

DUAL JD/MASTER OF ARTS IN LIBERAL STUDIES



Program Description This dual degree option enables students in the VU School of Law to take advantage of the wide range of concentrations offered through the Master of Arts in Liberal Studies (MALS) program. In addition to taking four core seminars in liberal studies, students select a concentration in:

- English
- Ethics & Values
- Gerontology
- History
- Human Behavior & Society
- Individualized
- Theology

The flexible and individualized nature of the MALS degree makes it an ideal and efficient enhancement to the JD. Specifically, students may:

- choose from a variety of core and concentration courses, many of which are offered in the evening and summer;
- develop an individualized concentration, taking coursework across disciplines to meet specific needs and interests;
- receive each degree upon completion of the requirements; degrees need not be awarded simultaneously;
- apply up to six graduate credits toward the 114 credit law degree, and up to 6 law credits toward the 36 credit MALS degree, saving up to 12 credits.

A Capstone Experience No thesis is required for completion of the MALS in English, however, research papers are regular part of graduate coursework in the program. MALS students are encouraged to culminate their studies with a capstone experience, a research project, a creative or artistic work, a service-learning endeavor, or even a travel/study experience. Regarding this last option, MALS students may earn academic credit by taking advantage of 4-6 week stints of study at one of VU's overseas centers in Cambridge, England; Reutlinger, Germany;

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Puebla, Mexico; or Hangzhou, China. Curriculum Most MALS degrees offered at
Valparaiso University require:

- four core seminars (12 credits),
- five courses in a field of concentration (15 credits),
- three elective courses (9 credits).

In general, and consistent with the other joint programs with the School of Law, up to 6 credits of law coursework may apply to the MALS degree, and up to 6 credits of MALS coursework may apply to the JD degree. Thus, 111 credits are required for both degrees. While the exact substitutions must be worked out in consultation with Law and MALS advisors, the two law substitutions may be applied to core, concentration or elective categories, so long as they match the appropriate domain of study. For example, the core seminar in social sciences might be replaced with one of the following:

- LAW 442 Civil Rights Legislation and Litigation
- LAW 446 Employment Law
- LAW 483 Law and Feminism
- LAW 485 Family Law
- LAW 487 Elder Law (or LAW 488, Selected Topics)

Criteria for Admission Applicants must be admitted to both the Graduate Division and the School of Law. Admission to each program is separate. For a graduate application, click [here](#). For a VU School of Law application, click [here](#). Applicants must meet the admission requirements of the Graduate Division, which include:

- Undergraduate degree from an accredited University;
- TOEFL of 575 or 230 computer version or higher for non-native English speakers;
- An overall grade point average of 3.0.

As part of the application process, students must provide:

- [Valparaiso University Graduate Application](#);
- Official transcripts of all prior undergraduate and graduate coursework. If you have received an undergraduate or graduate degree from Valparaiso University, you are not required to submit an official transcript from Valparaiso University;
- Two letters of recommendation (Letters may be forwarded from the VU School of Law);
- A reflective essay indicating your reasons for wanting admission to the program;
- For Ethics & Values (required) and Theology (highly recommended) concentrations, at least 6 credits in undergraduate or graduate Theology or Philosophy;
- Application Fee: \$20.

Financial Considerations Full time students enrolled in the VU School of Law may take a maximum of 6 credits in the Graduate Division without paying additional tuition, as long as these credits are taken during the fall and spring semesters.

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Because dual and joint degree programs provide significant savings in both tuition, time, and credit hours through mutual exchange of credit, law students in such programs are not extended the courtesy of 6 credits in the graduate or undergraduate division during either fall or spring semester at no additional charge. The savings afforded by combining degrees enables a law student to add on a master's degree for about \$12,150.

Students are strongly encouraged to begin their study during either the summer or fall semesters. Students may be surprised to discover the affordable tuition rate at Valparaiso University. Tuition for the 2008-2009 academic year is \$450 per credit hour, highly competitive for a private institution of recognized national quality. Students enrolled in graduate courses pay a \$80 general fee each semester. [Financial aid](#) is available through direct and indirect student loans for students taking 6 credits or more during fall and spring semesters. Students may transfer up to 6 credits of approved graduate coursework into the program.

For more information about the School of Law programs To learn more about the School of Law, visit their website at <http://www.valpo.edu/law/>.

Interested students should [request an application packet](#) from the Office of Graduate Studies through our website or by e-mailing Graduate.Studies@valpo.edu.

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