

[HOME](#) / [MCGEORGE SCHOOL OF LAW](#) / [MASTER OF SCIENCE IN LAW - MSL](#)

MSL Frequently Asked Questions

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[Programs](#) →

What is the MSL degree?

The MSL is a Master of Science in Law. The degree is innovative and versatile and meant for professionals who seek the benefits of advanced training in legal reasoning and analysis. The degree enhances many professions and is ideal for business executives, entrepreneurs, policymakers, human resource and other professionals in today's economy. With so many businesses and industries being impacted by constantly changing laws and regulations, having knowledge and training in legal analysis can be advantageous in dealing with those everyday law-related issues.

What can I do with an MSL degree?

Because the law intersects with every industry in one way or another, it is very likely there is some aspect of your current role that could be enhanced with a MSL degree. Our MSL degree can also open career opportunities by allowing you to pivot your career toward the legal aspects of your field. For example, someone working in government affairs may take courses in lobbying, election law, and statutory interpretation. Individuals working with water and environmental issues may take courses in water resources law, environmental law, and water and environmental justice.

Through our MSL coursework, you'll be better equipped to:

- Review and understand agreements such as contracts
- Review and draft proposed local, state, and federal laws and regulations
- Understand and comply with regulatory requirements for specific industries
- Work with attorneys and compliance officers

What can I expect in terms of workload?

Typical students will take six units in each semester. The general rule of thumb is that for every hour you spend in the "classroom," you can expect another 1.5 – 3 hours of additional studying.

How many courses must I complete in order to earn an MSL degree?

Students must complete 26 credits. Please refer to the program's curriculum web page for a complete list of required and elective courses.

Who teaches the classes?

The classes are taught by a combination of McGeorge's full-time faculty members and highly qualified adjunct instructors. Many of the adjunct instructors are practitioners in the fields of water law and environmental law. We encourage you to view the faculty bios and send us an email at graduatelaw@pacific.edu if you would like to connect with a McGeorge professor.

What is required as part of the application?

An application containing the following items is required: Official transcripts for all universities and colleges that you have attended, a resume or curriculum vitae, a personal statement, a writing sample, and one (required) or two (preferred) letters of recommendation. For more information, see MSL Admission.

How are admissions decisions communicated to applicants?

All decisions will be communicated to applicants via email. If you are admitted, a formal letter will be attached to the email.

If I am accepted, how much time will I have to decide whether to enroll or not?

Applications are accepted and reviewed on a rolling basis with a commitment required by April 1 (Fall start) or Nov. 1 (Spring start). The sooner you apply, the longer span of time you will have to make a decision that will work best for you. If an applicant submits their application materials after these dates, they will have two weeks from the time a decision is rendered to pay a seat deposit and commit to the program. Extensions to this two-week rule may be granted on a case-by-case basis.

Is financial aid available?

Yes, students may be eligible for financial aid. Please contact our Financial Aid office at 916.739.7158 or finaid@pacific.edu. We also offer a Dean's Scholarship to highly qualified applicants.

Individuals who have earned educational benefits through the Veterans Administration can use their benefits at

Individuals who have earned educational benefits through the Veterans Administration can use their benefits at McGeorge. You are responsible for confirming your eligibility with the VA. McGeorge is a 100% Yellow Ribbon matching institution.

Is it possible for my employer to cover all or part of the tuition?

Applicants should check with their individual employers. Of the companies that do assist with tuition payments, some have a limit on the amount of tuition that can be covered in any given year. We encourage you to reach out to your Human Resources department to see if this benefit is available to you.

When do classes begin?

Students may begin the online program in either the Fall (August) or Spring (January) semester. The exact date that the academic terms begin varies from year to year so please reference the academic calendar.

Do I need to participate in an orientation?

An online orientation program is required for all program participants. Orientation will be available the week before the start of each semester.

How are the online courses organized? Are they self-paced?

Most courses within McGeorge online graduate programs are offered on a semester-long basis, with weekly modules. Although format may vary depending on the nature of the course, in most courses students should expect to be assigned new topics each week, with associated reading, lecture, discussion, exercises, quizzes, and other interactive activities. Individual topics that include a specific group of reading assignments, lectures, discussion, and exercises are called modules. Most courses will release new modules each Monday and allow one week for completion.

Within the weekly modules, most McGeorge online courses will be primarily asynchronous. This means that students do not necessarily need to be online at the same time, and will have the flexibility to complete module activities at a time convenient to their schedules, as long as they complete the activities by the assigned, typically weekly, deadline. Some assignments, such as weekly discussion, may have mid-week deadlines. Some papers or projects may be assigned over several weeks or the course of a semester. To facilitate planning, all deadlines will be announced in the syllabus prior to the beginning of a course.

What are the technical requirements for the online programs?

Students need to have regular and reliable access to a computer and high-speed Internet. Note that mobile and tablet devices will not provide full access; students will need a laptop or desktop computer with a webcam.

Are courses offered during the summer?

There will be two units available over the summer. One of these units will have an optional residential requirement. While this is not required, we highly recommend your participation in the optional residential opportunity.

Is there a residential component?

There is no requirement for an online student to come to our Sacramento campus. However, we highly recommend students to participate in the 1-unit hybrid summer course or come to campus for additional learning opportunities.

I live in a state outside of California, can I apply?

Per the Department of Education, we must be authorized to educate students in any particular state, therefore only students from pre-authorized states may participate in this program. If your state is not on the list below, please send us

an email so that we are aware of interest from your state, for planning purposes. States where McGeorge School of Law has obtained state authorization:

Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Hawaii, Idaho, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Massachusetts, Mississippi, Montana, Nebraska, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, North Dakota, Ohio, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia and Wyoming.

As an online student, can I participate in on-campus events?

Yes – you are a part of our community and as such we invite (and encourage) you to participate in any way that is meaningful for you. Students will be alerted to opportunities to participate in on-campus events through live-streaming and similar technology. If you are able to visit campus, we are happy to provide a campus tour, to introduce you to faculty, to connect with professionals in your area of concentration, and to participate in academic and social events. If you are planning a visit, we encourage you to contact Graduate Law Programs at graduatelaw@pacific.edu in advance so that we can help make your stay meaningful and rewarding.

Additional Questions?

Contact the Graduate & International Programs Office

[Email](mailto:graduatelaw@pacific.edu) | 916.739.7019

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PACIFIC

Stockton Campus

3601 Pacific Ave.
Stockton, CA 95211
Admissions: 209.946.2211

Sacramento Campus

3200 Fifth Ave.
Sacramento, California 95817
Admissions: 916.739.7105

San Francisco Campus

155 Fifth St.
San Francisco, California 94103
Admissions: 415.929.6491

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