Standards of Admission

To be considered for admission to the Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana (“Blewett School of Law” or “law school”), applicants must properly follow the instructions on the Application Instructions page, which includes:

- Registering with the Law School Admission Council;
- Completing the Law School Admission Test;
- Submitting:
  - a personal statement;
  - a minimum of two letters of recommendation;
  - a current resume; and
- Earning a baccalaureate degree from a regionally-accredited U.S. or Canadian college or university—or the foreign equivalent whose program has been deemed comparable to that of a 4-year baccalaureate degree—prior to registration of the fall semester, beginning in August of each year.

Applicants must be of good moral character and must maintain good moral character as a condition of continuing enrollment.

During the admissions review process, the law school seeks future students who will achieve the highest standards of academic performance, professional responsibility, and demonstrate a commitment to serving their communities. We have a faculty-based admissions committee. The admissions committee includes members of the faculty, director of admissions (ex officio), and one student nominated by the Student Bar Association (ex officio). The application review process is guided by the policy and principles set forth in the law school's mission statement.

LSAT: Law School Admission Test

Almost all first-year J.D. applicants must take the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), the only exceptions are for students who meet the criteria for our Expedited Admission Program, see below. We recommend that applicants fully prepare to take the LSAT. The LSAT is currently offered 4 times a year. We strongly recommend taking the test no later than the February administration, as our priority application deadline is March 15th each year. As space permits, we will consider applicants who have scores from the June test administrations. If an applicant takes the LSAT more than once, the highest score is used for reporting purposes, but all scores will be evaluated. LSAT scores older than five years will not be accepted, for example, if applying for the Fall 2018 entering class, the candidate must have taken the LSAT no earlier than March 2013.

Expedited Admissions Program
Applicants may qualify to apply for our Expedited Admissions Program, which does not require an LSAT score. A candidate must apply under the general application procedure through LSAC if any of the following requirements are not met, register for LSAC’s Credential Assembly Service (CAS), and follow the instructions for the A1 Application.

There are two types of Expedited Admissions Program applicants. To qualify for Expedited Admissions Program, candidates must have (a) received a baccalaureate degree from the University of Montana within the academic year immediately prior to anticipated matriculation (‘UM undergraduate expedited’); and/or (b) be seeking the J.D. degree in combination with one of our three joint degree program offerings, J.D./M.B.A; J.D./M.P.A.; or J.D./E.V.S.T, regardless of undergraduate institution (‘UM joint degree expedited’). The requirements for the two types of Expedited Admissions Program applicants are set forth below:

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<th>(a) UM undergraduate expedited</th>
<th>(b) UM joint degree Expedited</th>
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<td>• The student must have scored at or above the 85th percentile on the ACT or SAT; and • The student must have ranked in the top 10% of their undergraduate class after at least six semesters of academic work, or achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or above after at least six semesters of academic work.</td>
<td>• The student must have scored at or above the 85th percentile on the GRE or GMAT. • The student must have ranked in the top 10% of their undergraduate class after at least six semesters of academic work, or achieved a cumulative GPA of 3.5 or above after at least six semesters of academic work.</td>
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If a candidate has a reportable LSAT score(s), they must report their score, even if they qualify to apply under this Expedited Admission Program.

Credential Assembly Service

Each applicant is also required to register for the Credential Assembly Service (CAS). Applicants register with the LSAC Credential Assembly Service at www.LSAC.org or by calling (215) 968-1001. LSAC will create a CAS report that contains an applicant’s LSAT
score(s), writing samples, copies and analysis of academic transcripts, and copies of letters of recommendation and online evaluations. We require at least 2 recommendation letters to complete an applicant’s file—and recommend at least one of them be an academic recommendation or evaluation. Upon receipt of an application and application fee, we will request a copy of the CAS Report from LSAC. Once a file is deemed “complete,” the file is ready to be reviewed by the faculty admissions committee.

Decision Timeline

We begin to accept applications on September 1 of each year. Admission decisions are made on a rolling basis. Usually the first round of applications are considered in December. Applicants are notified of the decision of the admission decision committee by email and by letter. If an applicant is offered admission, two seat deposits are required to reserve a place in the class. The initial seat deposit is $300, with its due date specified in an applicant’s letter of acceptance. The second deposit is $200 and is due July 1st. Any applicants admitted after July 1st will pay a one-time $500 deposit. The seat deposit is non-refundable. Of this total, the entire $500.00 is credited to the student’s university account. Failure to meet a seat deposit deadline can result in the rescinding of the offer of admission.

Rescinding Offer of Admission

The law school may rescind an offer for failure to meet a seat deposit deadline. Additionally, the law school reserves the right to rescind an offer of admission if: 1) the applicant fails to maintain satisfactory academic progress; 2) the applicant’s final transcripts fail to show completion of courses and/or degrees required for matriculation; 3) the applicant submitted incomplete or inaccurate information; 4) or if the applicant’s fitness for legal study or membership in the bar is called into question by any personal or professional conduct issues.

Re-applicants

Previous applicants to the JD program may reapply. As a re-applicant, the admissions committee prefers new and updated materials be submitted. Letters of recommendation written within 2 years of the date of the new application are preferred.

Deferred Admission

Applicants who are accepted for admission and seek deferrals may be granted only for extenuating circumstances. The Director of Admissions considers deferment requests on a case-by-case basis. It is not the policy of the law school to defer students in order for them to gain in-state residency. Admitted applicants approved for deferral must submit the entire non-refundable $500.00 seat deposit in order to reserve their seat in the following class. The deferred applicant’s seat deposit will be processed immediately and applied to the next cycle. Any scholarship offers made to the admitted student before deferral is rescinded, and the admitted student will be considered for scholarships the following year.
Residency

If in-state residency is claimed in an application, but the law school is unable to verify residency, applicants will be sent a letter or email directing them to complete a set of follow-up questions before a residency determination can be made. The Director of Admissions reserves the right to request additional information and documentation than what is asked for in the general application from any student claiming Montana residency.

Visit https://www.umt.edu/registrar/students/residencyinfo.php for additional residency information.

Transfer or Visiting Law Students

The Blewett School of Law will accept transfer applications only from students attending an ABA-accredited law school. Admission is granted on based on available seats in the law school class. Transfer applicants will be evaluated on the same criteria as applied to entering students, with the additional consideration of the applicant’s academic performance in the law school currently attended, the quality of that law school, and reasons for seeking a transfer. Transfer students must complete at least 60 credit hours of law study in residence to earn a degree of Juris Doctor from the Blewett School of Law.

Admitted transfer applicants must meet with the Director of Admissions to complete a Transfer Credit Evaluation form. Every effort will be made to transfer credit from the same or similar courses to meet requirements.

Transfer credits and grades will be considered in calculating a student’s grade point average and class rank will be determined after completing one semester at the Blewett School of Law. Grades and GPA will be transferred and calculated as close as possible based on the following scale: A+/A: 4.0; A-:3.7; B+: 3.3; B: 3.0; B-: 2.7; C+: 2.3; C: 2.0; C-: 1.7; D:1; F:0.

Transfer students must register for LSAC’s Credential Assembly Service (CAS) and follow the instructions to ensure a complete application. Register at www.lsac.org.

Please visit: http://www.umt.edu/law/admissions/application/default.php to view the transfer and visiting law student policy.

Conduct Requirement

Law students and members of the legal community are expected to maintain high standards of professionalism. The Blewett School of Law application includes several questions about personal, professional, and academic conduct. If any aspect of an applicant’s responses to questions or if any part of an application has changed since it was first submitted, the applicant must immediately contact the Admissions Office. The Admissions Committee will
review the change or changes to the application to determine if further action is required. One action could be the rescinding of the offer of admission.

Admission to the Montana State Bar, or any other state bars, involves consideration of an applicant’s character and moral fitness for the practice of law. Law schools are asked to comment on bar applicants in this regard. It is important, that applicants disclose any changes to their applications. Some jurisdictions require applications to law school as a part of its review for membership the state bar. Applicants who have questions or concerns about bar admission are advised to contact the jurisdiction(s) in which they intend to practice to discuss bar membership requirements. To contact the State Bar of Montana about requirements for bar membership, call (406) 442-7660 ext. 2210 or visit: http://www.montanabar.org/.

At the Blewett School of Law, the Student Handbook contains the Honor Code applicable for law students. The Honor Code is set forth in “Appendix A,” of the Student Handbook. The Student Handbook provides the standards of conduct to which all law students are expected to adhere.

The Honor Code and detailed information about student conduct and community standards can be found on our website at:

https://www.umt.edu/law/academics/students/handbook/default.php

Students must read and be familiar with the code and will be held accountable to all of its provisions.