or quarters.
- 2.2 Completion in residence defined. "Completion in residence" means that a student has been enrolled in a schedule of work represented by a minimum of 10 class hours a week and has passed a minimum of nine class hours, but in case a student fails to pass work equal to nine class hours a week, (s)he shall not receive "residence credit" in excess of the ratio that the hours passed bear to nine. A student enrolled in a schedule of less than 10 class hours a week shall receive "residence credit" in the ratio that the hours passed bear to 10.
- 2.3 Exception. A student in a full-time school can earn full residence credit with less than a 10 hour class load, if the reduction arises out of a faculty-approved activity directly related to his/her law school work.

Note that you must finish your paper during the semester in which you register for the special research and writing credit. Your petition to enroll in this course will be approved with the understanding that the paper will be turned in to the supervising faculty member in time for the grade to be submitted with all other grades for that semester. Students whose grades are not submitted within this time frame may be administratively withdrawn from the course. You will not be given an “Incomplete” and allowed to have the grade changed later. This means that you will not be able to obtain credit for the paper unless you reenroll in special research and writing in some later semester, paying additional tuition for this new enrollment. You will not be given a tuition reimbursement for the course in which the “W” was received. If you do not intend to complete the paper during the semester, you should not enroll in Special Research and Writing. Credit for Special Research and Writing is not intended for open-ended projects.

Exceptions to any of these policies must be approved by the Associate Dean for Student Life. Students should not rely on faculty-granted exceptions to these policies. Note that the Associate Dean for Student Life may grant an extension where the research project justifies it or where there are other compelling circumstances. Note also that **the Special Research and Writing course cannot be used to satisfy the senior writing requirement except in extremely compelling circumstances**, as determined by the Associate Dean.

b) *Directed Research Assistance for Credit* (serving as a faculty research assistant for pass/fail credit); *Academic Enrichment Program (AEP) Tutoring*:

Professors in law schools engage in a number of exciting and challenging research projects in addition to their teaching obligations. Law Center policies permit students to earn academic credit for serving as a research assistant for a law professor. You can also receive pass/fail academic credit for working as a tutor in the Academic Enrichment Program. Note that you cannot earn both academic credit and pay for performing the same research or doing the same work.

The number of credit hours associated with this research work is related to the number of hours worked. Sixty hours of research for a faculty member will equal one hour of academic credit. Students are able to obtain up to four hours of Directed Research credit. Note that Directed Research credit is included within the cap on “special” course hours that may count toward your graduation requirements (see page 24).

There are a few important things to remember about Directed Research and Academic Enrichment Program credit. First, the credit you earn will be graded pass/fail; you will not receive a letter grade. In addition, your supervisor may withdraw you from this credit for unsatisfactory performance. Second, Directed Research credit can **never** satisfy the senior writing requirement. Third, faculty members must closely supervise the research and will award credit only if, in the good faith opinion of the faculty member, the work was academically credit-worthy. No faculty member shall be permitted to supervise more than four hours of research assistance for credit in any semester.

Students interested in participating in Directed Research generally find suitable experiences in one of two ways. First, you can approach faculty who are teaching or writing in your areas of interest and indicate your willingness to serve as a researcher for credit. Second, you can look for notices posted by faculty members who are seeking researchers for credit. In either case, it is wise to approach the professor with an updated resume and a letter indicating the basis of your interest in the professor’s research project. Note that adjunct professors (part-time professors) may not supervise a directed research class without special permission and supervision from the Associate Dean for Student Life.

Once you have identified the professor and secured his or her permission, you register for the Directed Research credit by submitting a signed petition form to the Office of Student Services.

Students interested in participating as tutors in the Academic Enrichment Program should contact the Office of Student Services.

III. Duplicate Credit Prohibition

Students may not receive credit for one research and writing project by submitting it for credit more than once. This means that the same paper cannot be used for two seminars, for law review and for a seminar, for Special Research and Writing and a seminar, etc.

D. SPECIAL ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES

I. Taking Classes at Other Law Schools:

After completing the first year, a student may request permission from the Office of Student Services to take up to 30 semester hours of credit at another approved law school. Rules regarding transfer of credit from other law schools (including summer abroad programs) are as follows:

1. The student must be in good standing.
2. The student must have completed all first year courses;
3. The student must complete Professional Responsibility and the Senior Writing Requirement at the Law Center.
4. Credit will not be given for internships, clinics or independent study taken at another law school (Exception: Credit will be given for the Texas Supreme Court Internship through the University of Texas).
5. The student must enroll in graded courses at the other law school. The Law Center will not accept and give credit for courses graded pass/fail.
6. Only courses in which a **"C" or better** is received will be credited toward hours earned.
7. The grade received at another institution is not calculated into the Law Center GPA.
8. The student must submit a petition requesting the specific course(s) for which credit is sought, with a **course description or photocopy attached**, to the Office of Student Services. It is the student's obligation to inquire as to whether coursework at another institution unduly overlaps with coursework taken or to be taken at University of Houston. The approval of a general petition asking for approval of coursework at another law school does not indicate that this overlap has been reviewed.
9. Note that students usually will not be given permission to take courses from other law schools in Houston, except when the courses are not offered at the University of Houston.

II. Summer Abroad Programs

Each January, the STUDENT LAWYER, an ABA Law Student Division publication, includes a listing of all ABA-Approved Summer Programs. This information is usually available in the Office of Student Services and the Office of Career Services after that date. Approval is generally given for students to participate in these programs and receive credit for them, so long as the coursework does