

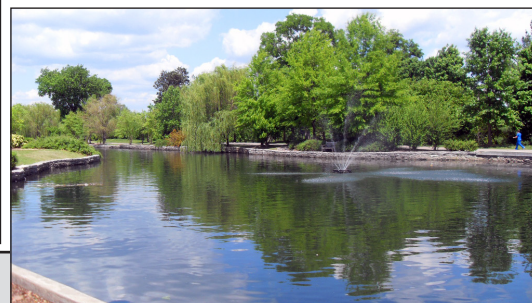
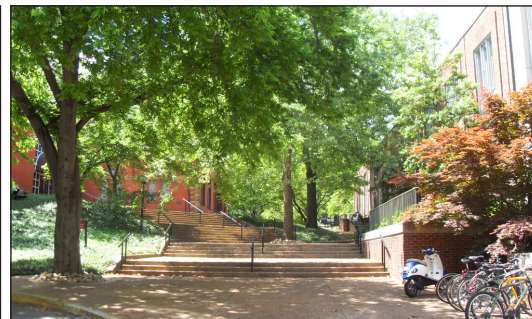
Vanderbilt University Law School

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THE BASICS

Vanderbilt University Law School (which is known by many names: VULS, Vanderbilt Law, and Vandy Law) began having classes in 1874, and is one of the oldest law schools in the Southeast. It was accredited by the ABA in 1925.

The school is located in the Tennessee capital of Nashville. As a private institution, it does not offer reduced tuition for in-state students; combined with cost of living expenses, all students can expect to pay approximately \$67,000 a year to attend.

VULS is a small school, with a total enrollment of around 600 students, and an incoming class size of approximately 200. Despite its small size, however, it has a fiercely loyal and active alumni base, and has produced a number of prominent grads, including Tennessee Supreme Court Justices and U.S. Senators.

While the excellent reputation of the school is indisputable within the Southeast, Vandy also enjoys a very strong national name; students can feel confident that the combination of the Vanderbilt rep and the strength of the alumni network will get them a foot in the door of most, if not all, large legal markets nationwide.

The school has a broad range of academic and extracurricular activities: 7 clinics (and a variety of practical externships), one study abroad program (and numerous international externships), 5 joint-degree options (and the option to create your own), 4 scholarly journals, and 52 student organizations.

Application deadline: 3/15

Application fee: \$50

Financial aid deadline: 2/15 (Priority deadline)

Type of school: Private

Tuition: \$45,636 (2010 - 2011)

Admissions: Rolling

Acceptance percentage: 24% (2009)

Incoming class size: 195 (2009)

Early Action/Early Decision available: No

Part-time program available: No

GPA AND STANDARDIZED TESTS

LSAT 25th - 75th percentile range: 164 - 169

GPA 25th - 75th percentile range: 3.50 - 3.86

TOEFL required for some international applicants.

APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS

Letters of recommendation: 2 required

Required essays: Personal statement (2-page limit)

Optional essays: Law Scholar's Application (6 essays)

Dean's Certification: None required

Additional documentation: JD Financial Aid Statement Form (required); Interview (optional, but encouraged)

Vanderbilt Law: The PowerScore Perspective

Regional powerhouse, national reach

There's no denying the strength of the Vanderbilt name. The school is widely recognized in the South and Southeast as one of the oldest and most prestigious institutions of higher learning in the region, and because of the school's successful, widely-dispersed alumni base (over 8,300 alumni in 49 U.S. states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and 27 foreign countries), VULS is well-known and respected across the country, too. Vandy Law certainly dominates the Nashville legal market, although grads can find employment at any of the large legal markets across the nation, as well. Vanderbilt's widespread reputation is further evidenced during the school's busy on-campus recruiting season, as many of the biggest firms in the nation visit the campus annually in search of fresh talent.

Interviews available

Vanderbilt is only one of two law schools with an optional formal interview program (Northwestern Law being the other). Interviews are conducted both by Vandy Law staffers and alumni, and are available at the school and interview sites around the country (a testament to the omnipresence of Vanderbilt alumni almost everywhere in the U.S.). For those outside the interview locations, the school offers interviews via phone or teleconference. The interviews are reportedly laid back, informal, and pleasant; once completed, the alumni or staffer who conducts it submits a report about their experience with the applicant that then goes into the applicant's file for review along with their application. While the interviews are not mandatory for admission, no serious applicant should pass up the opportunity to have one.

So happy together

That the school offers an interview program is no real surprise; when you have an incoming class the size of Vanderbilt Law's, you need to make sure those admitted will work well within the school environment. The school and each incoming class is small (around 600 and 200 students, respectively), and the environment of the school is pretty relaxed, friendly, and tight-knit. The school makes a concerted effort to keep things harmonious by evaluating each application holistically (although LSAT and GPA still reign supreme), and ensuring that every member of the incoming class will not only enhance the school academically, but will also make a positive social contribution to the school's atmosphere. And it's clear that the administration is doing a good job: Vandy Law

students thoroughly enjoy their classmates and their school—so much so that most live near the school and have lives that revolve around it, even after graduation.

No rankings!

Another reason Vandy students are so pleased with their law school experience is the lack of class rankings. VULS doesn't rank students, and doesn't make rankings available for employers or create them upon request. This means that, although you know what the recommended curve is, and you can guess where you may place amongst your classmates, you won't know exactly who is ahead of or behind you in performance. The school does give out a number of percentile-based awards (i.e., Dean's List to top 20% of the class, and Order of the Coif to the top 10%, among others), so you won't be flying completely blind as you go through law school.

Nice digs

The school has also made sure that students enjoy their surroundings as much as they enjoy their classmates and academic experience. VULS was renovated in 2002, and the law school building is nice, comfortable, and technologically modern.

So-so student-to-faculty ratio

Perhaps the only fly in the happy Vandy Law ointment is the student-to-faculty ratio. For a school this small, the ratio is quite high: 14.4:1. While this may seem like a huge detractor, it *can* mean that professors may be hard to get a hold of, office hours may be crowded, and research assistantships may be difficult to come by. Even the best, most well-meaning professors may find themselves bogged down

with student requests, and may take a while to get back to you.

Music City

One of the most unique aspects of attending Vanderbilt Law is its location. Nashville not only has many of the positive attributes of a charming Southern city—the welcoming people, the often-pleasant weather, the small-town feel with the availability of big-city amenities—but it also has plenty of other great facets, too: The inimitable music scene, the progressive mindset, the fantastic dining options, and oodles of fantastic bars, hangouts, and clubs.

While Vandy Law certainly dominates the Nashville legal market, grads can find employment at any of the large legal markets across the nation, as well. **The big players in New York, Chicago, Atlanta, California, Texas, and Boston appreciate the caliber of student the school puts out, and send recruiters to find Vanderbilt legal talent every year.**

Vanderbilt Law: The Numbers

ACCEPTANCE RATES

Full-time: 24% (1,181 of 4,850 admitted)

Part-time: N/A

GPA AND LSAT SCORES

GPA - 75th percentile: 3.86

GPA - Median: 3.71

GPA - 25th percentile: 3.50

LSAT - 75th percentile: 169

LSAT - Median: 168

LSAT - 25th percentile: 164

ENROLLMENT AND ETHNICITY

African-American: 16 (M); 38 (F); 9.1% of student body

American Indian: 2 (M); 1 (F); 0.5% of student body

Asian-American: 9 (M); 12 (F); 3.5% of student body

Caucasian: 196 (M); 154 (F); 58.9% of student body

Hispanic: 8 (M); 15 (F); 3.9% of student body

Mexican-American: None reported

Puerto Rican: None reported

International: 9 (M); 8 (F); 2.9% of student body

Non-Reported: 66 (M); 60 (F); 21.2% of student body

TRANSFERS (FIRST-YEAR) AND ATTRITION

Transfers in: 14

Transfers out: 4

1L attrition: 4 (0 Academic, 4 Other)

2L attrition: 1 (0 Academic, 1 Other)

3L attrition: None

FINANCIAL AID

Merit aid available? Yes

Grants and scholarships available? Yes

Students receiving grants: 407, 70.4% of student body

Median grant amount: \$15,000

LRAP program available? Yes

The school provides merit- and need-based scholarships to students, based on their academic and financial credentials. It also has Law Scholar Merit Awards available; these cover the student's full tuition, and provide a stipend. All students are automatically considered.

LIBRARY RESOURCES

Wireless network availability? Yes

Number of wired connections available: 250

Hours per week the library is open: 111

Study seating capacity inside the library: 278

Number of full-time professional librarians: 6

CAREER SERVICES

On-campus Career Services Office? Yes

Number of full-time career services staffers? 7

Career services specializations: Private law practice, government, public service, judicial clerkships, résumé preparation, mock interviews.

On-Campus Interview (OCI) program? Yes, in the fall (for all students), and spring (for first-year students).

EMPLOYMENT STATISTICS*

**All statistics are 9 months after graduation*

Employment status known: 220, 99.1% of class

Employment status unknown: 2, 0.9% of class

Employed: 210, 95.5% of class

Pursuing graduate degrees: 7, 3.2% of class

Unemployed: 2, 0.9% of class

TYPE OF EMPLOYMENT

Academia: 1, 0.5% of class

Business and Industry: 6, 2.9% of class

Government: 13, 6.2% of class

Judicial Clerkship: 31, 14.8% of class

Law Firms: 155, 73.8% of class

Public Interest: 4, 1.9% of class

GEOGRAPHIC LOCATION

The VULS class of 2010 was employed primarily in the Southeast (38%), followed by the Northeast (33%), West/Southwest (15%), and Midwest (12%). 2% of the class was employed internationally.

Students employed in-state: 18.1%

Students employed in foreign countries: 1.4%

Number of states where students are employed: 32

The Class of 2010 was employed in 37 states, the District of Columbia, and 2 foreign countries.

ALUMNI NETWORK

The school has an alumni network of over 8,300 grads. They live and work in 49 U.S. states, Washington, D.C., Puerto Rico, and 27 foreign countries. VULS alumni are very active at the school, and participate in recruitment by conducting applicant interviews.

BAR PASSAGE RATES

First-time takers: 213 (70.89% reporting)

Average school pass rate: 96.69%

Average state pass rate: 86.83%

Average pass rate difference: 9.86%

Vanderbilt Law: The School

Vanderbilt Law is known for its small class sizes, congenial atmosphere, and excellent academic reputation. It also has a demonstrated commitment to public interest, and helps students subsidize unpaid *pro bono* or public interest work through summer stipends (for current students), Public Service Initiatives (for graduates), and an LRAP program.

Incoming class size: 195 (2009)

Typical first-year section size: 97

CURRICULUM

First-year students at VULS must take **Civil Procedure, Constitutional Law I, Contracts, Criminal Law, Life of the Law, Property, Regulatory State, and Torts. Legal Writing I** must be taken during the fall semester, and **Legal Writing II** must be taken during the spring semester.

While most of the courses listed are standard first-year law school fare, two (**Life of the Law** and **Regulatory State**) aren't course names often seen on law school first-year curricula. **Life of the Law** is a pass/fail course taken in the fall. It "introduces students to the study of law," and is "designed to give students the knowledge and skills that will prepare them for their other first year courses." **Regulatory State** focuses on "statutes and agency decisions and the central role they play in modern government."

To graduate, students must have a combined GPA of 2.0, and complete a course in professional responsibility, a professional skills requirement, and a substantive research paper.

FACULTY

Student-to-faculty ratio: 14.4 : 1

Vanderbilt Law's prominent faculty includes:

James F. Blumenstein, a health law, law and medicine, and voting rights scholar.

Chris Guthrie, the Dean of the law school and expert in behavioral law and economics.

Nancy J. King, an expert in criminal procedure.

Jeffrey A. Schoenblum, an expert in international estate taxation.

Suzanna Sherry, a constitutional law scholar.

ACADEMIC OPPORTUNITIES

CLINICS: VULS has a variety of clinical opportunities available to its students. They include the Appellate Litigation Clinic, Civil Practice Clinic, Community and Economic Development Clinic, Criminal Practice Clinic, Domestic Violence Clinic, Intellectual Property and the Arts Clinic (which works with the U.S. Patent & Trademark Office), and International Law Practice Lab.

EXTERNSHIPS: In addition to its clinical program, VULS also has a wide range of externships students can participate in. In the past, students have been placed with the Tennessee Supreme Court, the Tennessee Attorney General, Legal Aid, the Internal Revenue Service, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives (ATF). Students can also undertake their own externship with administration approval.

STUDY ABROAD: The school has the Vanderbilt in Venice Program, which takes place over the summer and in which students take international law courses. VULS' International Legal Studies program also has a variety of fall, spring, and summer international externships in which students can participate.

JOINT DEGREE: JD students at VULS can pursue a JD/MBA, JD/MDiv, JD/MTS, JD/MD, and JD/MPP. LLM students can obtain a joint MA in Latin American Studies, or a Law & Business Certificate. In addition, students can also create their own joint-degree program in conjunction with any Vanderbilt department (with faculty approval).

JOURNALS AND PUBLICATIONS

The school has four scholarly journals: *Vanderbilt Law Review*, *Vanderbilt Journal of Transnational Law*, *Vanderbilt Journal of Entertainment and Technology Law*, and *Environmental Law & Policy Annual Review*.

MOCK TRIAL AND MOOT COURT

VULS has a **Moot Court Board** that administers the school's yearly Bass, **Berry & Sims Intramural Moot Court Competition**, open to second- and third-year students. The schools' **Mock Trial Board** puts on intramural competitions for first- and second-year students, and assembles teams that participate in regional competitions.

• NOTABLE ALUMNI •

Vanderbilt Law's list of notable alumni includes **Bill Purcell** '79, former Mayor of Nashville and **Karl Dean** '81, who succeeded Purcell in that post; **Fred Thompson** '67, former Republican Senator for the state of Tennessee, and actor on the television series *Law & Order*; **Cornelia A. Clark** '79, Chief Justice and **William C. Koch Jr.** '72, Justice on the Tennessee Supreme Court; **Paul S. Atkins** '83, Commissioner of the U.S. Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC); **Greg Abbott** '84, Texas Attorney General; **William F. Hagerty, IV** '84, Commissioner of the Tennessee Department of Economic and Community Development; and **Pauline LaFon Gore** '36, mother of former U.S. Vice President Albert "Al" Gore, Jr. (who attended VULS, but did not graduate).

Vanderbilt Law administrators often talk about the congeniality of the VULS student body, and say the goodwill students have for each other is palpable as soon as you step onto the school grounds. VULS students happily endorse the administration's sentiment: "Students here are actually extremely friendly," says one alum. "There is no backstabbing or really overt cut-throat behavior here," adds another. "Everyone is super nice," agrees a third.

However, don't think that competition doesn't exist. "Even though the class is unranked, everyone still cares about grades and how they're doing," says a recent grad. "The school does give out awards if you're in a certain percentile of the class, like Dean's List, so you do have some idea of where you stand."

VULS' size also plays a role in how much students know about each other, both inside the classroom and out. "The school is pretty small," says a grad, "as each class is only about 200 people. Everyone pretty much knows what everyone else is doing." "It can get pretty gossipy," says another. "You kind of end up knowing everyone else's business by default." Being a small, tightly-knit group does have its advantages, though: "We are all pretty close. Most everyone lives fairly near to the school, so there's always something going on."

And when there's not something going on at the school, there's certainly plenty to do nearby. "Nashville is great! It's fairly cheap to live here, the city is small but still big enough to do just about anything you'd want, and it has plenty of Southern charm."

After Nashville, "probably the best part of Vandy are the job prospects. The law school really is national, and employers from all over the country come to OCI. And the school's rep in the South and Southeast can't be beat." "You get a great education with a great reputation in a great town—it's a win-win for everyone."

ACTIVITIES AND ORGANIZATIONS

The student government at VULS is the Vanderbilt Bar Association (VBA). In addition to acting as the voice of the student body in discussions with the administration and faculty, it also puts together school-wide social events throughout the year, such as the fall's Halloween Party, the winter's Barrister's Ball, football tailgates, and weekly Bar Reviews.

- American Constitution Society
- Animal Law Society
- Asian-Pacific American Law Student Association (APALSA)
- Black Law Students Association (BLSA)
- Christian Legal Society
- Colloquy
- Criminal Law Society
- Disability Law Society
- Entertainment & Sports Law Society
- Environmental Law and Policy Annual Review
- Environmental Law Society
- Federalist Society
- Headnotes
- Health Law Society
- Honor Council
- International Arbitration Association
- International Law Society
- J. Reuben Clark Law Society
- JD-MBA Society
- Jewish Law Students Association (JLSA)
- La Alianza at Vanderbilt Law School (Formerly the Latin American Law Students Association, or LALSA)
- Labor and Employment Law Society
- Law & Business Society
- Law Partners
- Law Students for Social Justice
- Law Students for Veterans Affairs
- Legal Aid Society and Public Interest Stipend Fund
- Street Law
- The List Project at Vanderbilt
- Moot Court Board
- National Security and Law Society
- Native American Law Students Association
- OUTLaw
- Phi Delta Phi
- Running Club
- St. Thomas More Society
- South Asian Law Students Association
- Vanderbilt Alternative Dispute Resolution Organization (VADRO)
- Vanderbilt Art and Cultural Property Law Association (VACPLA)
- Vanderbilt Bar Association (VBA)
- Vanderbilt Intellectual Property Association (VIPA)
- Vanderbilt Law Brewing Guild
- Vanderbilt Law Futbol Club
- Vanderbilt Law Republicans
- Vanderbilt Law School Ambassadors
- Vanderbilt Law School Democrats
- Vanderbilt Law Transfer Students Association
- Vanderbilt Mock Trial Board
- Vanderbilt Student Health & Wellness Association (VSHWA)
- Vanderbilt Second Amendment Club (V2AC)
- Vanderbilt Trial Advocacy Society
- Women Law Students Association (WLSA)

• CLASS PROFILE •

In 2010, Vanderbilt University Law School received 4,885 applications requesting admission into the VULS Class of 2013. As per the school, this was "the largest number of applications in [Vanderbilt Law] history."

Of those admitted, 193 eventually matriculated.

The median GPA for the Class of 2013 was 3.72. The 25th and 75th GPA percentiles were 3.50 and 3.82, respectively.

The median LSAT score was 169. The 25th and 75th LSAT percentile scores were 165 and 170.

The class was 53% male, and 47% female.

26% of the class identified themselves as a minority.

55% of the incoming Class of 2013 graduated from college at least one year before starting law school.

The members of the Class of 2013 represented 97 different undergraduate institutions.

9% of the class held advanced degrees.

The median age for this class was 23.

22% were 25 years of age or older.

The class hailed from 33 states, Washington D.C., Canada, China, and Gambia.

Vanderbilt Law: The City

Setting: Urban

Students talk about Nashville's outstanding music scene ("they don't call it Music City for nothing"), Southern hospitality, and "tons of dives, bars, and restaurants." "It's a really great place to spend three years," says a grad. The city is big enough to provide students with plentiful entertainment, while still being small enough to feel cozy and inviting.

LIVING EXPENSES

The cost of living in Nashville is above average for schools on this list, but reasonable for a city of its size. Housing in particular, say students, is easy to find and very affordable (especially if you get a roommate), and entertainment is relatively inexpensive.

Estimated academic year living expenses*

Housing	\$9,170.00
Meals	\$3,730.00
Books and supplies	\$1,788.00
Personal/miscellaneous	\$5,226.00
Transportation	\$1,810.00
TOTAL	\$21,724.00

**Values provided by Vanderbilt Law*

HOUSING

The school does not have graduate student housing available. However, there are a multitude of apartment buildings within a 5- to 10-minute walk from the school (students recommend Barbizon, 20 & Grand, The Grove at Richland, and Westboro Apartments, among others), as well as houses available in residential neighborhoods a 20- or 30-minute commute from the school.

On-campus housing available? N
Average apartment rental cost (1 BR/1 BA) \$715/mo

DEMOGRAPHICS

The U.S. Census Bureau estimates the 2006 population of Nashville to be 552,120 people, with 66.9% of the population between 18 and 65 years of age. 29.7% of the population has a bachelor's degree or higher.

Population density in the Nashville area (as per the 2000 census) is 1,153 persons per square mile.

The 2000 census puts the ethnic makeup of the city as 65.9% white, 4.7% of Hispanic or Latino origin, 26.8% African American, 0.3% American Indian or Alaskan native, 2.4% Asian, 0.1% native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander, and 2.0% from two or more races.

PARKING AND PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION

While finding parking within the city of Nashville may not pose much of a problem, finding parking near or around the law school certainly will. "You have to get there early to even have a chance at a spot," says a grad. Parking, both street and garage, is also only available to those with Vanderbilt parking passes, which can be pricey. Nashville, however, is a city of commuters, and a car will definitely come in handy; in particular, say students, "having a car gives you flexibility when choosing housing," since you can often find cheaper and nicer apartments, condos, and houses if "you're willing to put up with the commute."

For students without transportation, the Nashville Metro Transit Authority offers free bus service for those with Vanderbilt IDs, and the Music City Star commuter rail service offers 60% discounts on passes to Vanderbilt students and employees.

Travelling to and from Nashville via air is easy: The area is served by the Nashville International Airport.

AREA ATTRACTIONS & ENTERTAINMENT

The biggest attraction in Nashville is undoubtedly its music scene. Those who love country music, and those who love the idea of rubbing elbows with country music stars, flock to the city to see everything from big-time shows (such as Carrie Underwood, Brad Paisley, and the Charlie Daniels Band) at the Grand Ole Opry to small shows happening at one of the myriad honky-tonks and open mic nights around the city.

There's definitely much more to Nashville than just the music scene, though. Professional sports are big, too (the NFL's Tennessee Titans call Nashville home, as do the NHL's Predators), and the Vandy Commodores (part of the Southeastern Conference) are also a main attraction.

The city also offers a plethora of dining and cultural options; students say "every type of cuisine" can be found in the city, and museums of every kind are available for those seeking to view art or relive history.

CITY MUST-DOs

"You can't live in Nashville and not go to at least one music show," says a grad. "It would be sacrilege." Aside from the music, though, students have a wide range of must-dos, ranging from "going to see the Titans (if you're into sports)," to "spending a spring afternoon at Centennial Park, and visiting the Parthenon."

Going to the weekly Bar Reviews is also a must: "a great way to see the different hangouts in Nashville and also get to know your classmates."