

SOUTHWESTERN

LAW SCHOOL Los Angeles, CA

Scholarships, Grants, and Fellowships

Administrative policy.

Revision History: Formerly a part of the annually revised Student Handbook; then part of the Grading and Scholastic Honors Policy; established as a standalone policy in June 2024; technical edits made in February 2025.

Related policies: Grading and Scholastic Honors Policy

Scheduled Review Date: January 2026 (Associate Dean for Admissions and Office of the Vice Dean)

A. General Scholarships

Southwestern offers several student scholarships from income provided by gifts from donors, foundations, and its own general funds. Qualifications for and the amounts of scholarships vary, but award determination is generally based on financial need, scholastic achievement, and the amount of funds available. It is Southwestern's general policy that no student receives scholarship or gift aid from Southwestern or any of its benefactors in excess of tuition charged in an academic year (including summer). If a student receives other scholarships or gift aid that would cause those funds to exceed the student's full tuition charged, Southwestern reserves the right to reduce the scholarship so that the full annual tuition amount is not exceeded. Information about select scholarships is listed below. Please refer to the Scholarships, Grants and Fellowships information page on Southwestern's [website](#) for additional and the most current information. This policy discusses scholarships for J.D. students.

1. Entering students

Southwestern awards a select number of merit scholarships providing up to full tuition to entering members of the J.D. class, including those seeking a concurrent degree, who have demonstrated exceptional academic promise. Awards may be renewable or non-renewable scholarships. If renewable, students must meet the continuing academic performance requirements. All accepted Southwestern first-year J.D. applicants are considered for these scholarship types based on information submitted in the admission application and accompanying

materials. Southwestern does not have a separate application for these scholarships.

Additional information regarding continuing eligibility for scholarships is found on the Scholarships, Grants and Fellowships information page on Southwestern's [website](#). Students must consult the version of the eligibility rules from the academic year in which they entered Southwestern.

2. Continuing students

Southwestern awards several scholarships to continuing students. For a complete and current list of scholarships available to continuing students, please visit the scholarship information page on the Southwestern portal. Two of several scholarships are as follows:

a. Dean's Academic Leadership Award

The Board of Trustees established the Dean's Academic Leadership Award to provide full-tuition scholarships to the highest-ranking upper-division students (typically the top 1% of the class). Eligibility is calculated based on class ranks as determined at the end of the academic year and based on the cumulative GPA.

b. Dean's Merit Award

The Board of Trustees established the Dean's Merit Award to provide partial tuition scholarships to upper-division students who have demonstrated academic excellence and are in the top 30% of their class. Award amounts are commensurate with class rank. Eligibility is calculated based on class ranks as determined at the end of each academic year and based on the cumulative GPA.

B. Institutional Scholarships

Continuing students may be eligible for scholarships from more than 80 funds with specific criteria established by the donors. For further information, visit the Scholarships for Continuing Students information page on Southwestern's [website](#).

C. Public Interest Law Grants and Fellowships

Students interested in working for public interest law or civil legal aid agencies may apply for stipends created through Southwestern Grant and Fellowship programs. These programs provide the matching amount for Federal Work Study funds applied to positions off campus, thereby providing students with practical experiences and career opportunities in public service while offering legal services organizations the assistance necessary to service indigent communities and clients. Other programs are also available to support work in the public interest, living up to the dual goals of enhancing the educational experience of its students and furthering the work of public entities serving underrepresented communities and individuals. Please refer to the

Southwestern portal and the Public Interest Law Committee Summer Grant Program information page on Southwestern's [website](#) for the most current information about grants and fellowships. Below is a short listing of available summer fellowships and grant awards for graduating students:

- George and Katrina Woolverton Public Service Award
- Harvey L. and Lillian Silbert Public Interest Fellowship Program
- Leigh H. Taylor Public Interest Endowment Fund
- Public Interest Law Service Award
- There Is a Light Foundation
- Summer Public Interest Law Grant

D. Outside Scholarships

A number of other scholarships from outside organizations are available each year. Eligibility is usually based on need, academic achievement, and extracurricular activities. The necessary supplemental applications and specific requirements for these scholarships are on file in the Financial Aid Office, and the most current information is available on the Outside Scholarship Opportunities information page on Southwestern's [website](#).

E. Outside Fellowships

Postgraduate fellowships are an outstanding way to jumpstart graduates' legal careers while building a network of mentors and supporters. Below are two examples of fellowships that regularly select Southwestern applicants. In addition, other postgraduate fellowships are available in various practice areas. Please schedule an appointment with the Career Services Office to learn more about available fellowships.

1. American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA)

Every year, the Los Angeles County Chapter of the American Board of Trial Advocates (ABOTA) offers a unique fellowship program to local graduating law students who will be sitting for the July Bar Exam. Fellows spend one month with a civil defense firm, one month with a plaintiff firm, and another month with various judges at the Los Angeles Superior Court. This fellowship is open to students who have a strong interest in civil jury trial practice and intend to practice law in Los Angeles County.

2. Presidential Management Fellowship Program (PMF)

The Presidential Management Fellows Program (PMF) is known as the training ground for future government leaders. It is a two-year paid post-graduate program where Fellows have the opportunity to work in high-level federal government agencies. Through this Program, Southwestern graduates have worked at places like the Missile Defense Center and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

F. Writing Competitions

A list of writing competitions provided by various organizations is located on the scholarship information page on the Southwestern portal. The Career Services Office includes information about writing competitions in its weekly CSO/Externship email newsletter.

G. Policy Revisions

Southwestern expressly reserves the right to change or modify any aspect of this policy at any time, with or without prior notice.