

Stanford University Law School

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THE BASICS

Stanford University Law School (known as Stanford Law, or simply SLS) began as a department within the University in 1893. It was formally founded in 1908, and was accredited by the ABA in 1923.

Stanford Law's Palo Alto location in sunny northern California is very appealing; students love the peacefulness of their campus, and the calm of their suburban home. The proximity to vibrant San Francisco is also a huge plus. Perks like these come at a price, though: Students can expect pay just over \$71,000 a year to attend SLS.

The school is on the smaller side, with a total enrollment of around 560 students. Despite its size, though, it has graduated a number of very high profile personalities, including former Secretary of State Warren Christopher '49, and Supreme Court Justices William Rehnquist and Sandra Day O'Connor, both part of the class of 1952.

SLS is incredibly well-regarded nationally and internationally, and has excellent name-brand recognition. It is often referred to as one of the "big three" law schools, along with Harvard and Yale.

For a school its size, Stanford Law has a very good number of academic and extracurricular activities: 11 practical opportunities (8 clinics and 3 projects), study abroad programs in 6 foreign countries, 25 joint-degree options, 10 scholarly journals, and 50 student organizations.

Application deadline: 2/1

Application fee: \$75

Financial aid deadline: 3/15

Type of school: Private

Tuition and fees: \$44,880 (2010 - 2011)

Admissions: Rolling (most notifications by April 30)

Acceptance percentage: 9% (2008)

Incoming class size: 180 (2009)

Early Action/Early Decision available: No

Part-time program available: No

GPA AND STANDARDIZED TESTS

LSAT 25th - 75th percentile range: 167 - 172

GPA 25th - 75th percentile range: 3.77 - 3.97

TOEFL not required for international applicants.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Letters of recommendation: 2 required (more accepted)

Required essays: Personal statement (2-page limit)

Optional essays: None listed

Dean's Certification: Required* ("Form B")

Additional documentation: Résumé (required; 1-2 pages)

**Not required for foreign applicants.*

Stanford Law: The PowerScore Perspective

“The Ivy of the West”

From the academic requirements for admission (the incoming class of 2012 had a 3.88 median GPA and a 170 median LSAT) to the acceptance percentage (9% for the class of 2012), Stanford is right up there with Yale and Harvard (and even Harvard had a slightly higher 11% acceptance rate in 2009). Their alumni lists are similarly filled with giants in just about every industry. The quality of the curriculum is exceptional, and the faculty is fantastic. If you want an Ivy League-quality legal education without the frigid Ivy League-quality weather, Stanford’s the way to go.

Happy people

Perhaps it’s the sun or the nice climate; maybe it’s something in the ocean water. Whatever the reason, it seems that students at Stanford Law are pretty much universally happy. Sure, the workload is extreme, and it’s no fun to have to study on the weekends—but that’s law school. The one complaint we got was about the one-track mind that the Career Service Office seems to have when it comes to their (law firm job-centric) resources; outside of that, it seems that Stanford Law is pretty much a law school utopia.

Beautiful location

The Stanford University campus is beautiful. The grounds are sprawling and green, and the trees are tall; the architecture is beautiful, detailed, and intricate. Palo Alto is also very picturesque (albeit rather small). It has some nice dining and drinking options, and the Stanford Shopping Center has just about anything you could want. And San Francisco is just a short car ride away.

San Francisco!

That’s right, San Francisco! Undoubtedly one of the major geographic attractors (after the nice northern California weather) to attending Stanford Law is the close proximity to the bustling, jumping city of San Francisco. If you need it, want it, or want to do it, chances are San Fran’s got it. Many of the “must-do” activities listed by SLSers revolved around eating, shopping, walking, sight-seeing, drinking, partying, running, or just hanging out there. Be prepared to spend much of your limited down time in the city.

Guaranteed on-campus housing

There are few law schools that can actually boast “guaranteed on-campus housing” for any portion of their population—Stanford Law is one of the ones that can. All single students willing to be flexible about which

of the law school living facilities they want to be in are guaranteed room for their first year. That’s a definite plus, considering that Stanford Law’s on-campus housing is not only within walking distance to the school (of course), but is also considerably cheaper than going out and renting a place on your own. Married students and students with families aren’t guaranteed housing, though.

Brand new dorms

And these guaranteed on-campus digs are *nice*. The University’s brand new Munger Graduate Residence has just about anything you’d want in a on-campus dorm: Fully-furnished rooms, individual bathrooms, in-suite kitchens, and wireless internet. And don’t forget the café, 24-hour grocery store, and across-the-street location to the law school. Not too shabby.

Pretty pricey

The per-year cost of attending Stanford Law is estimated at over \$71,000. With a combined total of over \$200,000 for three years of schooling, cost is definitely something every aspiring SLS student should carefully consider.

Generous financial aid

The school does help to relieve the financial burden with a generous financial aid program. The school estimates that over 80% of the student body is on some sort of financial aid (either loans, grants, or a combination), and over 50% of the student body received grants. SLS only provides need-based grants, though, so don’t expect to get anything for your exceptional LSAT or GPA. The grants that the school

does give out are pretty hefty—the median amount is over \$20,000, which comes close to covering half a year’s tuition. That certainly goes a long way to softening the financial blow.

A California powerhouse

Four out of every ten Stanford Law grads end up working in California—but that’s not to say that they don’t find jobs elsewhere. New York and D.C. have their fair share of SLSers, too.

It seems that students at Stanford Law are pretty universally happy. Sure, the workload is extreme, and it’s no fun to have to study on the weekends...When it comes to just being content with your overall surroundings, though, SLSers seem to have that one covered.

Stanford Law: The Numbers

ACCEPTANCE RATES

Full-time: 9% (373 of 4,082 admitted)
Part-time: N/A

GPA AND LSAT SCORES

GPA - 75th percentile: 3.97
GPA - Median: 3.88
GPA - 25th percentile: 3.77

LSAT - 75th percentile: 172
LSAT - Median: 170
LSAT - 25th percentile: 167

ENROLLMENT AND ETHNICITY

African-American: 25 (M); 35 (F); 10.8% of student body
American Indian: 8 (M); 4 (F); 2.2% of student body
Asian-American: 34 (M); 36 (F); 12.6% of student body
Caucasian: 176 (M); 137 (F); 56.2% of student body
Hispanic: 3 (M); 1 (F); 0.7% of student body
Mexican-American: 25 (M); 23 (F); 8.6% of student body
Puerto Rican: 2 (M); 3 (F); 0.9% of student body
International: 4 (M); 7 (F); 2.0% of student body
Non-Reported: 17 (M); 17 (F); 6.1% of student body

TRANSFERS (FIRST-YEAR) AND ATTRITION

Transfers in: 16
Transfers out: 1

1L attrition: None
2L attrition: 3 (0 Academic, 3 Other)
3L attrition: 1 (0 Academic, 1 Other)

FINANCIAL AID

Merit aid available? No
Grants and scholarships available? Yes
Students receiving grants: 270, 50.1% of student body
Median grant amount: \$22,178.00
LRAP program available?

Stanford Law provides students with need-based aid only. Close to 80% of the student body receives some sort of aid. The primary forms of financial aid for Stanford Law students are fellowships (grants), federal student loans, and private student loans.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

Wireless network availability? Yes
Number of wired connections available: 250
Hours per week the library is open: 103
Study seating capacity inside the library: 508
Number of full-time professional librarians: 10

CAREER SERVICES

On-campus Career Services Office? Yes
Number of full-time career services staffers? 8
Career services specializations: Judicial clerkships, international, non-law jobs, private sector, advanced-degree careers, teaching, public interest
On-Campus Interview (OCI) program? Yes. One in the fall for 2L and 3L students; one in the spring for 1L students.

EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS*

**All statistics are 9 months after graduation*

Employment status known: 175, 99.4% of class
Employment status unknown: 1, 0.6% of class
Employed: 172, 98.3% of class
Pursuing graduate degrees: 1, 0.6% of class
Unemployed: 2, 1.1% of class

TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT

Academia: 2, 1.2% of class
Business and Industry: 8, 4.7% of class
Government: 6, 3.5% of class
Judicial Clerkship: 40, 23.3% of class
Law Firms: 105, 61.0% of class
Public Interest: 11, 6.4% of class

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

Stanford Law students of the class of 2008 were primarily employed in California (43%), and the mid-Atlantic (NY, NJ, PA) and southeast (DC, DE, FL, GA, MD, NC, SC, VA, WV) (the latter two with 20% each).

Students employed in-state: 43.6%
Students employed in foreign countries: 1.7%
Number of states where students are employed: 22

The geographic areas represented the least were New England, the West (non-California), and Midwest U.S.

ALUMNI NETWORK

Stanford Law currently has over 9,200 alumni all over the world. Close to 400 of them live outside the United States (in 55 different countries). Stanford Law grads can be found in 49 states, the District of Columbia, and a number of U.S. protectorates.

BAR PASSAGE RATES

First-time takers: 160 (95.00% reporting)
Average school pass rate: 97.37%
Average state pass rate: 81.44%
Average pass rate difference: 15.93%

Stanford Law: The School

Students have nothing but great things to say about the academics at SLS. “Stanford is a great blend of the practical and the theoretical. A very intellectual place, but not so intellectual that it loses sight of the realities of the law,” says a recent graduate. “The faculty were caring, accessible, and ridiculously talented,” adds another alum.

Incoming class size: 180 (2009)

Typical first-year section size: 60

CURRICULUM

Stanford Law’s academic year is divided into quarters rather than semesters. First-year students have required courses they must take during the fall, winter, and spring quarters.

As with most other law schools, the first year is dedicated to teaching students the basics of the legal system, and introducing them to broad legal topics.

In the fall, first-year students take **Civil Procedure, Contracts, Criminal Law, Torts, and Legal Research and Writing** (the last of which is taken in small sections of approximately 30 students). Required courses in the winter are **Constitutional Law I, Property, Federal Litigation**, and **elective courses**. Students take **Federal Litigation** as the spring requirement, in addition to a few **elective courses**.

The second- and third-year curriculum is entirely elective; the school encourages students to create and tailor their classes based on their desired area or areas of interest and specialization.

FACULTY

Student-to-faculty ratio: 8 : 1

Stanford Law’s notable faculty includes:

Joseph A. Grundfest, capital markets, corporate governance, and securities litigation expert, and former commissioner of the Securities and Exchange Commission. **Kathleen M. Sullivan**, former Dean of the school and constitutional law expert.

Mark Lemley, intellectual property, computer and Internet law, patent law, and antitrust expert, and Director of various programs at the school.

ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES

CLINICS AND PROJECTS: SLS has eight clinics and three projects available to students. The **clinics** include the Supreme Court Litigation Clinic, Stanford Community Law Clinic, Organizations and Transactions Clinic, International Human Rights and Development Clinic, Immigrants’ Rights Clinic, Environmental Law Clinic, Cyberlaw Clinic, and Criminal Prosecution Clinic. The **projects** include the Youth and Education Law Project, Stanford Three Strikes Project, and Social Security Disability Pro Bono Project.

STUDY ABROAD: The school has established study abroad programs with schools in Germany, Mexico, Singapore, China, Italy, and Japan. Students can also create their own study abroad program with administration approval.

JOINT DEGREE: Stanford Law offers JD/MA, JD/MS, and JD/PhD joint degrees in 20 different academic concentrations, in addition to JD/MBA, JD/MPP, JD/MAPP options, all with Stanford University graduate schools and programs. The school also has established a JD/MPA joint degree with the Woodrow Wilson School of Public and International Affairs at Princeton University, and a JD/MA joint degree with the Paul H. Nitze School of Advanced International Studies at Johns Hopkins University.

JOURNALS AND PUBLICATIONS

The school currently publishes 10 student-edited academic journals: *Stanford Environmental Law Journal*; *Stanford Journal of Animal Law and Policy*; *Stanford Journal of Civil Rights and Civil Liberties*; *Stanford Journal of International Law*; *Stanford Journal of Law, Business & Finance*; *Stanford Journal of Law, Science & Policy*; *Stanford Law & Policy Review*; *Stanford Law Review*; *Stanford Law School Documentary Project*; and *Stanford Technology Law Review*. Stanford has both mock trial and moot court programs.

MOCK TRIAL AND MOOT COURT

Students can try out for the mock trial team in the fall. The **Kirkwood Memorial Competition** is the main moot court event at the school, although the moot court team also participates in the **Jessup International Law Moot Court** as well as other national and international competitions.

• NOTABLE ALUMNI •

Stanford Law lists many recognizable names among its list of alumni, including **Riley Bechtel**, CEO and Chairman of Bechtel Corp.; **Joshua Bolten**, White House Chief of Staff during the presidency of George W. Bush; **Warren Christopher**, the 63rd United States Secretary of State; **Robert Paul Cochran**, Emmy Award winner and executive producer of the TV show 24; **Anthony Romero**, Executive Director of American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU); **William Rehnquist**, Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the United States from 1986-2005; **Sandra Day O’Connor**, first female appointed to Supreme Court of the United States; **Ronald K. Noble**, Secretary General of INTERPOL; and **David C. Drummond**, Senior Vice President of Corporate Development and Chief Legal Officer of Google, Inc.

Students have great things to say about their SLS experience: “I hoped to attend a small school where I could get to know my classmates and my professors well. I also wanted to study in a collaborative environment. Stanford did not disappoint on either count,” says a ‘10 grad.

The school environment gets a big thumbs up. “The atmosphere was not hyper competitive like at [other top schools],” says an ‘06 grad. An ‘09 grad agrees that the students are “extremely friendly. SLS is such a small school that there’s not much competition for jobs, etc.”

But there are some gripes about the way the school helps its students find these jobs. “I wish the school did more for students who are not seeking traditional legal career paths,” says one student. Others bemoan the “lack of professor outreach to students who weren’t on the law professor/public interest track.” Another student feels that “SLS does not provide good support to students who want clerkships.” However, if you’re looking for a law firm job, you’ve come the right place: “The Career Services office and on-campus interviewing are top-notch. It was easy to get twenty interviews right away with the firms I was interested in,” boasts one grad.

The learning environment is a great one. “My classes were much more challenging than I expected,” says one student. Others had more to say about their classmates: “Everyone was there to learn, there was a lot of socializing, and everyone felt confident that they would be able to do what they hoped to do job-wise after graduation, without having to beat out someone else.” Stanford Law students and grads seems to enjoy being around each other and helping each other out. Says one ‘06 grad: “The contacts and connections I made were invaluable. SLSers love to help each other.”

ACTIVITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

The Law Association is the student government at Stanford Law. It acts as a liaison between the students and administration, helps with new student orientation, and also organizes a number of the school’s social events, including the Law School formal and semi-formal, and weekly bar reviews and happy hours, among many others.

- Acappellants
- Advanced Degree Student Association
- American Bar Association, Law Students Division
- American Constitution Society
- Animal Legal Defense Fund
- Asian and Pacific Islander Law Students Association (APILSA)
- Barker’s Guild
- Black Law Students Association (BLSA)
- China Law and Policy Association
- Civil Rights and Civil Liberties Society (CRCLS)
- Criminal Law Society
- Drama Society
- Energy Society of Stanford Law School
- Environmental Law Society (ELS)
- Federalist Society
- J. Reuben Clark Law Society
- JD/MBA Club
- Law Association
- League of Stanford Transfers (LOST)
- Marion Rice Kirkwood Moot Court Board
- National Lawyers Guild
- Native American Law Students Association (NALSA)
- Older Wiser Law Students (OWLS)
- OUTLAW
- Public Interest Coalition
- Real Estate and Land Use Association
- Shaking the Foundations
- SLS Academy
- SLS Christian Fellowship
- Stanford Association of Law Students for Disability Rights
- Stanford BioLaw & Health Policy Society
- Stanford Entertainment and Sports Law Association (SESALA)
- Stanford Intellectual Property Association (SIPA)
- Stanford International Human Rights Law Association (SIHRLA)
- Stanford International Law Society (SILS)
- Stanford Latino Law Students Association (SLLSA)
- Stanford Law and Technology Association (SLATA)
- Stanford Law and Wine Society
- Stanford Law School Golf Association
- Stanford Law School Mock Trial Program
- Stanford Law Students for Reproductive Justice
- Stanford Law Veterans Organization
- Stanford National Security & the Law Society
- Stanford Public Interest Law Foundation (SPILF)
- Street Law
- Students Advocating the Restoration of Sanity (SARS)
- The Voting Rights Project
- Women of Color Action Network
- Women of Stanford Law (WSL)
- Youth and Education Advocates at Stanford (YEAS)

• CLASS PROFILE •

For the Stanford Law class of 2011 (admitted in 2008) a total of 3,943 applications were received, of which 364 were accepted. 170 students eventually matriculated: 80 women, and 90 men.

Applications were received from all 50 U.S. states, as well as 65 foreign countries.

35% of the class was comprised of students of color.

30% of the class came to SLS directly

after college, 38% was 1-2 out of undergrad, and 32% came 3+ years after their college graduation.

The average age of the class was 25.

25% had advanced degrees.

The 25th percentile GPA for the class of 2011 was 3.76, while the 75th percentile was 3.94.

The 25th percentile LSAT for the class of 2011 was 168, while the 75th percentile was 172.

For the class of 2012, 4,082 applications were received, of which 373 were accepted. 180 students eventually matriculated.

33% were students of color.

The 25th percentile GPA for the class of 2012 was 3.77, while the 75th percentile was 3.97.

The 25th percentile LSAT for the class of 2012 was 167, while the 75th percentile was 172.

Stanford Law: The City

Setting: Suburban

The school's location in Stanford (Palo Alto), CA is "beautiful and laid-back," say students. "It's a suburb, but it has many of the resources of a college town." "It's very law student friendly. It's fun to be in the heart of Silicon Valley. The people have so much creativity and energy." And, if you want to get a dose of something a little more urban, "San Francisco isn't too far."

LIVING EXPENSES

Living in Northern California is not inexpensive. SLS only gives concrete values for room, board, and books, stating that expenses like clothes, transportation, and recreation are variable. It does, however, say that students should budget at least \$71,353 for the school year (and when we subtract tuition and fees, room, board, and books from that value, we are left with a "miscellaneous" amount of \$5,718.00).

Estimated academic year living expenses*

Room/board (single student, on-campus)	\$19,074.00
Required books (purchased new)	\$1,863.00
TOTAL	\$20,937.00

* Values provided by Stanford Law

HOUSING

Stanford provides on-campus housing for single students and married students with or without children (couples with kids may have to live off-campus, though, since family housing is limited). Housing is most plentiful for single students, and all single students who apply for housing by May are guaranteed an on-campus home, as long as they are willing to live in any graduate residence.

On-campus housing available? Y
Average apartment rental cost (1 BR/1 BA) \$1800/mo

DEMOGRAPHICS

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates the 2006 population of Palo Alto, CA to be 57,809 people, with 63.2% of the population between 18 and 65 years of age. 74.4% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher.

Population density in the Palo Alto area (as per the 2000 census) is 2,476 persons per square mile.

The 2000 census puts the ethnic makeup of the city as 75.8% white, 4.6% of Hispanic or Latino origin, 2.0% African American, 0.2% American Indian or Alaskan native, 17.2% Asian, 0.1% native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 3.2% from two or more races.

PARKING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

Because most first-year students live right on campus (or not too far away from it), you probably won't need a car to get to and from school. However, it is definitely useful to have a car if you live in California; it will make travel, entertainment, and errands much easier.

If you choose to take public transportation, you can use the campus shuttle Stanford University has in place, known as **Marguerite**. One of the lines, the B-Line, takes students from the train stations in Palo Alto and Menlo Park to the law school and back. The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority and San Mateo County Transit District provide public bus service to the city.

CalTrain provides train service to the area. Palo Alto is serviced by Palo Alto Airport of Santa Clara County, although San Francisco International Airport is also nearby.

AREA ATTRACTIONS & ENTERTAINMENT

Stanford University itself is a huge area attraction. As a student, you will have access to all of the cultural, social, athletic, and performing arts events going on at the campus.

If you're looking for things to do outside of the confines of the University, you can visit one of the area's various museums, or shop at the Stanford Shopping Center (an open-air center with over 140 retail stores and restaurants). Students say that just walking around Palo Alto's "cute downtown" can be fun, too.

Going on a day trip to San Francisco is always a popular pastime. About 45 minutes away by car, San Francisco is home to the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz prison, Chinatown, and many museums and tours of the myriad historic sites in the city. San Francisco also has excellent dining and nightlife venues.

CITY MUST-DOs

Stanford students are big on outdoor recreations. They suggest taking part in the Bay to Breakers (a 12-kilometer run/walk race through San Francisco), hiking "The Dish" (the name by which the foothills at Stanford University are known), visiting the Muir Woods National Monument, and visiting the beach (particularly in February).

Culinary exploits also featured in their suggestions, particularly having brunch in San Francisco, or doing a "taqueria crawl" in San Francisco's Mission District.

Day trips to Berkeley and Sausalito are also fun, as are longer weekend trips to Lake Tahoe for skiing and Las Vegas for shows and gambling.