



**LL.M. (Master of U.S. Laws)
STUDENT HANDBOOK**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
INTRODUCTION	1
DISCLAIMER	1
<i>FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)</i>	2
SECTION I — General Information on the Law School and Related Services	3
SECTION II — Notice of Non-Discrimination	6
SECTION III — Academic Rules and Regulations	7
A. Degree Requirements	7
B. Course Load	7
C. Class Attendance	8
D. Live and Archived Lectures	8
E. Grading	8
F. Incompletes and Makeup Examinations	9
G. Finality of Grades	10
H. Examinations	11
I. Academic Probation and Dismissal	12
J. Withdrawal from a Course	12
K. Leave of Absence and Withdrawal from the Program	12
L. Waiver of Academic Rules	14
M. Honors	14

INTRODUCTION

Please read this Handbook and its attachments carefully. It contains the rules and regulations of the Florida Coastal School of Law (hereinafter “Florida Coastal,” “Coastal Law” or “School of Law”), for which every faculty member and student is responsible. These rules cover only the subjects enumerated and do not govern or limit the existing and customary authority of the Faculty or the Deans in other respects. These rules shall be construed in harmony with the rules and standards of the American Bar Association, the Association of American Law Schools and the Florida Department of Education. All law students are subject to the general regulations of Florida Coastal on matters not specifically covered in this Handbook. For information about matters not covered in this Handbook, including the Florida Coastal School of Law’s Sexual Harassment Policy and the Complaint Procedures in Cases of Alleged Disability and Age Discrimination, students should visit the Florida Coastal website at <http://www.fcsl.edu/academics/student-handbook> and review the attached exhibits.

The Honor Code and the Student Code of Conduct are attached to the Student Handbook as exhibits. Because of Florida Coastal’s commitment to values and to ethical professional conduct, every student is bound by the Honor Code and Conduct of Code. In order for these Codes to be effective, every student must take the time to read them and to understand them thoroughly.

DISCLAIMER

The rules, regulations, policies and procedures governing Florida Coastal School of Law are subject to amendment; any such amendments take effect immediately. Amendments may affect program requirements, degree status, tuition fees and financial aid, and any other aspect of enrollment at Florida Coastal School of Law. Florida Coastal School of Law notifies students of amendments to the Handbook, rules, regulations, policies and procedures by way of notices appearing on the class schedules published prior to each semester, through correspondence sent to student portals, or through email.

This document is not a contract. It is not to be construed as a contract between students and Florida Coastal School of Law. **Each student is personally responsible for her/his academic progress.** Students are urged to carefully read this document and all Florida Coastal School of Law publications and correspondence, and to consult regularly with appropriate School of Law personnel for additional information.

THE FAMILY EDUCATIONAL RIGHTS AND PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

Florida Coastal complies with the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act of 1974 (FERPA). FERPA was designed to protect the confidentiality of student records, guarantee student access to certain records, regulate disclosure of information from student files, provide opportunities for students to correct or amend records and add explanatory statements, and provide opportunities for students to file complaints with the U.S. Department of Education alleging infractions of the law.

Students who would like to obtain more specific information about FERPA should contact the Program Director

SECTION I

GENERAL INFORMATION ON THE LAW SCHOOL AND RELATED SERVICES

Program Director

The Program Director, Aron Mujumdar, will be responsible for the day-to-day administration of the program and will report directly to the Dean and Vice Dean. He will be the primary contact for students and will be available to them on a daily basis. He will also moderate every live class session. He can be reached by phone at 001-205-534-1662 or at amujumdar@fcsl.edu. Mr. Mujumdar can route student emails to faculty and facilitate student-faculty contact. He will also facilitate student contact with other Florida Coastal administrators as necessary.

Bar Admission Information

The Bar Prep Coordinator provides assistance in obtaining information concerning the requirements of the bar and in obtaining the proper forms. The Dean of Florida Coastal completes bar certificates and character recommendation forms.

Students should be advised that each state has “character and fitness requirements” in terms of sitting for and admission to the bar. Each student, both before and after enrollment in the LL.M. Program, should review the state bar requirements for any state in which he/she may be considering the practice of law.

Please note that criminal charges and/or convictions, juvenile offenses, credit problems, academic charges and sanctions, and student conduct issues may affect your ability to sit for the bar and/or be admitted to practice. The investigation by the state bars of such issues is often lengthy; therefore, it is highly recommended that students begin their application to the bar early in his/her law school education. Students should contact the Board of Bar Examiners in any state in which he/she may be interested in practicing for further information.

The Live, Online Classroom and Technical Support

All of the courses in Florida Coastal’s LL.M. Master of U.S. Laws degree will be offered on-line. In order to participate in the program, students will be required to have a computer and access to a high-speed, broadband Internet connection. Students will also need to purchase a headset. Florida Coastal reserves the right to require students to purchase a webcam. Students will receive user names and passwords that will enable them to access the on-line classroom as well as LexisNexis and Westlaw, two legal research databases.

Florida Coastal will provide live technical support during all live classroom sessions. Students are encouraged to contact Florida Coastal's Program Director at any time with any technical problems at amujumdar@fcsf.edu.

All lectures will be archived immediately after they are offered in the live sessions. Students will have the option of viewing either live lectures or the archived versions. For purposes of its grading and attendance requirements, Florida Coastal does not make any distinction between students who view live lectures and those who view archived lectures.

Duty to Update Admission Application

On the application for admission to Florida Coastal, students were required to disclose any history of criminal offenses or academic, work-related, or military disciplinary actions, whether those matters appear on the student's record or not. Each student has a continuing duty to update this information beginning from the time the law school application was submitted until the time the student sits for the bar exam. This information specifically includes, but is not limited to, any arrests or convictions occurring during the time a student is enrolled at Florida Coastal. Students needing to change or update information on their admissions applications should notify the Program Director in writing or in person within fourteen (14) days of the occurrence of any addition or change.

Failure to disclose information in accordance with this provision may subject the student to discipline up to and including Honor Code proceedings, Student Code of Conduct proceedings, revocation of admission, suspension or dismissal from school, withdrawal of certification of graduation to bar authorities, or revocation of his/her degree.

Few acts will be serious enough to keep a student from being admitted to practice law in any jurisdiction, but a lack of candor in reporting instances which may reflect on a student's character and fitness to practice law may substantially delay or even prohibit acceptance into a state bar.

Tuition and Billing

The tuition for the LL.M. Masters of U.S. Law Program is \$500 per credit hour. The Finance Office is responsible for billing and receiving payments such as tuition, fees and other financial obligations to Florida Coastal. Applicants should contact Aron Mujumdar at amujumdar@fcsf.edu for more information.

Student Identification

Upon enrollment in the program, students will need to provide their name, home address, work address (if applicable), phone number (two numbers if applicable), email address, a passport photo, and photocopies of two identifying documents (i.e. passport profile page, driver's license, birth certificate). Florida Coastal reserves the right to ask students to present these documents,

either in person, via webcam, or through electronic submission, prior to examinations in order to verify the student's identity.

Library and Technology Center

The Florida Coastal Library and Technology Center (LTC) provides a number of services to support the law school's educational and research mission. The collection includes materials in print and electronic formats, covering U.S., international, and comparative law. The LTC's services include reference assistance, research guides, interlibrary loan, and research workshops. Additional information, and access to the library's collection, begins at the webpage: <http://www.fcsl.edu/ltc/>

Notices to Students

It is important for students to check their personal e-mail accounts, messages sent to their student portals, and alerts posted on student notice boards on a regular basis as this is the most effective way for the faculty and staff of Florida Coastal to communicate events, changes to academic schedules, and other important information to the students. E-mails to students from faculty, staff, and administrators are considered formal notification.

Registrar's Office

The Registrar's Office provides official verifications of enrollment; prepares official transcripts; provides graduation audits; assists students with questions regarding registration; and is also responsible for maintaining student records. Students must input any change to their address or telephone number in their Student Portal immediately. In the event a student is unable to make this change in the Student Portal, the student must contact the Registrar's Office for assistance.

Student Grading Numbers

Students are provided with a new Student Grading Number (SGN) upon their enrollment in the LL.M. program. SGNs are available on each student's web portal. SGNs are not disclosed to Faculty or other students. Students should retain their SGN in a secure place and not disclose the SGN to any other person. A student may request that his/her SGN number be reassigned only if he/she believes it has been revealed to a faculty member or another student. This will be done on an exception basis only. Questions about SGNs should be directed to the Registrar's Office.

Student Affairs

The Program Director, in conjunction with the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs, will provide support and advice to individual students as well as student organizations and act as the liaison between student groups, faculty, the administration, and the alumni board, when appropriate. Students with disabilities and students needing assistance are a high priority in this office.

Please visit our website at <http://www.fcsl.edu/academics/student-handbook> for more information.

Student Organizations

Students are encouraged to form and participate in their own organizations. As the Florida Coastal LL.M. will be offered in a non-residential setting, Florida Coastal will set up a Facebook page for the program to encourage social networking between students and professors. Students will also be able to participate in chat sessions with professors and with one another and interact through message boards on the course homepages. Students may also set up their own social networking sites provided that such sites do not make use of the Florida Coastal School of Law logo and contain a statement on their home page that the sites are not owned or operated by Florida Coastal or its employees.

SECTION II

NOTICE OF NON-DISCRIMINATION

The Florida Coastal School of Law does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, ethnicity, religion, gender, disability, age, or sexual orientation in its programs and activities. For grievances related to disability and age discrimination, please see the Complaint Procedures in Cases of Alleged Disability and Age Discrimination under Attachment #6. The following person has been designated to handle inquiries regarding the non-discrimination policies:

Donald Jones, Assistant Dean for Multicultural Affairs
8787 Baypine Road
Jacksonville, Florida
904-680-7747
dwjones@fcsl.edu

SECTION III

ACADEMIC RULES AND REGULATIONS

A. Degree Requirements

- a. **General Requirements.** A candidate for graduation must have: (i) attained a cumulative grade point average of at least 2.50 in the required twenty-six (26) credit hours of course work; (ii) successfully completed all course requirements; (vii) conducted himself or herself as a fit candidate for admission to the bar; and (viii) satisfied all outstanding account balances owed to the school.
- b. **Credit Hour Requirement.** Credit hours are awarded for courses in which the candidate for the degree has earned a grade of “D” or better, or in the case of a course that is graded pass/fail, a “P.” Students may obtain a grade of “P” in courses totaling no more than four (4) credit hours. A student who receives a grade of “F” in a required course shall not be deemed to have completed the course. He or she must repeat that course and obtain a passing grade in order to obtain credit.
- c. **Limitations of Time.** The maximum period for a full-time law student to complete requirements for a LL.M. degree is three (3) years.

B. Course Load

- a. Credits Required for Graduation. Students must successfully complete twenty-six (26) credit hours to obtain the LL.M. Master of U.S. Laws degree.
- b. Required Courses. All twenty-six (26) credit hours will be required courses. Students will be required to take and pass the following courses:
 - i. Introduction to Law (1 credit)
 - ii. Constitutional Law (2 credits)
 - iii. Criminal Law (2 credits)
 - iv. Criminal Procedure (2 credits)
 - v. Contracts & Sales (3 credits)
 - vi. Real Property (2 credits)
 - vii. Torts (2 credits)
 - viii. Evidence (2 credits)
 - ix. Business Organizations (2 credits)
 - x. Civil Procedure (2 credits)
 - xi. Legal Ethics (2 credits)
 - xii. Wills, Trusts, and Succession (2 credits)
 - xiii. Family Law (2 credits)
- c. Sequence of Courses. Courses will be offered in a live, interactive online classroom. Students will take one course at a time in a sequence determined by Florida Coastal. After the last class in each course, students will take a final examination covering all of the material for that course. Students who view archived lectures rather than participate in the live, interactive classes will be expected to follow the same examination schedule.

C. Class Attendance

Regular attendance and preparation are required in all courses. Students must attend eighty percent (80%) of the classes for a given course to receive credit for that course. Florida Coastal will monitor and verify the attendance of each student electronically. Students who do not participate in live lecture sessions will be expected to view archived lectures. In the event that a student has not attended 80% of the classes for a given course, the student will not be permitted to sit for the final examination in that course. Consult the section below for information about makeup examinations.

D. Live and Archived Lectures

- a. Students are encouraged to participate in the live, interactive online classes. However, Florida Coastal realizes that, for any number of reasons, students may want to attend class by viewing archived podcasts of the lectures. Archived lectures will be made available to students as soon as the live lecture is finished.
- b. Students who view archived lectures will be able to interact with the professor via email and message board postings during the period of time in which the course is being offered through live lectures. Students who view archived lectures during periods when the course is not being offered live will direct all inquiries to the Program Director.

E. Grading

a. Grades

Grades in each course reflect academic performance as evaluated by the faculty member. Faculty members will provide students with a written syllabus of course work and an explanation of the testing and grading requirements for the course.

b. Anonymous Grading

1. Written examinations are graded without the grader knowing the identity of the test taker. Student Grading Numbers (SGNs) are confidential. Each student is assigned a unique SGN for use on examinations and other written projects. The Registrar posts final grades by SGNs. Faculty members or other individuals engaged in grading student work do not have access to SGNs. Faculty should not question students about their SGNs. Students who fail to use an SGN or who otherwise reveal their identity may be subject to sanctions by the administration or the professor including, but not limited to, substantial grade reductions. Students with questions concerning SGNs should consult the Registrar.
2. Faculty may incorporate into final grades non-anonymous factors such as written assignments and multiple choice quizzes. If so, each factor and its percentage of the final grade must be identified in the course syllabus. To preserve anonymity, faculty

must submit a list of student names and non-anonymous points earned to the Program Director prior to the first day of the examination period.

c. Distribution Policy

To avoid inequities that result when different professors employ different criteria, and to defuse pressures which may result in grade inflation, the faculty has adopted a grade distribution policy. This policy aims to avert individual grading standards and establish a faculty-wide grading criterion.

It is the faculty member's prerogative and responsibility to assign grades. Each instructor must assign to each student a final numerical grade and the total points possible for the course. This raw grade will reflect the relative rank of each student's performance in the course.

The mean for these courses must be 3.00 with an acceptable deviation of no more than 0.10. To the extent his or her grade mean deviates from the curve, he or she will provide an academic dean with a written notation and rationale for the departure. An academic dean will forward the grades to the Registrar for appropriate data entry purposes.

d. The following grading and point value system applies:

<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Point Value</u>	<u>Letter Grade</u>	<u>Point Value</u>
A	4.0	C-	1.67
A-	3.67	D+	1.33
B+	3.33	D	1.00
B	3.00	F	0.00
B-	2.67	P	Pass
C+	2.33	W	Withdrawal
C	2.00	W/F	0.00
		I	Incomplete

F. Incompletes and Makeup Examinations

- a. A student shall receive an Incomplete ("I") if either (i) he/she fails to attend at least eighty percent (80%) of classes and is therefore ineligible to sit for the final examination or (ii) he/she fails to take the final examination at the scheduled time for any reason.
- b. After administering the final examination for a given course, Florida Coastal will identify each student who did not take the examination. Florida Coastal will then schedule a date and time for the administration of a makeup examination upon consultation with students. This makeup examination must be administered prior to the completion of the subsequent course in the academic calendar, typically four

- (4) weeks but in no event later than six (6) weeks. Students who did not take the examination because they failed to attend 80% of classes will be given the opportunity to meet the attendance requirement prior to the administration of the makeup examination for that course.
- c. Florida Coastal will make every attempt to schedule a time that is convenient for students who provided advance written notice via email that they would miss the regularly scheduled exam; students who do not provide such notice will not be accorded the same deference.
 - d. Students who receive an Incomplete "I" and who take the makeup examination will receive a grade of either Pass "P" or Fail "F."
 - e. A student may not receive more than two grades of "P" over the course of the LL.M. program. If a student who has already received two "P's" misses a regularly scheduled examination and receives an "I" for the course, that student will be required to re-take the course to expunge the grade of "I" and will be required to make an additional payment of \$500 per credit hour (e.g. if a student needs to make up a two credit hour course, then the student will pay a total of \$1000).

G. Finality of Grades.

- a. Grades are deemed final when posted by the Registrar.
- b. Grade Appeals. Grades may be appealed for only one of the two reasons listed below. All grade appeals must be made within six (6) weeks after the grade has been posted by the Registrar.
 - i. A faculty member may change a grade only if there has been an arithmetical or clerical error in calculating the grade. If a student believes that an arithmetical or clerical error occurred, she or he must resolve the matter with the faculty member. If the faculty member determines that there is an arithmetical or clerical error, the faculty member must complete a grade change form and submit it to an academic dean. The decision of the faculty member is final, subject to the approval of an academic dean.
 - ii. If a student believes a grade was motivated by animus or given arbitrarily, s/he may submit a written petition to the Academic Standards Committee setting forth all information which the student deems relevant. The Academic Standards Committee will provide a copy of the petition to the faculty member. Where appropriate, at the request of the Academic Standards Committee, an academic dean may convene a meeting between the student and the faculty member to resolve the dispute. The decision of the Academic Standards Committee shall be final.

H. Examinations

1. Procedures.

- a. The Program Director establishes final examination schedules and procedures for administering examinations. Students are responsible for adhering to examination schedules and procedures. Students will receive advance notice of all policies and procedures to be followed on the day of the examination, including but not limited to procedures for verifying the student's identity to ensure the integrity of the examination. Failure to comply exam-taking policies and procedures may subject a student to disciplinary action, including dismissal from the program.
 - b. Students will need to purchase any and all software and hardware that is necessary to take the examination. Students may need to purchase webcams so that Florida Coastal can verify their identity prior to and during examinations. In the event that Florida Coastal requires webcams, it will provide reasonable advance notice to students.
 - c. Florida Coastal School of Law, its partners, employees, officers, directors or affiliates are not liable for any damages to computers arising from the use of exam software including any loss of exam answers or any affect it may have on any students' grade for this course.
 - d. Students have a duty to ensure that computers are in proper working condition before the exams, including up-to-date Microsoft Windows updates and anti-virus software, and that all installation instructions are followed.
 - e. In the event that the exam software malfunctions during the examination, students will be allotted additional time to finish the examination in proportion to the length of the software malfunction. In the event that the student's hardware malfunctions during the examination such that the student is prevented from taking the examination, the student will be required to take a makeup examination and will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis. Florida Coastal is not responsible for hardware malfunctions during examinations.
2. **Schedule.** . FCSL will administer a floating exam over the final weekend (i.e. Friday, Saturday, and Sunday) of the course after the completion of all lectures for a given course and prior to the beginning of the subsequent course. At any point during this seventy-two (72) hour period, students will be able to log in to Examsoft to take the examination. Once the student has logged in, the student must complete the examination in the allotted amount of time. Students who do not take the examination during this seventy-two (72) hour period will receive an Incomplete and will be required to follow the Makeup Exam procedures detailed above. FCSL reserves the right to change from a floating examination period to a fixed examination period for administrative reasons or to preserve academic integrity.

I. Academic Dismissal

The following rules regarding academic probation and dismissal apply to all students without regard to full time or part time status.

1. To receive the LL.M. degree, the student must complete the twenty-six (26) credit hours of coursework and receive a minimum of a 2.50 GPA.
2. Students who do not have a cumulative GPA of 2.50 after the completion of fourteen (14) credit hours may be academically dismissed from the program.
3. Students may repeat the first course in which they receive a grade of “F.” If a student receives an “F” in a course and repeats the course, both the “F” and the subsequent grade will be factored into the student’s cumulative GPA.
4. Students who receive a grade of “F” in two separate courses will be dismissed from the degree program. If a student repeats a course in which he or she received an “F” and receives a passing grade, the “F” will still count toward this provision.

J. Withdrawal from a Course

Students may withdraw from the LL.M. program at any time. Students must provide written notice of such withdrawal to the Program Director via email. Credit hours that have already been earned will be subject to the provisions contained in the section below entitled “Leave of Absence and Withdrawal.” If the student withdraws during the middle of any given course, the student will have to start the course from the beginning upon his/her return unless he/she returns within time to finish coursework and take the makeup examination. Students who take the makeup examination subject to this provision will be graded on a Pass/Fail basis.

K. Leave of Absence and Withdrawal from the Program

Florida Coastal understands that some students may need to leave school for an extended period of time. The policies and procedures below describe the circumstances under which a student may leave and return to Coastal Law.

1. **Leave of Absence.** A student may take a leave of absence from Florida Coastal for any reason. Students who take a leave of absence should notify the Program Director no later than one week in advance of the beginning of the next course.
2. **Withdrawal.** Withdrawal, under this section, is defined as dropping the entire academic program, not a portion thereof. A student who chooses to withdraw from the program must provide advance written notice to the Program Director. A student

who is not attending classes or taking examinations will be presumed to have taken a leave of absence from the program unless they inform the Program Director that they have withdrawn.

3. **Return to Coastal Law.** A student who has taken a Leave of Absence or has withdrawn from the program must provide at least seven (7) days advance written notice of their intent to re-enter the program to the Program Director.
4. **Honor Code or Conduct Code.** If a student takes a leave of absence or withdraws when an honor code or student conduct code investigation or proceeding is pending, the Assistant Dean for Student Affairs may place a memo in the student's academic file outlining the charges and the status of the proceeding. An honor court or student code of conduct proceeding may continue even after the student has taken a leave of absence or withdraws.
5. **Three Year Requirement.**
 - a. To receive an LL.M. degree, students must complete the program within three years of their enrollment.
 - b. Students must assume primary responsibility for ensuring that they will meet all requirements for graduation within three years of their initial enrollment. While the Program Director will advise students concerning how their leave of absence may affect their ability to complete the program, Florida Coastal may not be held responsible in the event that a student's failure to complete all requirements for graduation within this time frame prevents him or her from graduating.
 - c. All students enrolling in the LL.M. Master of U.S. Laws Program on or before April 5, 2010 will have up to three years in which to complete the degree requirements. Students enrolling after that date will have three years in which to complete their degree provided that the LL.M. program is not discontinued. In the unlikely event that the LL.M. program is discontinued for whatever reason, students enrolling after April 5, 2010 must complete all degree requirements on or before April 5, 2013. In such a scenario, Florida Coastal will ensure that students are provided with a reasonable opportunity to complete all degree requirements on or before April 5, 2013.

L. Waiver of Academic Rules

- a. **General.** Requests for waiver of any Florida Coastal rule, regulation, or policy must be submitted in writing to an academic dean who shall forward such requests to the faculty committee having jurisdiction over the matter. An academic dean may also forward a recommendation to the faculty. If none of the standing faculty committees has jurisdiction over the issue(s) raised, then an academic dean, in her/his discretion, may grant or deny the waiver. A waiver of an academic rule will only be granted under exceptional circumstances. The student will be notified of the decision in writing. The decision of the academic dean or faculty committee is final.

- b. **Graduation Requirements.** Requests for waivers of academic rules, regulations and/or policies relating to graduation requirements must be submitted in writing to an Academic Dean who shall forward such requests to the Academic Standards Committee.

M. Honors. A candidate for the LL.M. degree may be recommended for honors if the student's cumulative grade point average for all course work at Florida Coastal meets the following standards:

<i>Cum Laude</i>	3.250
<i>Magna cum Laude</i>	3.500
<i>Summa cum Laude</i>	3.750