



SCHOOL OF LAW

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN

727 East Dean Keeton Street • Austin, Texas 78705-3299 • (512) 471-5151 • Facsimile (512) 471-6988

Congratulations on your admission to the University of Texas School of Law! Given your impressive credentials and accomplishments, I suspect you will have a number of options for law school. You have probably also consulted by now one of the proliferating rankings of law schools, and so know that Texas is uniformly viewed as one of the nation's top law schools, a stature the school has enjoyed for nearly a hundred years. A single rank can't, of course, help you decide between Texas and any other top law school. I think it is more informative to call your attention to *specific* features of a UT legal education that may be of interest. In doing so, I believe I can give you eight good reasons to choose Texas for law school.

Reason #1: Texas is the best buy in American legal education. According to the 1997 Wehrli Graduate School Rankings, a UT legal education provides the best return on investment of any legal education in the country, in a comparison of tuition with median starting salaries. Note, too, that the Wehrli study did *not* adjust the median starting salaries to take account of differences in cost of living in different regions of the country. Factor that in, and Texas is the best buy in legal education by a mile. Tuition at Texas, for both in-state and out-of-state students, is lower than the comparable tuitions at Michigan, Virginia and Boalt (not to mention all the top private schools).

More recent confirmation of the bargain value of a Texas legal education comes from the February 1999 issue of *The National Jurist*, which reports that Texas grads have the lowest average debt of students from any top 15 law school.

Reason #2: Texas is genuinely committed to teaching excellence. The Princeton Review's national surveys of student satisfaction with teaching have ranked Texas in the top ten for the last seven years in a row, even ranking the school first one year. Of the nation's leading law schools, only Texas and the University of Chicago have enjoyed such consistently high marks for teaching. I have talked to transfer students from places like NYU and Boalt who found the teaching noticeably better here. I can also attest, from personal experience (at Yale, Michigan, Texas, and San Diego), that this is one of the only institutions of higher education that takes teaching seriously in reality, not simply as a public-relations ploy. Faculty have been denied tenure here, and faculty from other schools have been denied offers of permanent positions, because of poor teaching. We are the only top law school I know of that regularly demands teaching evaluations from lateral faculty candidates before we even proceed to consider them for permanent or visiting offers.

Reason #3: In terms of scholarly distinction, the Texas faculty is one of the very best in the United States. You will get more out of your legal education if you are taught by faculty who are intellectually engaged with cutting-edge scholarship in their fields. At Texas, you will benefit from a faculty of distinguished scholars that regularly ranks among the very best in the

U.S. Objective measures of faculty quality, like per capita publications and citations, consistently place Texas among the top ten faculties in the nation. The 1995 *Chicago-Kent Law Review* survey of faculty scholarship, for example, ranked Texas fifth in the country based on per capita publications in leading journals; a 2002 study by *Science Watch* also ranked the Texas law faculty 5th in the country, this time based on scholarly impact as measured by per capita citations. Only Yale, Harvard, and Chicago ranked ahead of Texas in both studies. Texas has hired faculty away from tenured positions at Yale, Oxford, Chicago, UCLA, Duke, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, among other places. Recently, generous endowments targeted to faculty hiring have enabled us to embark upon an aggressive program of faculty recruitment, that has so far allowed us to hire top professors away from NYU, Michigan, Stanford, and Northwestern in the last three years, a record of success unmatched by any top law school outside the top three or four.

Texas is one of only nine law schools with four faculty who are elected Fellows of the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, the nation's most prestigious learned society. Five UT faculty have served as President of the legal academy's leading professional organization, the Association of American Law Schools; only four law schools (Columbia, Harvard, Yale, and Penn) have produced more holders of this prestigious post.

Texas faculty have authored or co-authored the nation's leading casebooks or treatises in corporate law, remedies, comparative law, mass torts, wills & estates, trusts, legal research, local government law, and conflicts of law, among other areas. The faculty is generally acknowledged to be the best--or one of the three or four best--in several areas, including constitutional law, wills and estates, admiralty/maritime law, labor law, environmental law, law and philosophy, torts and products liability, and comparative law.

More than a dozen faculty hold PhDs in cognate disciplines, including economics, philosophy, history, and political science.

Reason #4: The Texas faculty is *not* an Ivory Tower law faculty. Texas is largely alone among the top law schools in still retaining close ties with the bench and bar. A study by two Ohio State professors, published in the 1996 *Chicago-Kent Law Review*, found, for example, that articles by Texas faculty were cited more often by the courts than articles by any other law faculty in the country. A study by a Northwestern professor in the 2000 *Journal of Legal Education* identified Texas as the nation's #1 producer of articles and books for practitioners and judges.

The American Law Institute is the nation's most important center for law reform; its "restatements" of the law influence courts and legislatures around the country. The Institute is dominated by practicing lawyers and judges, so ALI membership is the best indication of whether a school's faculty has any connection with the "real world". More than one-third of the faculty are elected members of the ALI, a percentage of faculty membership higher than that at Michigan, Virginia, Chicago, Stanford, Berkeley, and NYU, among many other schools. Several faculty are currently serving, or have recently served, as the Reporters for Restatements of the law in various fields of law, and one professor was recently elected to the ALI's governing Council.

Reason #5: At Texas, your classmates will include some of the best law students in the nation. The entering class this fall, for example, boasted a median LSAT of 165; only one school

in the country of comparable size, Harvard, boasts a higher median. (Georgetown's day class, as opposed to its night class, boasts a higher median, but the day class is smaller than the Texas class.) The GPAs of entering students are typically among the top ten in the United States.

Each year, dozens of entering students turn down offers of admission from Harvard, Stanford, Chicago, NYU, Michigan, Virginia, and other excellent law schools to pursue their legal studies at UT. In a typical class, 5% of the students have scored in the 98th percentile or higher on the LSAT, while 20% have scored in the 95th percentile or higher. Based on my experience teaching at Yale Law School I can confirm what these numbers suggest: the best Texas students are as good as the students at the nation's most selective law school.

Reason #6: A Texas legal education opens doors throughout the legal profession. More than 300 employers recruit on campus each year at Texas, with more than one-third from out-of-state. (Another 200 employers solicit resumes and interview Texas students at job fairs around the country.) Major firms from all the top legal markets outside Texas recruit on campus each fall.

For example, employers such as Allen & Overy (London), Arnold & Porter (DC), Brown & Bain (Phoenix), Choate, Hall & Stewart (Boston), Cleary, Gottlieb, Steen & Hamilton (NYC), Covington & Burling (DC), Cravath, Swaine & Moore (NYC), Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher (LA), Irell & Manella (LA), King & Spaulding (Atlanta), Kirkland & Ellis (Chicago), Kirkpatrick & Lockhart (Pittsburgh), Latham & Watkins (LA), Littler Mendelson (San Francisco), Munger, Tolles & Olsen (LA), O'Melveny & Myers (LA), Shook, Hardy & Bacon (Kansas City), Simpson, Thacher & Bartlett (NYC), Skadden, Arps (NYC and LA), Stoel Rives (Portland), Sullivan & Cromwell (NYC), and Williams & Connolly (DC)--among many others--aggressively recruit UT law students in Austin each fall.

Of course, if you want to practice in Texas, it would be silly to go to any other law school. In both the public and private sectors, UT grads dominate the power structure of the nation's second largest state. If you don't graduate from UT, you will be at a disadvantage in terms of professional connections.

Even though UT students do often prefer to remain in Texas, UT graduates are heavily represented in most major legal markets (New York, Washington, D.C., and Los Angeles are particular out-of-state favorites) and the Texas degree opens doors at the best firms nationwide. Williams & Connolly, for example, the most selective firm in D.C., recruits on campus at only a dozen schools nationwide, including Texas. Cravath, Swaine & Moore, the most selective and prestigious firm in New York City, currently employs 11 Texas graduates as attorneys, compared to 9 from Virginia, 8 from Cornell, 4 from Michigan, and 3 from Duke—even though those four schools all have far more students trying to enter the New York legal market each year than Texas.

Over the last decade, UT has emerged as one of the top ten producers of clerks to justices of the U.S. Supreme Court in the country, placing more graduates on the High Court than Northwestern, Georgetown, Duke, Berkeley, and Penn—as well as more than Cornell, UCLA, and Vanderbilt *combined*. Two recent graduates clerked last year (for Chief Justice Rehnquist and Associate Justice Kennedy), marking the *third* time in the last five years that

Texas had at least two graduates clerking on the Supreme Court in the same term. Only four schools—Yale, Harvard, Chicago, and Columbia—have a better track record than that in the same time period.

Texas is the third leading producer of federal judges in the United States; only Harvard and Yale have more graduates sitting on the federal bench. More than 130 graduates of UT also teach in the nation's leading law schools, from NYU, Chicago, and Texas, to SMU, Connecticut, and Washington University in St. Louis. Graduates of UT now in academia include the nation's preeminent authority on antitrust law, who is also a distinguished legal historian (**Herbert Hovenkamp '78**); the first woman to hold an endowed chair at the University of Chicago Law School, where she still teaches international law while also serving as a judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Seventh Circuit (**Diane Wood '75**); one of the most influential figures in corporate law of the past quarter-century, now at NYU (**William Allen '72**); and the senior author of the most widely used treatise on legal ethics, now emeritus at Cornell (**Charles Wolfram '62**). Some of our most distinguished alumni-scholars are now teaching, unsurprisingly, back at UT, including **David Anderson '71**, **John Dzienkowski '83**, **Ronald Mann '85**, **Thomas McGarity '74** and **Jay L. Westbrook '68**.

No law school provides more assistance to its graduates seeking teaching jobs. Since we instituted programs of formal support for aspiring law teachers in 1997, UT alumni have received tenure-track job offers from the law schools at Tulane, Ohio State, Washington (Seattle), Nevada (Las Vegas), Mississippi, Michigan (Ann Arbor), Houston, DePaul, Marquette, Saint Louis, Temple, and San Diego, among others.

Reason #7: Texas offers the outstanding academic resources of one of the nation's top research universities. The UT law library is the sixth largest in the country, and its staff generally considered the best in the country. (Indeed, dozens of the nation's law libraries are run by staff trained originally at Texas.) The November/December 2000 issue of *The National Jurist* ranked UT's law library third in the nation based on a consideration of facilities, resources, and staff. What a large and well-run law library means for you as a student is that you will almost always be able to find the research materials and tools you need close at hand, as well as enjoy expert support and assistance from the library staff.

The University of Texas at Austin is one of the nation's top fifteen research universities according to the authoritative 1995 report on program quality by the National Research Council in Washington, D.C. In quality of graduate programs and faculties, Texas is competitive with Penn, ranks slightly ahead of Duke, Northwestern, and Johns Hopkins, and substantially ahead of Brown, NYU, Virginia, Georgetown, and Vanderbilt, among many others. UT also offers the fifth largest academic library collection in the country. Some twenty different UT graduate programs are regularly ranked among the ten or fifteen best in the United States (including Anthropology, Chemistry, Classics, Computer Sciences, Engineering, German, Integrative Biology, Latin American Studies, Linguistics, Mathematics, Philosophy, Physics, Psychology, Public Affairs, and Sociology), while most others rank in the top twenty in the country. Law students can take up to twelve credit hours in another UT department to count towards the JD.

Texas law faculty hold joint appointments in several other UT Departments, including Government, History, and Philosophy, facilitating the pursuit of joint degrees for students interested in law and these cognate fields.

Reason #8: Texas students enjoy a very high quality of life. There are, of course, no objective criteria to point to here. The fact is, however, that most students really like living here, and many don't want to leave (making competition for jobs in Austin particularly stiff). Austin has the virtues of a college town, but being both the state capital and much bigger than a typical college town (Austin is now the 16th largest city in the country, bigger than Seattle, Boston, and Washington, D.C., among many others), it also offers cosmopolitan amenities and a diverse and talented population. (A Carnegie-Mellon economist recently ranked Austin 2nd in the nation, after San Francisco, on a "Creativity Index" measuring factors like the percentage of creative workers, artists, patent holders and college graduates in the population.) In short, there's a lot to do and it's affordable. The weather during the school year, especially October through April, is just ideal. If you haven't been here, I encourage you to pay a visit.

I hope you will join us in Austin in the fall.

Sincerely yours,

Brian Leiter
Joseph D. Jamail Centennial Chair in Law
Professor of Philosophy
Director of the Law & Philosophy Program