

# DOCTOR OF JURIDICAL SCIENCE

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The Doctor of Juridical Science (SJD) program is a small and selective program for students who wish to make an original, significant contribution to legal scholarship.

## Eligibility

An applicant for the SJD program must hold an LL.M. degree or its equivalent either from Tulane University or other accredited American universities or foreign universities that the Law School Graduate Affairs Committee (the faculty admissions committee) has ascertained have good standing among the higher education community in the home country.

## Admission

Admission to the SJD candidacy requires the endorsement of the Law School Graduate Affairs Committee. The Committee will examine, along with the student's performance at the LL.M. or the equivalent qualifying degree level, the strength of the candidate's proposal to determine whether the individual has the capacity for advanced legal research and for outstanding scholarship. Strong interest in and support of the proposal and the candidacy of the applicant by a Tulane Law School faculty member who is willing to serve as a supervisor will be an important factor in the Committee's decision. Applicants are strongly encouraged to make every effort to find a supervisor, but they are discouraged from circulating mass letters to the faculty of the Law School.

## Course of Study

Each SJD student is assigned a faculty advisor upon admission. During the first semester of enrollment, SJD students take between 10 and 12 credits of coursework. Thereafter, most SJD students work full-time on the dissertation until it is completed. Tulane's expectation is that the final SJD dissertation will be submitted within four years following initial enrollment in the program. The dissertation is to make an original and significant contribution to legal scholarship. Each candidate defends his or her dissertation in an oral examination before a committee of the Tulane Law School faculty, supplemented with other University faculty where appropriate.

## Requirements

Tulane Law School also offers the Doctor of Juridical Science (SJD) to a small number of candidates who already hold the LL.M. as well as the first law degree (JD or LL.B. or equivalent). The SJD is a research-oriented degree requiring completion of a dissertation which makes an original and significant contribution to legal scholarship.

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## Degree Requirements for the SJD Program:

1. In order to obtain the SJD degree, a student must fulfill the following requirements, depending on the student's particular circumstances upon admission to the program:
  - a. Students admitted to the SJD program with a Tulane Law School Master's degree awarded five or fewer years prior to admission to the SJD program are exempt from any further coursework requirement.
  - b. Students admitted to the SJD program with a Tulane Master's degree awarded more than five years prior to admission to the SJD program must complete an additional 10 hours of coursework with a grade of B or better in each course.
  - c. Students admitted to the SJD program with a Master's degree from a law school in the United States (other than Tulane) or from an approved foreign law school in all cases must complete an additional 12 hours of coursework at Tulane.
2. All SJD students, including those exempt from some or all further coursework requirements, must be in residence for at least one year but are only required to pay full-time tuition and fees for at least one semester, typically the first semester of enrollment in the program. Students wishing to enroll in courses outside that one semester may do so on the understanding that they must pay tuition for each additional course they take.
3. Every SJD candidate must write and defend successfully a dissertation which makes an original and significant contribution to legal scholarship. Unless specifically exempted from this requirement for very exceptional circumstances by the Graduate Programs Committee, the dissertation must be complete and the defense must take place within four years from the initial enrollment in the SJD program.
4. Dissertation Committee: The committee will consist of three members one of whom is the supervisor who acts as the chair of the committee. The chair of the committee shall be a tenured member of the faculty. At least one of the other two members of the committee shall be a tenured or tenure-track member of Tulane Law School. Under normal circumstances, all members of the committee will be Tulane Law School faculty members, but there may be cases where it becomes necessary to ask a faculty member from another department of the University or a faculty member at another institution, foreign or domestic, to join the committee. The outside member must, however, be a tenured member of the faculty at his or her home institution. The selection of the dissertation committee will be decided by the student in consultation with the chair of the committee. The committee shall be empaneled at the earliest time after the candidate has taken residence but no later than the end of the first semester of residence. As soon as the committee has been established, the chair of the committee shall notify the Graduate Affairs Committee of

the names of the members of the committee. The Graduate Affairs Committee shall transmit the information to the Assistant Dean for Academic Services for record keeping.

5. Lengths of dissertations vary depending on the subject matter and the writing style of the authors, but as a general matter the length of a dissertation ranges between 200-300 pages, including appendix and bibliography. After the dissertation committee has approved the dissertation, the supervisor shall set up a meeting at which the candidate shall present an oral defense of the doctoral thesis. The dissertation committee will conduct the oral examination. The meeting for the oral defense is open to members of the Law School faculty.
6. Clinical programs, the Trial Advocacy course and externships are not open to SJD students.

**Program String and Field of Study:** LSJD\_PR, LAW

## Contact

For more information contact:

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