FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COURSE SELECTION

- May I select courses from the J.D. curriculum?

Yes. You may select courses from the entire upper-level J.D. curriculum (with the exception of clinics and first-year courses, such as Torts and Contracts) as well as the graduate curriculum. Many of the J.D. courses are cross-listed which means that there are seats reserved for LL.M. students; these seats are listed in the schedule after the JD section as LAWG. You must register for the “LAWG” side of cross-listed courses. For J.D. courses that are not cross-listed, graduate students have priority below all J.D. students for getting into the course if there is a waiting list.

In a few J.D. cross-listed courses, first priority for LAWG seats may be given to students in a related specialized degree program (e.g. a National Security Law LL.M. student will have priority during preregistration for some National Security-related cross-listed courses). Other LL.M. students may request seats in those courses during the add/drop period.

- Must all my LL.M. courses be taken from the list of classes in my degree program?

No. You may choose from the entire graduate curriculum as well as the second and third year of the J.D. curriculum. The list of courses meeting the requirements for each degree program [see www.law.georgetown.edu/go/llm-registration] are a useful way to identify courses that likely will interest you and will satisfy the specialization requirements for your degree, but you should also look through the alphabetical list of graduate courses to get an understanding of the wide range of classes open to you. When selecting classes, bear in mind the number of “specialization credits” you need for your degree. For example, foreign-trained lawyers in the “traditional track” Taxation degree must complete 16 tax-related credits. Foreign-trained lawyers in the traditional Securities & Financial Regulation degree must complete 14 securities-related credits; those foreign-educated students in the “practice-oriented track” of the Securities and Financial Regulation must take the 14 credits of classroom courses plus at least one additional credit in an Externship, Practicum or Workshop. The rest of your credits are “electives” and can be selected from our full curriculum.

- What is the difference between the “traditional track” and the “practice-orientated tracks”? Why distinguish them?

Due to U.S. visa regulations, those students on F-1 or J-1 student visas who wish to enroll in courses involving an off-campus work experience [e.g., Externships, most Practicums and most Workshops] must obtain work authorization to be in compliance with visa regulations. To accommodate this, we have designed two “tracks” for the LL.M. programs for foreign students so that they can pursue the academic and off-campus work experiences they want without violating their visa status. We will address this distinction during Orientation, and we will switch a student to the “practice-oriented track” only when they enroll in a course requiring off-campus work experience.

- I applied for one degree program but now realize another one better suits my interests. Can I change my degree specialization?

If you are certain you want to change your degree designation prior to registration, please make
the request through the Office of Graduate Admissions [llmadmis@law.georgetown.edu]. Please note that requests to change into a more specialized degree program may require another review by the Admissions Committee prior to approval. If you are thinking about a switch but prefer to make the decision after your arrival, you should discuss the change with your LL.M. academic advisor. Please note, you may need to start meeting degree requirements for a specialized degree program in the fall semester even if you decide to switch later on.

- **Should I try to meet the requirements of a certificate along with the LL.M.?**

  A certificate can be a nice bonus but employers often are more interested in the legal knowledge and skills you have developed at Georgetown Law than in whether you have a specialized certificate. As with your degree specialization, you should not let the requirement of a certificate limit your course choices. If you have a highly specialized career plan and we offer a certificate in that area – such as WTO Law or International Human Rights – you will find that you can complete the certificate requirements easily. Otherwise, it is better to think about the courses you are interested in and the skills you wish to develop.

- **How do my career goals impact my course selection?**

  If you already know what career path you want to follow, there may be a series of courses that will help you acquire substantive knowledge and develop useful skills for that particular career. Generally speaking, employers do not require you to take a specific course or courses. Think about the goals you set when you decided to enroll in an LL.M. Do you want to work on your writing skills? Do you want to learn how to negotiate? Employers that focus on a particular subject matter or type of legal work, however, often do expect that applicants will have taken at least a basic course in the related area. There are a wide range of courses for you to choose from that will help you develop a broad foundation in numerous areas of law. For instance, while some courses will familiarize you with the governing regulatory body of law, others will focus on specialized topics that you find of interest. “Course clusters” provide some guidance in helping you choose courses related to a specific career path and can be found. To search for a course by cluster, please go to [http://apps.law.georgetown.edu/curriculum/tab_schedules.cfm](http://apps.law.georgetown.edu/curriculum/tab_schedules.cfm) and select the area of law from the drop down for our various degree programs. For more advice about course selection and your career path, please consult with your career and academic advisors. We will also offer some webinars in the coming weeks to help you think about course selection (the webinar schedule will be posted on the Admitted Student Website and Facebook page); also, remember many of the sessions at Orientation will address these issues.

- **What is an “externship” and should I do one?**

  An Externship is a placement in a work setting outside of the law school. For LL.M. students, it is possible to do an externship at a government agency, at an NGO, or at a for-profit enterprise like a law firm or business. Students work at least 10 hours a week under the direct supervision of a lawyer for at least eleven weeks and receive 2 credits. Our students work in a variety of placements including the World Bank, the U.S. Internal Revenue Service, U.S. Securities & Exchange Commission, National Institutes of Health, the U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia, KPMG, the U.S. Congress Joint Committee on Taxation, the Center for Justice and International Law, and the Center for Telehealth & e-Health Law. International students are
eligible to do an Externship only in the Spring semester. For more information, visit http://www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/academic-programs/graduate-programs/externships/index.cfm. Please note that externships do not count toward the specialization requirements required for certain degree programs.

Students on a student visa will need to obtain off-campus work authorization before beginning an externship, practicum or workshop. F-1 students must consult with the International Student Advisor [visa@law.georgetown.edu] and J-1 students should consult your visa sponsor for authorization prior to beginning any course involving off-campus work.

Are there other practice-oriented courses available, in addition to Externships?

We offer a number of courses that emphasize practical skills. Generally speaking, courses with “workshop” in the title are skills-based courses; some involve on-campus experiences and others include an off-campus experience. For Tax and Securities students, these courses include International Business Planning Workshop, Business Planning Seminar, Drafting Partnership and LLC Agreements, and International Debt Workouts. For international LL.M. students, courses that emphasize practice skills and writing include Legal Research, Analysis and Writing; International Negotiations; Pre-Negotiation Strategies for Cross-Border Transactions; Presentation Skills for Lawyers; and Advanced International Commercial Arbitration.

We also offer “Practicum” classes that include an academic “classroom” component and often an “off-campus work experience.”

I am an international student who is thinking of taking the N.Y. Bar. Should this affect my course selection?

Yes. Please see the U.S. Bar Exam Information page on the Graduate Programs website (http://www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/academic-programs/graduate-programs/current-students/us-bar/index.cfm).

Should I choose a course because I hear that the faculty member is great?

Yes, by all means. But remember that each year nearly two thirds of the faculty members are nominated by at least one student as the teacher of the year! Teachers have different styles and different strengths. Read the course evaluations available online. Take a course with an interesting visiting faculty member, including international visiting faculty. Also, don’t forget our outstanding adjunct faculty. They include current and former judges and distinguished lawyers from private practice and private industry, government, and the non-profit and public interest sectors. Many students do not make their final decisions about which courses to take until after they have attended one class session during the first week of classes. It is usually prudent to have a few alternative course selections in mind, in case a particular teacher’s style or focus is not the one you prefer.

How do I get started with course selection?

There are a number of tools that you will want to explore when selecting courses, from the online
Curriculum Guide to faculty evaluations and biographies to the “How Courses Close” statistics provided by the Office of the Registrar. But before diving in to these materials, it is helpful to ask yourself a few questions:

- What are your goals for your time at the law school, and how would you prioritize them? How important is it to you to develop specific legal skills, such as drafting legal documents, public speaking, or managing client relationships? To have significant time for personal commitments or pursuits outside the law? To maximize your GPA? To take a course just for fun? To develop deep expertise in a specific field of law? To develop mentoring relationships with faculty?

- What classes have you enjoyed in other educational settings, and why? (Think about teaching style, substantive material, size of class, nature of graded exercises, the reading material, etc.)

- Do you already have a clear idea of what you want to do after you receive your LL.M.? Are there several areas of law you hope to explore?

We will also be holding Webinar discussions on the course selection process, the New York Bar and the various degree programs in early June before the course selection process ends.

- **Will it benefit me to submit my pre-registration requests as soon as the system permits it in early June?**

  No, there is no rush PROVIDED YOU SUBMIT YOUR REQUESTS BY THE JUNE DEADLINE. All pre-registration requests are treated as arriving at the same minute as long as they are submitted by the deadline. The process at this point is not a race. So take time to carefully think through your choices. There will be time later to make changes (some students change almost every course and that is fine with us) during Orientation Week, and the first week of both the fall and spring semester.

- **Are there courses every law student must or should take?**

  Each LL.M. degree and certificate has its own requirements. Review the Degree and Certificate requirements for your particular degree or certificate on the Graduate Programs website: [http://www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/academic-programs/graduate-programs/degree-programs/index.cfm](http://www.law.georgetown.edu/academics/academic-programs/graduate-programs/degree-programs/index.cfm). Be sure to enroll in any required courses and obtain the sufficient number of credits by selecting among the courses listed in the guides to receive the degree or certificate.

- **What are the maximum and minimum numbers of credits I can take per semester?**

  Georgetown requires full-time students to take no fewer than 8 and no more than 13 credits in a fall or spring semester. Part-time students may not enroll in more than 7 credits in a fall or spring semester. Full and part-time students may not enroll in more than 5 academic credits during the Summer session (and international students may not use more than 4 summer credits toward the New York Bar eligibility). Students may not enroll in more than 30 credits during the
For the purposes of this 30 credit limit, the academic year includes the 2-credit Foundations of American Law and the 2-credit Professional Responsibility Law in the U.S. courses during the LL.M. Summer Experience 2015.

Students whose first degree in law is from the U.S. must complete at least 24 credits for their degree. Students whose first degree in law is from outside the U.S. must complete at least 20 credits for their degree (or 24 credits for those seeking NY Bar eligibility).

Should I register for both Fall 2015 and Spring 2016?

Yes, make your selections for both semesters by the 5 p.m. deadline on Monday, June 22nd deadline. If you do not make your Spring Semester course selections now, you may find yourself at the bottom of waiting lists for Spring courses. You will have plenty of time to modify your course selections after you get here, during our “Add/Drop period” during the first week of each semester. For now, do your best to identify classes you want. Pay attention to the prerequisite and recommended courses listed.

May I enroll in a course that lists another course as a prerequisite?

Yes. You do not need to have taken a prerequisite course at Georgetown. For example, a common prerequisite is “International Law I.” If you have taken this course or a “public international law” course in your first legal degree then you meet the prerequisite requirement. Faculty members often will waive a prerequisite if you are taking the prerequisite concurrently with the course, or if you have knowledge through other study or work experience. If you are uncertain about whether you have the necessary background knowledge, choose the course in the pre-registration process and consult later with the professor or an academic advisor.

Is it preferable to take a heavier load in the fall or spring semester?

The timing and nature of the workload is much more important than the number of credits. A course-load of four exam classes will demand intense focus at the end of the semester for outlines and exam study, but may leave more room earlier in the semester for other commitments. By contrast, the deadlines and “what are deliverables? Assignments (short papers submitted throughout the semester, class presentations, etc) tend to spread out more evenly in a schedule that includes a practice-oriented course or an externship, a few exam classes, and one or two paper seminars. Foreign-educated students are reminded that writing more than one paper can be quite a challenge, especially in your fall semester.