MASTER OF STUDIES IN LAW

PATENT LAW

One-year Degree | No LSAT required

colorado.edu/law/msl
Colorado Law’s Master of Studies in Law (MSL) degree is a one-year, 28-credit, no LSAT required program that enables students who hold at least an undergraduate degree to obtain legal training short of a full Juris Doctor (JD). MSL students will be admitted into one of two specialty tracks: Patent Law or Compliance.

The MSL in Patent Law allows individuals with engineering and science degrees to pursue an interesting and in-demand career as patent agents. Increasingly, emerging job markets have openings that require some legal knowledge, and employers frequently assign legal tasks traditionally performed by lawyers to non-lawyers. Colorado Law’s MSL will prepare students to obtain and excel in these positions. Upon completion of the MSL in Patent Law degree, students will be prepared to sit for the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office (PTO) Patent Bar Exam.

CURRENT MSL – PATENT LAW STUDENTS

“I want to help scientific innovation progress.”

“When I was looking at the MSL degree, I couldn’t believe that it was only one year. You get a whole Master’s degree, and are set up to take the patent examination so you could start working as a patent agent soon after graduation. In one year, I can have an externship and all the classes I need for a solid background in patents. Also, my professors are already helping me find a place to work, which is magical. It’s fantastic that Colorado Law is already working so hard to help me be successful.”

JESSICA TROSTEL
MSL Class of 2016

“I want to protect innovation.”

“My interactions with the MSL professors have been fantastic and have helped to spark my interest further in the patent field and the legal realm in general. As I’ve been taking more specialized classes, it’s really amazing to see the different professionals coming in to teach us about patents. It’s awesome to hear their experience and hear how what we’re learning in theory is applicable in the real world.”

ZACHARY DICKERSON
MSL Class of 2016
FAQ

What is a patent agent?
Patent agents are non-lawyers who have passed the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office’s (USPTO) Patent Bar Exam, and are registered with the USPTO to prepare, file, and prosecute patent applications on behalf of their clients.

Why should I get an MSL if I want to be a patent agent?
In addition to helping you prepare for the Patent Bar, Colorado Law’s MSL in Patent Law will give you a strong foundation in U.S. law and legal research, writing and analysis. Moreover, your required and elective courses will be taken alongside JD students and will better prepare you to work in a wide variety of settings—legal and otherwise.

What is the difference between a patent attorney and a patent agent?
A patent attorney has graduated with a three-year JD degree from law school and has passed at least one state bar exam and the USPTO’s Patent Bar. In addition to practice at the USPTO, a patent attorney can practice law outside of the USPTO. A patent agent comes to the legal field with significant technical education in either science or engineering. Although a patent agent practices only patent law at the USPTO, because of their technical expertise and qualification to practice before the USPTO’s Patent Office, many law firms and legal departments hire patent agents instead of patent attorneys.

Where do patent agents work, and how much money do they make?
In today’s economy that is heavily focused on innovation and technological advances, patent agents have a number of job opportunities. Both law firms and corporate legal departments hire patent agents, who can also practice independently. Patent agents can also work as patent examiners at the USPTO, as technology transfer professionals, technical experts in general counsels’ offices, and in many other capacities.

The American Intellectual Property Lawyers Associations’ “Report of the Economic Survey 2015” indicates that the average salary of patent agents nationwide is $99,000; at private firms, the average salary is $124,000.
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APPLY NOW
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