



## University of Memphis School of Law

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### 1. What do you enjoy most about your job?

What I like most about my job are the wide and varied responsibilities I have. My role handles all the enrollment management functions for the law school. My office is the front door of the law school and the office that begins relationship-building with prospective students. In this role, I have the pleasure of working side by side with a wide range of groups, ranging from high school students, college students, alumni, and various University and state legislatures, as well as members of the local bar association. Additionally, my job responsibilities enable me to exercise a lot of judgment, creativity, and relationship-building. I must say, working with young people has kept me engaged and, lately, I have really enjoyed learning how to incorporate social media in our outreach efforts.

I also enjoy helping prospective students achieve their professional dreams. Earning a law degree is often a life-changing event. It gives me great pleasure to know I played a small role in pointing them in the direction of the University of Memphis. I have been in this position for a number of years and have had the pleasure of becoming lifelong friends with a number of alumni. It has been very rewarding to meet their families, hear about their careers, and celebrate their successes.

I also have the pleasure of working with a great group of people who are all working for the betterment of the University of Memphis. We are all energetic and very committed to making the law school successful. We are a small law school, and most of us do the job of several. We know that we are making a difference in educating and guiding legal professionals of the future.

Finally, I enjoy the overall process of bringing in a class. It is much like putting a puzzle together. Some of the pieces are easily found, while others take more time to identify. When you finish, there is a true feeling of satisfaction.

### 2. What do you like most about your law school?

Location - the City of Memphis.

I really think Memphis and the University of Memphis have a lot to offer students. The city itself is a charming southern city with all the perks of a large urban city, but without all the headaches. Geographically, it is located in the middle of the country with enough city life to make it feel like a metropolitan area. Greater Memphis has a population of approximately one million people. Memphis is home to a number of outstanding colleges and universities and is corporate headquarters for a number of Fortune 500 companies, such as Fed Ex,

Auto Zone, and UPS. We also have a large medical community, including St. Jude. Art, music, and the river are an integral part of the economic development of Memphis. The city is also a transportation hub for the nation. Another attraction to prospective law students is that the city is an affordable place to live. In fact, Memphis was cited in Forbes.com as one of the most affordable places to live.

#### Law School Location - Heart of the Legal Community.

Three years ago, the University of Memphis School of Law relocated to downtown Memphis, into a beautiful building on the National Register of Historic Places. This move was a game-changer for our students. Our location provides students with immediate access to numerous legal opportunities. This access provides a natural environment for networking, clerking at many state and federal governmental agencies, opportunities to observe trials, and having seasoned legal professionals teach electives. Most of the courts and major law firms are within a few blocks of the law school. This location provides students with a great “playground” for real practice experiences.

#### Students & Networking Opportunities.

University of Memphis law students respect and value their uniqueness and celebrate their differences. Students take ownership in their work and build on their collective strengths. People genuinely like to spend time with each other, and students spend a significant amount of time engaged in co-curricular activities. Nearly all students are involved in some co-curricular organization and make giving back to the law school and/or the community a priority.

The faculty and staff are supportive of our students. Our faculty is enthusiastic and approachable. The University of Memphis School of Law has a strong history of being engaged with the legal community. Our students, faculty, and staff are engaged in a variety of endeavors with the City of Memphis and the surrounding communities. The law school has significant opportunities for our students to gain practical experience, whether it is through our extensive externship program or a various advocacy teams. Last summer, we had more than 40 students engaged in legal externships in Memphis and throughout the state.

Due to law school location -- in the heart of the legal community, we host a number of legal conferences and workshops at the law school. Students are made to feel welcome at these events and use them as opportunities to network with attorneys. Several of Memphis’ law firms host receptions for our students and when there are CLEs hosted in the building, students can attend free or at a reduced price.

We are the only law school in Tennessee that has a pro bono requirement which must be fulfilled for graduation. The law school has made a commitment to connecting our students with the legal community in Memphis and around the state. We feel this requirement will not only help them network but also lay the foundation of giving back as professionals. This unique opportunity also provides the City of Memphis a great resource to help the poor and marginalized.

3. Is there any advice you would give pre-law advisors as they are working with students on the application process for your law school?

Law school applications are currently more alike than they are different. It is important that applicants take the time to read the instructions that we have placed with our application. All things being equal, our admissions committee really values a well-written personal statement. This exercise is an opportunity for the applicant to be their own advocate. Our admissions committee is interested in learning about the applicant beyond the numbers. One of the best ways to share this information is in the personal statement. If possible, our admissions committee is interested in hearing about their short- and long-term goals in the legal

profession. This is not a requirement, nor will an applicant be penalized if they do not know, but for those that do have some idea, we encourage them to share that information in their personal statements.

The thing that is unique to our application is that we require applicants who are not residents of Tennessee to submit a statement about why they are interested in our law school. This statement is an opportunity for the applicant to share any special circumstances or relationships they might have to Tennessee or the Mid-South. We are interested in learning something other than the information one can gather from our website or the city's or state's websites. For example, we want more than the love of Memphis barbeque, Memphis music, Elvis Presley, or the Memphis Grizzlies. We all love those things too, but we want the applicant to share his/her connections to the region.

Additionally, encourage applicants to take the LSAT seriously. Prepare for it as one would for an exam. As of right now, law schools are still using this exam as a critical component in the admission evaluation, so take it seriously. Preparation and solid performance may mean the difference between admission and a competitive scholarship.

4. What are some of the unique opportunities students will find at your law school?

- Extensive externship placements, current opportunities include:  
U.S. Court of Appeals, U.S. District Court, U.S. Bankruptcy Court, Tennessee Court of Appeals, Shelby County Circuit Court, U.S. Attorney's Office (Memphis and Jackson), Federal Public Defender, Shelby County DA's Office, Shelby County Public Defender, Tennessee Office of the Post-Conviction Defender (Nashville), City of Memphis Attorney's Office (Litigation, Corporate, and Real Estate Unit), Tennessee Department of Environment and Conservation (Nashville), Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (Hearings and Litigation Units), Memphis/Shelby County Airport Authority, University of Memphis Office of Legal Counsel, Memphis Area Legal Services (Tax Unit), Shelby County Honors Prosecution Externship, St. Jude Children's Research Hospital, and Methodist Le Bonheur Healthcare.
- Joint Degree Programs (MBA & MA in Political Science, Fast Track MPH after completion of the JD)
- Advocacy Certificate – specialized curriculum designed for students interested in litigation
- Multiple mock trial and moot court traveling teams
- Mental Health Law and Policy Journal
- Child & Family Litigation Clinic
- Elder Law Litigation Clinic
- Fair Housing Adjudication Clinic
- Civil Litigation Clinic
- Nationally recognized Public Action Law Society and the Alternative Spring Break
- Immigration Court in Tennessee is located in Memphis
- Pro Bono Requirement:  
The University of Memphis is the only school in Tennessee that has a pro bono requirement. The law school has made a commitment to connecting our students with the legal community in Memphis and around the state. We feel this requirement will help them network but also lay the foundation of being ethical lawyers and setting a commitment of giving back as professionals. This unique opportunity also provides the City of Memphis a great resource to help the poor and marginalized.
- Opportunities for non-residents to pay in-state tuition all three years

5. Is there anything you would like to leave pre-law advisors with as a final comment?

My best piece of advice is to have the applicants consider that they are their first client, and they are advocating on their own behalf for admission to law school. Applicants should be encouraged to take the application process seriously. The time and effort one puts into the application is obvious.

I would also encourage students to look at some of the lesser known law schools. The opportunities to engage and learn in these schools may be life-changing. Finally, make sure the applicants investigate the financial

costs associated with attending law school. They should have a reasonable idea of how much it will cost for all three years and then match that cost with their career goals.