



LAW SCHOOL ADMISSION POLICY

Revised in february, 2021

Law School Admission Policy

Admissions

The Admission Policy is determined by the Faculty, and the Dean is responsible for its administration. The Registrar's Office is in charge of executing the admission process. Since 2012, an Admission's Officer coordinates the admission process. The Registrar is constantly exploring new technologies for management of the applications and its filling processes. The Registrar's Office frequently communicates with applicants through email, social media, and the School's web page. The School's webpage has been improved allowing candidates to fill out the application electronically, request for orientation, and explore the admission's requirements.

Juris Doctor

Applicants Evaluation and Selection Process

The applicants' evaluation and selection process is divided into two phases. The first phase is the *Evaluation*. During this phase, the PCUPR School of Law considers as admission criteria for each candidate their LSAT scores and undergraduate grade point average (UGPA). All candidates must hold an undergraduate degree from a duly licensed or accredited college or university or be a candidate for such degree before the completing the application process.

The second phase of the evaluation and selection process is the interview. The Law School requires each candidate to interview with the Faculty Admissions Committee and the Dean. The interview allows the Admissions Committee and the Dean to inquire and learn more about each applicant interest in becoming lawyers, personal goals, extracurricular activities, work experience, performance in their undergraduate and/or graduate programs, relevant skills, and personal and/or academic obstacles faced. During the interview students are also advised of character and fitness qualifications for admission to the Bar established by the Supreme Court of Puerto Rico.

Admission criteria

The admission criteria related to the *Evaluation* phase have been established using three statistical assessments that determined the correlation between the LSAT scores, the UGPA, and the probability of bar exam approval. The findings of the studies suggested 134 as an admissible LSAT score. Relying upon the findings of these studies the Law School decided to establish two levels of admission criteria. The first level of the admission criteria requires the following minimal LSAT scores and UGPA:

1. LSAT scores must be 135 or above.
2. UGPA must be 3.00 or above.

Candidates that meet these criteria will be automatically called for the Interview Phase.

A second level of review is used to evaluate applicants who fail to satisfy one of the two minimal scores, or both. These candidates are classified by applying the statistical assessment of Dr. Caraballo, who in October 2020, revised the admissions requirements and scores. To be considered under this level of review applicants who fail to meet the 3.00 UGPA must have a UGPA of 2.50 or higher, and those that do not meet the 135 LSAT scores must have a score between 130-134. Candidates admitted to the Law School under these criteria will be placed in a Conditionally Admitted classification. The Conditionally Admitted classification will require that students:

1. Actively participate in the Academic Support and Bar Prep Program.
2. Achieve a 3.00 GPA in their first year of the Law School.

Once the Evaluation phase criteria have been reached, all applicants pass to the second part of the Evaluation and Selection Process, the Interview phase. The following factors will be taken into consideration by the Faculty Admissions Committee and the Dean:

1. History of the candidate's academic performance in undergraduate school (and graduate – if applies).
2. Community services and participation in student organizations.
3. Work experience.
4. Mastery of written and oral communication skills.
5. Mastery of analysis and reasoning skills.
6. Perceived causes that resulted in poor undergraduate academic performance.
7. Perceived causes that resulted in low LSAT scores.
8. Actions taken by the applicant to address the situations that interfered with their academic performance.

The Faculty Admissions Committee will evaluate the candidate and recommend their admission to the Law School based on the criteria above. The Committee will also review the applicant's UGPA and LSAT scores.

Policies, statistics and information

Non-Discrimination Policies

The Law School follows the PCUPR Non-Discrimination Policy regarding its student, student admissions, and retention prohibiting discrimination on the race, color, religion, national origin, gender, sexual orientation, age, or disability.

According to Notice of Non-Discrimination Under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, the PCUPR, does not discriminate against any person on the basis of race, color, ethnicity, national origin, sex, sexual orientation, disability, medical condition, religion, military status, veteran status or age in admission or access to or treatment or employment in its educational opportunities, programs and activities as required by valid laws and regulations. The University is exempt from Title IX provisions that are not consistent with the religious beliefs of the Roman Catholic Church.

Inquiries concerning the application of regulations prohibiting discrimination may be referred to the designated Section 504 Coordinator or the Office of Civil Rights.

In compliance with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Law (Public Law 93-113), the University has established the Office of Services for People with Disabilities (Oficina de Servicios a Personas con Impedimentos – OSPI). This Office is the main responsible for: the planning, organizing, and evaluating all the services available for the students and employees with disabilities. Also, is the institutional unit in authority to establish the reasonable accommodations that must be granted according to the current legislation and regulations.

Readmission of Previously Disqualified Applicants

Unqualified students to apply for readmission: A student who has been academically dismissed because has exhausted the right to two (2) probations and on the third attempt their academic index is below 2.00 is unqualified to apply for readmission.

Qualified students to apply for readmission - A student will be eligible to apply for readmission when:

1. Voluntary total withdrawal was accepted for health, military service, economic reasons, and others stipulated in the Qualifications section of the Academic Policy.
2. Student is classified as L4 and did not complete the previous semester.
3. The Academic Dismissal was a consequence of not fulfilling 50% of the credits attempted and fulfilling the general average of 2.00 or more.

Students who were readmitted: A student who was readmitted and then academically dismissed will not be able to request readmission. To be eligible for re-entry, after a period of one (1) semester away, the student must apply as a new student through the Admissions Office of the Law School with all the current regulations.

Readmission Application Procedure:

- a. The Admissions Committee must receive a request for readmission within the dates stipulated by the School and informed by the Registrar's Office. The Committee will not examine applications filed late, except in extraordinary circumstances. Also, only in circumstances extraordinary students can file the request by email.
- b. The request for readmission will be filed in the Registrar's Office of the Law School. The Registrar's Office will not accept a request for readmission filed without the corresponding documents explained below.
- c. A student eligible to apply for readmission must submit with his / her readmission application a letter addressed to the Admission Committee, together with all the pertinent documentation, in which he / she explains the reasons that justify the academic drop and the action plan taken to correct them.
- d. The applicant has the burden of proof to demonstrate that extraordinary circumstances resulted in his / her poor academic performance.
 1. Extraordinary circumstances that normally do not occur:

Financial concerns, employment obligations or commitments, family illnesses, or transportation distances are not considered extraordinary circumstances. The applicant has to show not only that the extraordinary circumstances resulted in his / her poor academic performance, but also has to show that they have been resolved and that, if re-admitted he or she will be able to successfully handle the rigorous requirements of Legal Education. If the extraordinary conditions have to do with physical or psychological conditions, the applicant must present written documentation with approval to demonstrate any physical or psychological condition described in the application and must demonstrate that such conditions are not an impediment to continue with Success in Law School. Failure to submit such documentation will result in a denial of the application.

- e. The applicant bears the burden of proof to convince or persuade the majority of the members of the Admission Committee that he or she should be admitted by providing, at a minimum, a summary of:
 - 1. History of the Academic Performance in Law School (grades, Pro Bono service, participation in student organizations, legal work experience, etc.);
 - 2. The seen causes that resulted in their poor academic performance;
 - 3. The actions taken and the corrective action plan to deal with problems that interfere with academic performance if admitted; and,
 - 4. Because he or she will have a chance or chance of success if readmitted.
- f. Once the Registry Office receives the readmission request, it will forward it to the Admissions Committee for its consideration.
- g. The Admissions Committee will meet as soon as possible after receiving the application.
- h. If a majority of the Committee, present and voting, is in favor of readmission, the student will be readmitted. Readmission may be conditioned by those requirements or conditions that the Admissions Committee deems pertinent. The Admissions Committee will impose any condition or conditions that it deems pertinent to help the student overcome their academic deficiencies, including but not limited to: requiring the student to register with the Academic Support and Preparation for the Examination Program, so that the office can schedule the enrollment and / or schedule or select your courses and class schedule; limit the number of courses or credits in which you can enroll in a given semester; require the student to repeat a course; and / or require the student to participate in any other program such as tutoring, etc.
- i. In all cases, the Office of the Registrar will inform the applicant only by letter of the disposition of their case.
- j. All communications will be made through the contact information in the student's file. It is the applicant's responsibility to provide all updated contact information as required.
- k. The decisions of the Admissions Committee on readmission applications are final.

Applicants from Non-ABA Approved Law Schools

Applicants who completed coursework in Non-ABA Approved law schools must complete the application form and submit an official transcript. The candidate's academic record will be evaluated by the Faculty Curriculum Committee, who will establish the amount of credits hours

and the courses to be validated. The maximum amount of credits hours to be validated is 31, which responds to 1/3 of the *Juris Doctor* degree.

Applicants from Foreign Law Schools

As in the case of applicants who completed coursework in Non-ABA Approved law schools, candidates with legal studies from a foreign law school must complete the application form and submit an official transcript. The candidate's academic record will be evaluated by the Faculty Curriculum Committee, who will establish the amount of credits hours and the courses to be validated. The maximum amount of credits hours to be validated is 31, which responds to 1/3 of the *Juris Doctor* degree.

ABA Disclosure - Standard 311. ACADEMIC PROGRAM AND ACADEMIC CALENDAR

The Law School graduation requirements do not allow students to complete the J.D. degree earlier than 24 months. The Academic Standards Policy states that "American Bar Association (ABA) requires that the student has a maximum of seven years to complete the *Juris Doctor*".

Masters of Law (LL.M.)

Applicants Evaluation and Selection Process

To apply to the LL.M. program, applicants must comply with the academic and administrative requirements. The academic requirements are: (1) applicants must have obtained a *Juris Doctor* from a Law School and (2) the graduation GPA should be 2.50 or higher.

Regarding the administrative requirements, the applicant must:

1. Complete the online application form, available through the Law School's website and pay the nonrefundable admission fee of \$75.00,
2. Submit a personal statement, which shall not exceed 300 words, where the applicant summarizes their experiences, objectives and reasons for requesting admission to the LL.M program,
3. Obtain official transcripts from the *Juris Doctor*,
4. Submit one letter of recommendation from a supervisor. In case the applicant is not able to obtain a recommendation from a supervisor, he or she must submit a letter of recommendation from a Law Professor, and
5. Submit a Criminal Record Certificate.

Once the applicant has completed all the above-mentioned requirements, selected candidates will be interviewed by the LL.M. Faculty Admissions Committee and the Dean. The following factors will be taken into consideration during the interview:

1. History of the candidate's academic performance in the *Juris Doctor* and other graduate degrees, if applicable,

2. Work experience,
3. Written and oral communication skills,
4. Analysis and reasoning skills, and
5. Interest in pursuing an LL.M. degree.

The Faculty Admissions Committee will evaluate the candidate and recommend their admission to the Law School based on the criteria mentioned above as well as their Juris Doctor GPA and personal statement.