

# ST. THOMAS LAW NEWS

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## THE PATHWAY TO GRADUATION

To complete the regular J.D. graduation requirements, all J.D. students must successfully pass all of the following classes: Civil Procedure I and II, Contracts I and II, Torts I and II, Property I and II, Legal Research and Writing, Advanced Legal Research and Writing, Appellate Advocacy, Criminal Law, Constitutional Law I and II, Professional Responsibility, Wills and Trusts, Criminal Procedure I, and Business Associations. Any student in the bottom 30% of his or her first year class also is required to successfully complete The Art of Lawyering. In addition to these specific classes, students must successfully complete the Senior Writing Requirement (either through a “seminar” class or an independent research project). All J.D. students also must complete six credits of skills courses. Advanced Legal Writing and Appellate Advocacy count as skills courses; therefore, J.D. students really only need one additional skills credit. Any clinical course, internship or externship, plus a selection of courses listed as “skills courses” on the registration schedule and listed in the catalog also count toward the skills course requirement. All students must successfully complete a total of 90 credits and have a cumulative grade point average of 2.0. Finally, all J.D. students must complete 40 hours of *pro bono* service prior to the end of the semester in which they graduate.

Assistant Dean John F. Hernandez and Assistant Dean Barbara Singer both provide on-going academic advisement for any student to ensure he or she is working to meet all graduation requirements. Also, students are encouraged to seek out the guidance and advice of other faculty members particularly if the student is interested in pursuing an area of specialization or pursuing post J.D. studies. Associate Dean Dykas can provide students assistance and guidance with regard to internships, externships, and St. Thomas Law’s clinical offerings. J.D. students intending on taking a bar examination should consult the state bar they will be taking to consider other courses that may be helpful to take while in law school. Courses recommended for the Florida Bar include the following: Sales, Remedies, Family Law, Florida Constitutional Law, Florida Practice and Procedure, and the newly created course: Commercial Law Survey.

Please note requirements for students in the joint degree programs are somewhat different, and students in those programs should consult with Assistant Dean Hernandez to make sure they are meeting all requirements.

## MARLINS TICKETS AVAILABLE

The Florida Marlins baseball club has provided us a few hundred complimentary upper deck tickets for the late afternoon game on Wednesday, September 28. (Opponent is Washington Nationals.) Tickets are in the form of vouchers, each good for four tickets redeemable at the Sun Life Stadium Ticket Office. Dean Ray is making these tickets available to students, faculty, and staff. If your schedule permits, this is an opportunity to see a game at the nearby stadium before the team moves to its new stadium next season.

You can sign up for ticket vouchers (4 tickets each voucher) at the Student Affairs Office. When you sign up, please provide the names of the others who will be joining you (classmates, colleagues, friends, and family) so we can ensure committed tickets will be used. Signup begins now, and vouchers can be picked up on September 22 or thereafter. If you have questions, please contact Assistant Dean John Hernandez at [jhernandez@stu.edu](mailto:jhernandez@stu.edu) who is coordinating this event.

## BUDGET CONTROL ACT OF 2011

St. Thomas University School of Law would like to take the opportunity to advise you of the [Budget Control Act of 2011](#), which recently was passed by Congress and signed by President Obama. Even though we would prefer that student federal aid programs were kept out of the budget process, Congress has chosen to include it in this most recent legislation, and it results in two provisions to the federal student aid programs. *The new law will not affect the amount of funding available, but will affect the costs to the borrower.*

The two provisions will have an impact on future federal student loan borrowing for graduate and professional students effective July 1, 2012. The two provisions are outlined below:

### **Elimination of the subsidy on Stafford loans made to graduate students.**

Stafford loans borrowed by graduate students beginning with the 2012-2013 academic year will no longer be subsidized. While the total amount that students can borrow will remain \$20,500, the full amount will be unsubsidized, and interest will accrue at a rate of 6.8% from the time the loan disburses.

### **Elimination of the upfront fee rebate on Stafford and Grad PLUS loans beginning with the 2012-13 academic year.**

Loans borrowed prior to 2012-13 have an origination fee of 1% for Stafford loans and 4% for Grad PLUS loans. Currently, there is a 1% origination fee on direct loans (0.5% assessed at disbursement and 0.5% if the borrower fails to make the first twelve months on time). The new provision calls for borrowers to be charged the full 1% at disbursement, regardless of on-time payments. For the PLUS, the current total is 4% (2.5% on disbursement and 1.5% if the borrower fails to pay the first twelve months on time). In this case, the new provision calls for borrowers to be charged the full 4% at disbursement, regardless of on-time payments. The Grad PLUS Loan continues to accrue interest at a rate of 7.9% from the time the loan disburses.

Please keep these costs in mind when borrowing your student loans, and **borrow only what you need.**

Should you have any questions regarding this new law or any other financial aid matter, please feel free to contact Andy Marrero, Student Affairs and Financial Aid Advisor.

## SUSTAINABILITY AND 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY LEADERSHIP SEMINAR

James Strock, CEO of Strock & Company, will be the guest speaker for a one-hour seminar titled "Sustainability and 21st Century Leadership," on **October 11, 2011, at 12:00 noon** in the Moot Court Room. Students are welcome to attend this free event co-sponsored by St. Thomas Law's LL.M. in Environmental Sustainability; the American Bar Association Section of Environment, Energy and Resources; the Special Committee on Smart Growth and Green Buildings; and the Committee on Climate Change, Sustainable Development, and Ecosystems.

Mr. Strock will examine the emergence of sustainability as a core element of business strategy and value creation in the context of broader trends in 21st century leadership and management. Mr. Strock is the former founding secretary of the California EPA. The private consultancy he created, James Strock & Co., serves global clients in the private sector, nongovernmental organizations, and government agencies in its mission to empower environmental and energy advancement through innovation, service, and leadership.

## KAPLAN/PMBR BOOK DISTRIBUTION

Kaplan/PMBR will make a book distribution to all 2Ls on Monday, September 19<sup>th</sup> from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Kaplan table in the Breeze Way. They also will have MPRE books.

If you have any questions, contact Ana Rosa Ramirez, the Regional Director for Florida, Kaplan Bar Review at (786) 314-9394 or you can e-mail her at [ana.ramirez@kaplan.com](mailto:ana.ramirez@kaplan.com)