

preLaw  
BEST  
VALUE  
LAW  
SCHOOLS  
2021



preLaw  
BEST  
FOR  
PRACTICAL  
TRAINING  
2020



preLaw  
TOP  
SCHOOL  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
LAW  
2020



# people place community





# ABOUT

Each year approximately 80 students from across the country enroll at the Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana looking for a hands-on approach to legal education. Under the guidance of dedicated faculty and staff, students thrive in an experience-rich environment that integrates theory and practice. Long before it was fashionable, the School of Law made a commitment to training practice-ready lawyers. Every student is required to participate in clinical programs in order to graduate. The atmosphere at the University of Montana is enhanced by the surrounding Rocky Mountains, where wilderness and recreation offer a break from the rigors of law study.

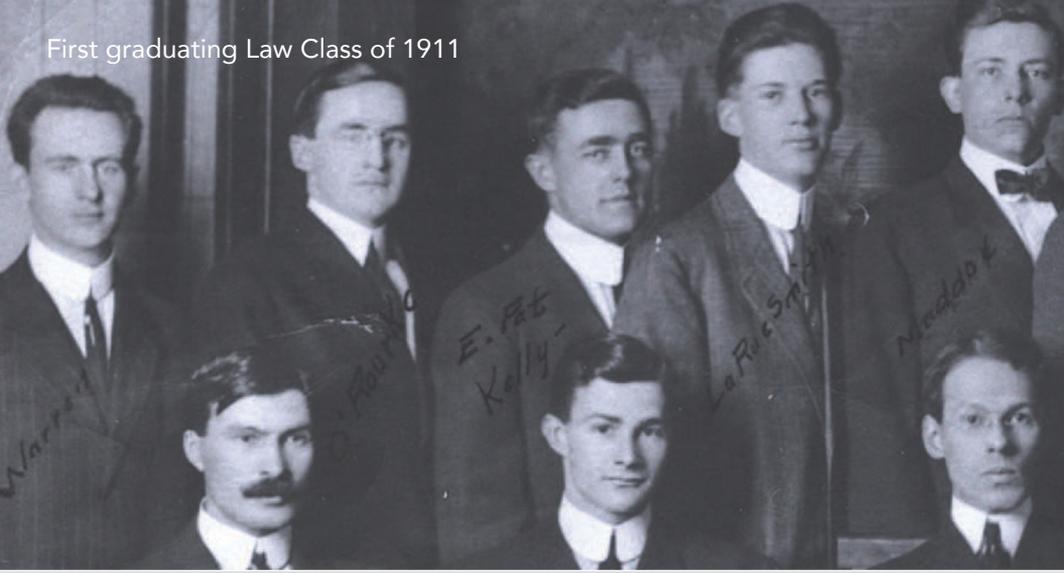
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## MISSION AND VALUES

The Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana prepares students for the people-oriented practice of law by integrating theory and practice in a competency-based curriculum; serves as the academic legal center in Montana; and contributes to the development of national, state and tribal law and legal institutions through teaching, scholarship and service. In pursuit of this mission, the School of Law strives to:

- Develop in its students the demonstrated ability to serve society as lawyers, to represent clients generally and in particular transactions, and to seek resolution of conflicts in appropriate forums;
- Foster intellectual inquiry, knowledge of the law, fundamental professional skills, perspective on the role of law and lawyers in society, and the character and values necessary to serve society;
- Support scholarship and provide professional service to Montana, tribal governments and communities, the nation and the international community;
- Emphasize those areas of law significant to the Rocky Mountain West, including natural resources, environmental and Indian law; and
- Promote among students, faculty and the profession a sense of community enriched by a diverse group of people devoted to freedom of inquiry and freedom of expression.

## First graduating Law Class of 1911



## HISTORY

University of Montana's law school first opened its doors in 1911. For more than 100 years, the School of Law has educated lawyers and prepared them to serve society. In 1914, the School of Law became a member of the Association of American Law Schools and in 1923, received accreditation from the American Bar Association. In 2011, the Blewett School of Law celebrated 100 years of education and service.

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## COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

The School of Law shall promote and support a learning environment that encourages, enriches and respects the multidimensional aspects of diversity. Recognizing that the quality of legal education is enhanced by a diverse educational community, the school is committed to recruiting and retaining students, faculty, staff and administrators capable of creating a safe, vibrant, diverse, engaging and intellectually stimulating learning environment. This educational environment reinforces and models the principle that diversity is an integral part of learning and the competent, people-oriented practice of law. Diversity includes, but is not limited to, differences based on race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation or background, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity, age, economic class or status, points of view or disabilities.



# BY THE NUMBERS

## 2020 Entering Class (current as of 08/29/20)

Class Size: 89

Resident/Non-Resident: 59/30

Female/Male: 45/44

Minority Students: 12.79%

Average Age: 27

LSAT 75%: 158  
50%: 156  
25%: 151

GPA 75%: 3.66  
50%: 3.41  
25%: 3.12

- 4 Joint Degree Programs
- 2 Certificate Programs
- 4 Areas of Concentration
- 7 Competitive Travel Teams
- 2 Law Reviews
- And 25+ Clinic Placements



## Tuition

### 2020-21 Academic Year

General Tuition

Resident

\$6,288

Non-Resident

\$27,818

Law School Tuition

\$6,450

\$6,450

Fees

\$2,203

\$2,275

**Total (Tuition and Fees)**

**\$14,941**

**\$36,543**

## Employment Outcomes

Montana First Time Takers 2020

Bar Passage Rate: **92%**

### Placement (class graduating 2019)

**71** total graduates

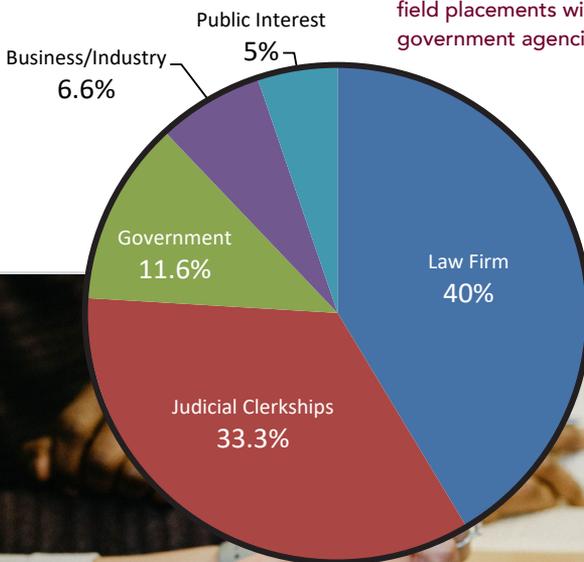
Employed or seeking advanced degree

(10 months after graduation): **86%**

Percent of class with full-time/long-term

Bar-passage or J.D.-preferred jobs: **81%**

### 2019 Employed Graduates



The Blewett School of Law is ranked **7th** in the nation for clerkship placements after graduation, as reported in National Jurist's preLaw magazine. According to the "Best Schools for Public Service" section of the Winter 2018 edition, the law school is also ranked 16th nationwide in federal clerkship placements, with 8.7% of our J.D. graduates clerking at the federal level.

In the Spring 2020 edition, the law school was ranked a "Top School of Environmental Law" and also received a high ranking in the category of practical training, with three in-house clinics and over 25 field placements with nonprofits, government agencies and judges.



# NATURAL RESOURCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL LAW

Montana has long been an innovator in natural resources and environmental law. As the Montana Constitution reflects, it is a community of people who both revere and rely upon natural resources, working hard to balance the varied demands placed upon the waters, lands and wildlife. It also recognizes that natural resource issues extend far beyond Montana's borders, affecting the nation and the world. The Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana models these values in its mission of serving people through an emphasis on natural resources and environmental law.



# INDIAN LAW

Take a prominent role in addressing legal issues relating to Indian people and Indian country. Experience Indian law while residing in western Montana, the beautiful homelands of the Bitterroot Salish, the Pend d'Oreille and the Kootenai tribes. Located in Missoula, the Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana is the only law school in a state with eight federally recognized tribes and one state-recognized tribe.

University of Montana's Indian Law Program addresses the complex and evolving principles of Indian law while recognizing the unique relationship between tribal, state, and federal governments. In addition to offering substantive Indian law courses and an Indian Law Certificate Program, the School of Law has the oldest in-house Indian Law Clinic in the nation, offers a progressive Summer Indian Law Program and supports an active Native American Law Students Association.







## MISSOULA, MONTANA

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It's hard to top Missoula as a beautiful place to live and study. Missoula is ringed by snow-capped mountains, and two rivers—the Clark Fork and the Bitterroot—flow through town. If you enjoy outdoor recreation or want a peaceful place to study, you'll fall in love with Missoula.

Missoula is a friendly town, full of active folks who appreciate their natural surroundings and are dedicated to preserving them. Biking is a way of life, both for transportation and recreation, and Missoula is considered one of the top biking communities in the country.

Missoula's quaint downtown is only a few blocks from campus. Here you'll find numerous buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places housing boutiques, art galleries, restaurants, craft breweries, local distilleries and coffee shops. Down by the river is Caras Park, where the town turns out to enjoy free music, local food trucks, festivals, and kayaking and surfing at the local's favorite spot, Brennan's Wave. Here, you will also find Missoula's carousel, one of the few in the country. The horses were hand-carved by local Missoulians as a labor of love.

For a smaller city, Missoula is remarkably sophisticated. We enjoy the arts, music, museums, high-quality performing arts and a variety of restaurants and shopping, without the hassles of big-city traffic and crime. Missoula is a great place to live, raise a family and receive your education.

- Missoula was named one of the 2020 Top 100 Best Places to Live by Livability.com
- Previously voted by Outdoor Magazine as one of the 16 greatest places to live in America
- Missoula's Wilma Theatre (#69) and the Top Hat (#135) were ranked among the best venues in the world by leading concert industry website Pollstar.

# COURSE OFFERINGS

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## Required Courses

- Business Transactions
- Civil Procedure
- Clinical Training
- Constitutional Law
- Contracts
- Criminal Law
- Evidence
- Lawyering Fundamentals: Analysis
- Lawyering Fundamentals: Research
- Legal Writing
- Pretrial Litigation
- Professional Responsibility
- Property
- Torts

## Elective Courses

- Administrative Law
- Advanced Constitutional Law
- Advanced Legal Research
- Advanced Problems in Federal Indian Law
- Agricultural Law
- Alternative Dispute Resolution
- American Indian Natural Resources Law
- Appellate Advocacy
- Art and Cultural Property Law
- Bankruptcy
- Business Organizations
- Civil Rights Litigation
- Conflict of Laws
- Consumer Protection
- Corporate Tax
- Criminal Procedure: Adjudication
- Criminal Procedure: Investigation
- Domestic Violence
- Economic Development in Indian Country
- Estate Planning: Wills and Trusts
- Family Law
- Federal Courts

- Federal Estate and Gift Taxation
- Federal Habeas Corpus
- Federal Indian Law
- Federal Tax
- Gender and the Law
- Insurance Law
- International Environmental Law
- Intro to Environmental Law
- Intro to Intellectual Property Law
- Land Use and Environment
- Law and Literature
- Law Practice
- Lawyers' Values
- Legislation: Law and Politics
- Montana Constitutional Law
- Natural Resources and Energy Law
- Natural Resources Conflict Resolution
- Negotiations
- Oil and Gas
- Partnership Tax
- Philosophy of Law
- Products Liability
- Public Land and Resources Law
- Real Estate Transactions
- Remedies
- Renewable Energy and Climate Change Law
- Tax Practice and Procedure
- Taxation of Business Organizations
- Taxation of Estates and Gifts
- Taxation of Property Transactions
- Trial Practice
- Tribal Courts/ Tribal Law
- UCC Article 9 - Secured Transactions
- Water Law
- White Collar Crime
- Wildlife Law

# NOTEWORTHY NEWS

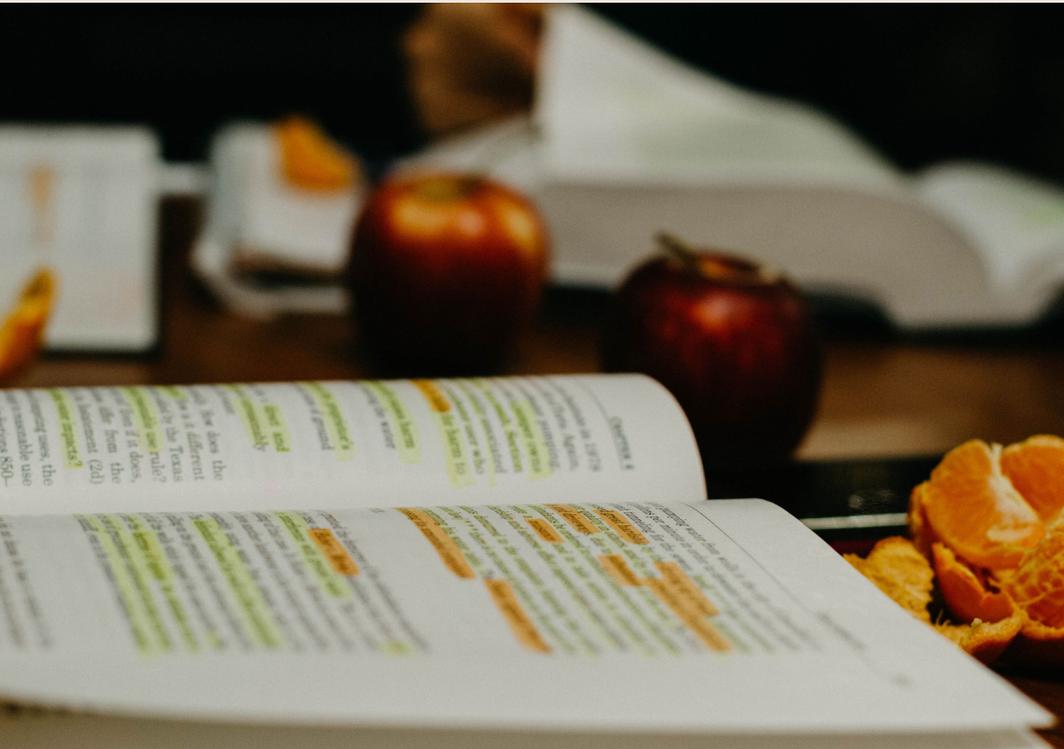
## A Best Value Legal Education

The Alexander Blewett III School of Law at the University of Montana was ranked 10th in the nation for best value by preLaw Magazine and had the lowest tuition of all the schools of their list.

The list of 25 Best Value Law Schools appeared in the magazine's fall 2020 edition, which is available online at: [www.nationaljurist.com/content/back-issues](http://www.nationaljurist.com/content/back-issues).

The ranking recognizes schools where graduates have excellent chances of passing the bar and getting a job without taking on excessive debt. Schools are selected using a formula that incorporates the bar pass rate, employment rate, tuition, cost of living and average indebtedness upon graduation.

"It's gratifying to see this recognition of the outstanding quality and value of the legal education we provide," UM law Dean Paul Kirgis said. "Our students study in an amazing location at a reasonable price, and then go on to exciting, fulfilling careers."



## Dan Brister '20 Selected as a Wyss Conservation Scholar

Blewett School of Law student Dan Brister is one of four University of Montana students named a 2019-20 Wyss Scholar for Conservation in the American West.

The Wyss Scholars Program provides financial support to UM students who have committed to careers in Western land conservation with a federal or state land management agency or at a nonprofit in the region. It is funded through the Wyss Foundation, a private charitable foundation dedicated to supporting innovative, lasting solutions that improve lives, empower communities and strengthen connections to the land.

Dan Brister, J.D. Class of 2020, received his master's degree in environmental studies from UM and his Juris Doctorate from the Blewett School of Law. He has a long history of environmental advocacy and served as the executive director of the Buffalo Field Campaign, from which he wrote a book of essays on the herds of Yellowstone.

"I will spend the rest of my life working with grassroots nonprofit conservation organizations and the tribes in fighting to protect the unique wild landscapes and species of the West," Brister said.



# UM Law Professor Receives Fulbright Scholar Award to Study Indigenous Justice

University of Montana law Professor Jordan Gross has earned a Fulbright U.S. Scholar Program award to serve as a research chair in Indigenous Public Policy and Criminal Justice at the University of Guelph, Ontario.

Gross, who teaches in UM’s Blewett School of Law, is one of over 800 U.S. citizens who will teach, conduct research and provide expertise abroad for the 2020-21 academic year through the Fulbright Program. Recipients of Fulbright awards are selected on the basis of academic and professional achievement, as well as record of service and leadership in their respective fields.

Gross teaches and researches comparative federal, tribal and state court systems, with an emphasis on criminal jurisdiction and procedure and interdisciplinary criminal justice reform.

Gross’ Fulbright project, “Making Space for Indigenous Justice Norms within Colonialist Legal Structures – Criminal Procedure as a Vehicle and Boundary for Self-Determination Interests in Canada and the United States,” considers criminal procedure rules and practices that reflect indigenous and mainstream justice norms.

As part of her research, Gross will visit indigenous justice forums and mainstream courts in Canada. She also will explore ongoing collaborations with Canadian scholars, including designing a seminar class on comparative indigenous criminal justice traditions that will be co-taught with faculty from her host institution and offered to UM and Canadian students through remote instruction.





# SPECIAL ADMISSIONS PROGRAMS

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## **GRE Admissions**

We accept both the LSAT and the GRE for admission. While we expect the vast majority of our applicants will continue to apply with only the LSAT, you may want to consider whether the GRE is a suitable alternative.

If you choose to apply with the GRE, you must submit all valid GRE test results for the past five years. You may not choose which results to share. This parallels the requirement that five years of LSAT scores be disclosed on an application. Similarly, with the LSAT, we will accept an explanation for discrepancies between multiple GRE scores. Any applicant who wishes to submit an addendum is free to do so.

Please visit the ETS website for additional information on the GRE.





## 3+3 Program

The School of Law offers qualifying students from our partner undergraduate institutions the option to earn their bachelor and law degrees in six years rather than the traditional seven.

Undergraduate students who gain admission into the law school through the 3+3 programs will follow the usual required course of study for first-year law students. After successfully completing the first year of law school, 3+3 participants will receive their bachelor's degree, assuming all other graduation requirements are met. The Juris Doctor degree will be awarded upon successful completion of the required minimum 90 total course credits for law school and all other J.D. requirements. The application deadline for 3+3 applicants is Feb. 1 and late applications will not be accepted.

The Blewett School of law has 3+3 program agreements with the following institutions:

- Carroll College (Montana)
- Rocky Mountain College (Montana)

For more information, please visit our [website](#).

# SUMMER PROGRAMS

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## Summer American Indian & Indigenous Law Program

Every summer faculty comprised of expert Indian law scholars and practitioners from around the country come to spend their summer in beautiful Missoula, Montana, to teach Indian law! Participants in the program may choose from any of the courses offered or take them all. Course topics vary each year, but touch on issues connected to or central to Indian law and Indian Country. Courses offered in the past include:

- Indian Law Research
- Mastering American Indian Law
- Civil Jurisdiction in Indian Country
- Native Hawaiian Law
- Criminal Justice in Indian Country
- Alaska Native Law and Policy
- Natural Resources Issues in Indian Country
- Indigenous Rights in International Law
- Indigenous Religious Freedom
- Public Policy in Indian Country
- Social Justice Indian Country

For more information, please see our website at: [www.umt.edu/indianlaw](http://www.umt.edu/indianlaw)





## Summer Study Abroad in China

China has emerged as one of the world's most powerful economic forces in today's global economy. The demand is increasing for experts familiar with the ever-changing nature of the Chinese economy and with Chinese political and legal systems to provide advisory services to businesses and policymakers. We recognize these needs and offer students an opportunity to experience China firsthand in our summer study abroad program. The Summer Study Abroad China program immerses students with colleagues from other western universities, as well as Chinese law students, using faculty from all involved schools. Each year offers different courses, the most recent program featured the following four 1.5 credit courses:

- Comparative Business Organizations
- Comparative Renewable Energy Law
- Comparative Constitutional Law
- Comparative International Business Transactions Law

For more information, please visit our website at:  
[www.umt.edu/law/academics/programs/](http://www.umt.edu/law/academics/programs/)



# FACULTY

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## **Pippa Browde**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Corporate Tax, Federal Tax, Partnership Tax, Taxation of Business Organizations, Taxation of Property Transactions

## **Michelle Bryan**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Administrative Law, International Environmental Law, Introduction to Natural Resources and Environmental Law, Land Use and the Environment, Water Law

## **Bari Burke**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Gender and the Law, Lawyer Well-Being and Self Care, Lawyers' Values

## **Jonathon Byington**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Bankruptcy, Business Transactions, Real Estate Transactions, Secured Transactions

## **Craig Cowie**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Civil Procedure, Consumer Protection, Pretrial Litigation

## **Elaine Gagliardi**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Business Organizations, Business Transactions, Estate Planning: Wills and Trusts, Taxation of Estates and Gifts, and Tax Exempt Organizations

## **Jordan Gross**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Criminal Procedure: Adjudicative, White Collar Crime, Environmental Crime, Professional Responsibility

## **Larry Howell**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Appellate Advocacy, Legal Analysis, and Legal Writing



**Anthony Johnstone**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Constitutional Law, Advanced Constitutional Law, Montana Constitutional Law, Legislation: Law and Politics, Philosophy of Law, Supreme Court Seminar

**Andrew King-Ries**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Criminal Procedure: Investigative, Criminal Law, Domestic Violence, Juvenile Justice, Law and Literature, White Collar Crime

**Monte Mills**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Indigenous Cultural Preservation; American Indian Natural Resources Law; Economic Development in Indian Country; Sovereignty, Self-Determination, and Economic Development in Montana; Energy in Indian Country; Federal Indian Law; Indian Law Clinic

**Samuel Panarella**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Business Organizations, Business Transactions, Contracts I and II, Renewable Energy Law, Study Abroad in China Program

**Cathay Smith**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Introduction to Intellectual Property Law, Property Law, Art and Cultural Property Law

**Kekek Stark**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Tribal Courts, Tribal Law, Indian Law Clinic

**Hillary Wandler**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Civil Procedure I and II, Lawyering Fundamentals: Analysis, Legal Writing, Veterans' Law, Veterans' Advocacy Clinic

**Sandi Zellmer**

**COURSES TAUGHT:** Public Lands, Water Law, Wildlife, Natural Resource and Environmental Law, Clinics, Torts



Faculty average more than seven years of practice before beginning their teaching careers at the Blewett School of Law.



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