

SOUTHWESTERN LAW SCHOOL

L O S A N G E L E S

Transfer and Visiting Students Policy

Revision history: Formerly a part of the annually revised Student Handbook. Established as a standalone policy August 2022.

Related policies: [LIST POLICIES].

Scheduled Review Date: June 2024 (Dean of Students Office)

A. Course Work at Other Law Schools

Written approval from the Dean of Students is required before a Southwestern student may take course work at another law school, including any work during study-abroad programs, intersessions, summer sessions, or academic semesters. Only course work offered by law schools approved by the ABA and members of the Association of American Law Schools (AALS) will be considered for approval. Required courses, such as Evidence, Legal Profession, or courses purporting to satisfy the writing or skills requirement, will not be approved absent an extraordinary circumstance.

A maximum of 6 units may be counted toward completion of the Juris Doctor degree from course work taken at other law schools. This 6-unit maximum includes all course work, including work completed in study-abroad programs, summer sessions, or intersessions. Students with special circumstances seeking to visit out for a semester or a year, whether domestic or abroad, should refer to *Part F "Southwestern Students Visiting at Other Law Schools"* in this section.

Courses taken by Southwestern students at other law schools with prior approval earn credit toward a Southwestern degree only if the student earns a minimum grade of "C." Generally, no courses designated by other law schools as "Pass/Fail" or "Credit/No Credit" courses will be approved for credit toward a Southwestern degree. Any credit accepted from another ABA approved law school is not included in computing Southwestern's grade point average. The units are transferred as "Credit" without grade point itemization on the Southwestern transcript.

Students who attend study-abroad, summer sessions or intersessions at other ABA-approved law schools, whether domestic or abroad, should contact that school to

ascertain that school's refund policy. While it is up to each school to decide how it wishes to handle refunds, it is unlikely that schools will issue refunds upon withdrawal after a program begins.

Information regarding financial aid eligibility and procedures for study abroad, summers sessions or intersessions at other ABA-approved law schools can be found at the following link: [Visiting Out - Information.pdf \(swlaw.edu\)](#).

Southwestern students desiring to take course work at other law schools must obtain written approval from the Dean of Students Office before attendance. To request a transcript, the student must submit a Transcript Request form available at the Registrar's Office and pay the required fees to the Registrar's Office. The student must also submit a Visiting Out Request form or ABA Approved Summer Abroad Request form, along with the following information to the Dean of Students Office:

1. The name of the school and/or program the student is considering visiting;
2. A detailed reason for why the student is requesting to visit another school;
3. The duration of the visitation request;
4. The name and detailed description of each course the student is requesting to take;
5. The number of units for each course the student is requesting to take; and
6. Confirmation that each course is graded (Credit/No Credit courses will not be approved).

At least 10–15 business days must be allowed for completion of the request(s). If the request is approved, Southwestern will mail a letter of good standing to the registrar of the appropriate law school. The letter will state certain conditions with which the student must comply. A letter of good standing will not be issued when the student is on probation or when a student is facing an Honor Code Committee determination in regard to an alleged Student Honor Code violation.

At the conclusion of the visit, the student must request a transcript from the school the student is visiting to be sent to Southwestern's Registrar's Office. Please note that visiting during your last semester could result in a delay in determining whether you have met all graduation requirements and in your graduation date, issuance of a diploma, and certification to sit for a bar examination.

B. Approval for Study-Abroad Programs Sponsored by Other Law Schools

Southwestern will accept credit for study abroad programs completed through other law schools only if the Dean of Students has approved the program before the student's departure. Only programs approved by the ABA are eligible for the Dean of Students' approval. Students must be in good academic standing to be eligible to attend study-abroad programs at other law schools. Only study abroad programs that fulfill all ABA

Criteria for Approval of Foreign Summer Programs will be approved. In accordance with ABA policy, no study-abroad programs will be approved that do not comply with the following: (a) the educational program must provide adequate time for class preparation, reflection and intellectual maturation similar to that provided in the regular semester. (b) the number of credits a student may receive in the program must comply with Standard 310 regarding credit hours and in no event will a student receive more than 1.5 semester credit hours for each week of the program.

A maximum 6 units of credit earned at non-Southwestern institutions may be approved and applied toward completion of the Juris Doctor degree. In the case of students who attend both a Southwestern-sponsored summer abroad program and a summer-abroad program sponsored by another ABA-approved law school, a maximum of 8 units from summer-abroad programs of any kind, Southwestern sponsored or otherwise, may be applied toward completion of the Juris Doctor degree. A director of a Southwestern-sponsored summer-abroad law program and the Dean of Students must approve in writing any deviation from the eight-unit maximum requirement. Deviations are rarely granted and will only be granted for Southwestern programs.

Study abroad should be an experience in which students gain learning and appreciation for the law as it functions and is taught in a foreign culture. Study abroad should not be an experience where students study the same law that could be learned in the United States. Programs should include curricula that focus on some study of the law in the region in which the summer abroad program is located. Required courses, such as Evidence, Legal Profession or courses purporting to satisfy the writing requirement, will not be approved in a summer-abroad program.

Please see further information in this section of the Handbook for additional requirements concerning approval to study abroad, including transfer of course credits to Southwestern. Further information about applying to non-Southwestern study abroad programs is available in the Dean of Students Office.

All students participating in summer-abroad programs must adhere to all provisions of Southwestern's policies and applicable policies of the hosting school, including those related to the Student Honor Code and sexual misconduct policies.

Students should be aware that there might be a limitation on the availability of financial aid for summer-abroad programs. Students are strongly advised to consult the Financial Aid Office as early as possible before registering for any summer-abroad program or paying any program fees.

C. Southwestern Students Visiting at Other Law Schools

Under compelling circumstances, the Dean of Students may grant permission for a Southwestern student to participate in a semester-long study-abroad program or take their second, third, or fourth year at another school and receive a degree from

Southwestern. Requests to do so must be in writing and directed to the Dean of Students.

Semester or academic year visits will be approved only to ABA-approved law schools in extraordinary circumstances in which a visit to another law school alleviates a significant hardship. An example of such situations includes a student's spouse being indefinitely transferred to another state. Students will be required to document the extraordinary circumstances on which the request to visit out is based.

Required courses, such as Evidence, Legal Profession, or courses purporting to satisfy the upper division writing or experiential requirements, will not be approved absent an extraordinary circumstance. Visits for reasons of career exploration or personal convenience cannot be approved. If a leave of absence can address the situation, then the student will be placed on leave of absence. Students interested in pursuing permission for a hardship visit or leave of absence should consult the Dean of Students Office.

D. Transfer to Southwestern

Southwestern welcomes transfer applications from students in good standing at other law schools approved by the American Bar Association. Applications must be submitted to the Admissions Office. The general law school policy regarding transfer students is as follows:

1. No more than 43 semester units will be allowed to transfer to Southwestern and be counted toward the 87 units required for graduation.
2. Transfer credit will be granted only for courses completed as a J.D. student with a letter grade of at least "C."
3. Credit/No Credit (Pass/Fail or other non-letter graded) courses will not be accepted for transfer credit.
4. Transfer students will receive unit-only credit at Southwestern for the full amount of their completed semester units from their former institution, within the constraints of this policy.
5. For the purpose of determining course equivalency for required courses completed at a transfer student's former institution, a review of the course syllabi may be required.
6. A course required by Southwestern for graduation will be deemed fulfilled if the equivalent course has been completed with a letter grade of at least "C" at a transfer student's former institution.

7. Transfer credit will not be granted for any course not reflected on the official transcript from the transfer student's former law school.
8. Transfer students will receive residency units for credit transferred to Southwestern in accordance with the academic program and equivalent number of terms completed at their former institution.
9. Class standing and grade point averages for Southwestern are computed solely based on grades achieved while enrolled at Southwestern. Official class rankings by percentage in 10 percent increments are based on cumulative GPA, and are computed for each class at the end of each academic year. Students from the part-time evening and PLEAS/Part-time day programs are ranked together.
10. Southwestern does not give advanced standing or award transfer credit toward completion of a J.D. degree for coursework completed at a foreign law school.

The Dean of Students will make the final determination on courses that may be accepted as transfer credit for admitted transfer students.

E. Visiting Students at Southwestern

Students visiting at Southwestern must complete an application for admission. Approval is based on receipt of a letter of good standing and permission to attend from the student's home school and all other required application materials as outlined at <https://www.swlaw.edu/admissions-financial-aid/admissions-jd/transfer-visiting-students>. Admission of visiting students will be considered and approved on a semester-by-semester basis. Visiting students are responsible for checking with their home school regarding acceptance and transfer of units, including acceptance and transfer of Credit/No Credit units. Upon receipt of all grades for the semester, the Registrar's Office will send one free transcript to the home school designated by the student on their application form as a means of reporting the completed coursework to the visiting student's home school. The visiting student must complete a transcript request form and pay the appropriate fee for any additional transcripts. All visiting students must abide by the academic and general law school policies of Southwestern. Visiting students are responsible for ascertaining that these policies, including the time frame for provision of grades, are acceptable to the home school, as Southwestern cannot deviate from its customary policies in order to meet home schools' deadlines.