

MASTER OF STUDIES IN LAW IN ETHICS & COMPLIANCE



Colorado **Law**

UNIVERSITY OF COLORADO **BOULDER**

Master of Studies in Law in Ethics & Compliance

Colorado Law's Master of Studies in Law (MSL) in ethics and compliance is a 28-credit program that enables students who hold at least an undergraduate degree to obtain compliance-focused legal training short of a full juris doctor (JD). No LSAT is required. The program can be completed in up to three years. MSL students range from recent college graduates, to seasoned professionals seeking a second career, to ethics and compliance officers looking to boost their résumés with added credentials.

The MSL in ethics and compliance trains students to drive organizational change and promote a culture of ethics. MSL graduates are prepared to become ethics and compliance officers at large and small corporations in a variety of sectors, growing businesses and startups, financial institutions, or nonprofit entities such as colleges, universities, hospitals, and credit unions.

Public, private, and nonprofit organizations are subject to an increasing number of legal requirements and need trained professionals to lead effective in-house programs to ensure compliance with statutes, regulations, and other applicable laws. Ethics and compliance professionals develop, improve, and manage compliance programs to help organizations obey the law, reduce the risk of fraud and other law-breaking and misconduct, and mitigate their companies' legal liability and reputation risk. They also foster a culture of ethics and responsibility within an organization.



“It’s an exciting time to enter the ethics and compliance profession, which helps institutions prevent misconduct and develop ethical cultures. Colorado Law’s MSL program sets students up for success in this in-demand field.”

Melanie Kay, Co-director, MSL Ethics & Compliance Program

Curriculum

Students take a combination of MSL and JD courses focusing on specific fields of law such as employment, environmental, privacy and cybersecurity, health care, sports, and financial services. MSL students may also partake in externships for course credit. The program features small class sizes, individualized faculty attention, and the opportunity to take legal coursework at a first-tier law school.

Sample Curriculum

Subject to change

August

- Introduction to U.S. Law

Fall Semester

- Communications for Compliance Professionals
- Compliance Law
- Ethical Organizations and Cultures
- Electives

Spring Semester

- Compliance Capstone
- Advanced Compliance Topics
- Externship
- Electives

Fall, Spring, or Wintersession

- Investigations

Industry-Specific Electives

EMPLOYMENT

- Employment Discrimination; Employment Law

ENVIRONMENT

- Environmental Law; Food Law & Practice

CYBERSECURITY/PRIVACY

- AI & the Law; Cybersecurity; Information Privacy;

HEALTH CARE

- Corporate Transactions in Health Care; Health Law; Health Law Compliance; Regulation of Marijuana

SPORTS

- Sports Law

FINANCIAL SERVICES

- Insurance Law; Regulation of Financial Institutions

GOVERNMENT

- Consumer Protection Law; Understanding (and Investigation Violations of) US and Foreign Anti-Bribery and Human Trafficking Laws

Careers

Compliance is one of the fastest growing professional fields, with excellent employment potential. The total employment of compliance officers in the U.S. alone is projected to increase by 8.2 percent between 2016 and 2026. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, the median annual wage in 2024 for compliance officers was \$78,420. Graduates of our program have gone on to follow a diverse range of exciting career paths, including health care facilities, the technology sector, and an international investment company.

Compliance officers work in nearly every sort of for-profit and nonprofit organization, ensuring that the entity complies with the governing internal and external laws, regulations, and policies. Compliance professionals are able to harness a diverse array of skills in their work—including analysis, research, communication, creativity, and teamwork—resulting in challenging and satisfying career experiences.

In fields facing complex sets of regulations, such as health care, higher education, natural resources and the environment, the technology industry, and the financial industry, compliance officers are critical. Compliance officers may:

- Identify the risks facing an organization
- Implement policies and procedures to mitigate the risks of an organization violating applicable laws and regulations
- Effectively communicate and market ethics and compliance policies across the organization
- Investigate and resolve internal misconduct and employee complaints
- Help build an ethical organizational culture
- Partner with an organization’s general counsel to avoid and mitigate risk
- Advise the organization

Why Study Ethics and Compliance



“The demand for compliance professionals has never been higher, and not just in highly regulated industries like health care, banking, technology, and energy, but in almost every other kind of for-profit business and nonprofit organization. Our MSL program in ethics and compliance is a great opportunity to meet that demand in every industry with a legal degree that’s short of a full-blown juris doctor and a good deal less expensive.”

John Francis, Assistant Teaching Professor



“If you are interested in law, or any type of career in the legal field, this program is the best way to get the experience. Not only are there plentiful job opportunities after you graduate, but you get the experience of being in law school. The MSL degree is a great way to further your education and learn about a field that is booming.”

Brianna Rice, Class of 2017, Law Department Operations Coordinator, ON Semiconductor



“I feel so lucky to be a part of this program. I am surrounded by top-notch students from a variety of interesting backgrounds as well as faculty, guest speakers, employers, and other community members who are at the forefront of this growing field. I am not aware of another degree program that equips students to join such a fast-growing and exciting profession that enables them to work in such a broad range of industries.”

Amy Bauer, Co-director, MSL Ethics & Compliance Program



“Ethics is a fascinating crossroad of law, human behavior, adult education, and marketing. It is more than just creating policies and conducting investigations, and requires an in-depth knowledge of the business, ability to simplify complex processes, and deliver engaging and enduring cultural pillars that lead people to keep ethical business behavior in the forefront of their work.”

Bill Brierly, Chief Ethics and Compliance Officer, CH2M

Contact

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Compliance Program

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