

FACULTY AGENDA ITEM

Date: *3/16/2020*

Submitted by: Kelly Erby 2018

SUBJECT: Washburn Law Early Admission Program (LEAP)

Description: LEAP is proposed to help attract well-qualified and highly motivated students to Washburn's undergraduate program and, ultimately, to Washburn's School of Law.

Rationale: LEAP is designed to enable academically talented and focused students to complete their undergraduate degree while simultaneously completing their first year of law school. This program is a modification of a baccalaureate degree from Washburn's College of Arts and Sciences (CAS). As there is no prelaw major, students are required to complete an existing major and to complete all other University core and general education requirements. The program is designed so that students in the program would complete at least 91 credits toward their undergraduate degree. Students who anticipate completing at least 91 credits by the end of their junior year are eligible to apply for entry to Washburn University School of Law in their junior year. In law school they would earn the remaining 29 credits of undergraduate study and receive their bachelor's degree after earning a passing grade in at least 29 law credit hours of coursework.

LEAP is also designed to lessen financial barriers to students desiring to pursue law degrees. Upon enrollment at Washburn Law, LEAP students will be charged Washburn Law School's in-state tuition and fees for each year of enrollment. As part of the program, Washburn's School of Law agrees to provide LEAP students a full tuition scholarship for the first year of law school and a minimum tuition scholarship of \$5000 per year for years two and three of law study, contingent on successful academic progress.

*Please note that new LEAP will replace the old 3.5. However, under the new LEAP, students may leap at either 3 or 3.5 years.

Financial Implications: As part of this program, CAS will lose tuition and enrollment from LEAP students during their final year of undergraduate study. However, it is likely the generous scholarships it provides will help to attract undergraduates to Washburn.

Proposed Effective Date: *Fall 2020*

Request for Action: Approval by Academic Affairs, Faculty Senate, General Faculty, and WUBOR.

Approved by: *AAC on date 3/23/2020*

FAC on date

Faculty Senate on date

Attachments

Memorandum of Understanding
Washburn University School of Law
Law Early Admission Program (LEAP)
Partnership with Washburn University College of Arts and
Sciences (WUCAS) for Early Law School Entry for
Undergraduates

Statement of Program Mission:

Washburn University School of Law [hereinafter “Washburn Law”] and WU College of Arts and Sciences University [hereinafter “WUCAS”] agree to offer the Washburn University *Law Early Admission Program (LEAP)* to academically talented and highly motivated undergraduate students at WUCAS. This program will allow WUCAS’s outstanding undergraduates early entry into law school by matriculating into Washburn Law after completing at least 91 credit hours of undergraduate study. The affiliation is structured to assist these students with their preparation for law school by exposing them to the skills necessary for the study of law, the qualities necessary for the successful practice of law, and the programming and curriculum available at Washburn Law. By pairing students early with law-faculty and attorney mentors, students will be prepared to serve their communities in a variety of roles in law firms, prosecutors’ offices, corporations, not-for-profit enterprises, and other professional legal environments.

Program Objectives:

Through participation in the *LEAP* partnership, students will be able to:

1. Reduce the number of years spent on their combined undergraduate and law education;
2. Lower the total cost of their undergraduate and law school education;
3. Enter the job market earlier;
4. Develop mentor/mentee relationships with Washburn Law faculty, staff and alumni while still undergraduates at WUCAS;
5. Participate in curricular and extracurricular activities jointly sponsored by Washburn Law and WUCAS that are designed to demonstrate the critical

thinking, legal analysis, technical writing, and oral communication skills and competencies essential to success in law school;

6. Appreciate the benefits of a career in the law and develop a better understanding of the range of career options through special events and activities offered to participants by Washburn Law; and
7. Comprehend the importance of honesty, integrity, and ethical behavior to the legal profession and become committed to the exercise of such values in their personal and professional endeavors.

Program Requirements & Processes:

The WUCAS prelaw coordinator will identify candidates for LEAP when students matriculate as incoming freshmen, transfers, or as soon thereafter as possible and recommend a course of study that will satisfy the LEAP requirements in a timely fashion.

Students may participate in the program even if they do not decide on a prelaw course of study until a later date in their undergraduate education. However, as a practical matter, the program will be most feasible for undergraduate prelaw students who are identified early. Advance planning will be necessary to complete required coursework for undergraduate majors. Early and focused consultation with both the prelaw coordinator and the student's undergraduate academic advisor will facilitate timely fulfillment of the LEAP requirements and preparation for early enrollment at Washburn Law.

Student Scholarships

Upon enrollment at Washburn Law, the student will be charged Washburn Law School's in-state tuition and fees for each year of enrollment. The law school agrees to provide to the student a full tuition scholarship for the first year of law school and a minimum tuition scholarship of \$5000 per year for years two and three of law study, contingent on successful academic progress. Following successful completion of the student's first year of study at Washburn Law, the student will apply to WUCAS to transfer up to 29 credits from Washburn Law to WUCAS to complete the Bachelor's degree. A student who earns fewer than 29 credits in the first and second semesters of law school will be permitted to earn the remaining credits needed to complete the Bachelor's degree through summer coursework at Washburn Law.

Admission Requirements

LEAP is designed for highly qualified and exceptionally motivated students. The criteria are:

- 1) a high school grade-point average of 3.0 or higher on a 4.0 scale, **OR** an ACT score in the top quartile (28–36 ACT) or comparable SAT score. For current Washburn or transfer students with at least 15 or more undergraduate credit hours the requirement is an undergraduate GPA of 3.0; and
- 2) application to and acceptance by the *LEAP* admission committee, chaired by the WUCAS *LEAP* coordinator.

Once the WUCAS prelaw coordinator accepts a candidate into *LEAP*, the candidate will be identified to the Washburn University School of Law Associate Dean for Centers and External Programs. Washburn Law will then assign the WUCAS student a law-school faculty advisor and a mentor from the local bench or bar, both of whom will assist the WUCAS student in their preparation for law school and a career in the law. The WUCAS student will also have the support of an academic advisor at WUCAS and the prelaw coordinator at WUCAS.

LEAP Completion Requirements: WUCAS students accepted into *LEAP* must:

1. maintain a 3.0 undergraduate GPA,
2. take the LSAT as administered by the Law School Admission Council (LSAC);
3. complete a free application to Washburn Law by the deadlines for the semester of intended enrollment, and
4. ***earn admission to Washburn Law as determined by its admission requirements and process***, including the mandated character and fitness review that is necessary for admission to both law school and the bar.

Additionally, *LEAP* students must have completed:

5. any WUCAS specific course requirements for their major;
6. all of the WUCAS requirements for their general education program;
7. university core requirements; and
7. enough total undergraduate credit hours so that the credits earned at Washburn Law will be sufficient to complete the WUCAS Bachelor's degree. For example, a *LEAP* WUCAS student who needs 120 credit hours to earn the Bachelor's degree would need to have accumulated at least 91 credit hours by the

end of the third undergraduate year so that the 29 credit hours completed during the first year at Washburn Law would total the hours necessary to earn the WUCAS Bachelor's degree.

WUCAS agrees to accept law school credit hours as coursework toward both the total credit hour requirement for the Bachelor's degree and the required credit hours of upper-division coursework. In some undergraduate majors, law school credit may count toward the major or minor requirements. In some undergraduate majors, law school credit may count toward the major or minor requirements as determined by the department.

Upon WUCAS's receipt of official transcripts evidencing the completion of the law school credit hours necessary for completion of the undergraduate degree, the Office of the Registrar for WUCAS will conduct the remaining steps necessary for the student to be awarded the Bachelor's degree and diploma, and will forward an official transcript to the Washburn Law registrar for inclusion in the law student's academic record.

If there are insufficient credit hours completed at Washburn Law after the first and second semester of law school, students have the option of completing the undergraduate degree program at WUCAS or using subsequently earned law credits to complete the undergraduate degree.

In coordination with WUCAS's prelaw coordinator, Washburn Law faculty and staff will develop and sponsor events and activities designed to achieve the objectives set forth in this Memorandum.

Program Assessment: Washburn Law and WUCAS agree to share information so that each unit can assess the effectiveness of this program. Data related to the program such as program enrollment, law school enrollment through the program, law school completion, and employment outcomes will be provided annually with a formal assessment report on a five-year cycle.

Dr. Laura A. Stephenson
Dean
WU College of Arts and Sciences

Carla D. Pratt
Dean
Washburn University School of Law

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Date	Date
_____	_____
Dr. JuliAnn Mazachek	
Vice President for Academic Affairs, Washburn University	

Date	

*** Washburn Law's First Year Courses – Total 29 Credit Hours:**

Fall Semester: The Law of Torts (4), Criminal Law (3), The Law of Property (4), Legal Analysis, Research, and Writing I (3) – Total of 14 Credit Hours.

Spring Semester: Constitutional Law I (4), Contract Law (4), Civil Procedure (4), Legal Analysis, Research, and Writing II (3) – Total of 15 Credit Hours.

Note that January enrollees take Legal Analysis, Research, and Writing I (LARW I) in the spring semester and LARW II during the following fall semester.