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MISSISSIPPI ALUMNI RECOMMENDATIONS AND TIPS!



Mississippi
College
SCHOOL OF LAW

EXCHANGE PROGRAMME WITH MISSISSIPPI COLLEGE
SCHOOL OF LAW, USA

A. History

The history of Mississippi is very much the history of America. It begins in prehistoric times, when vast herds of buffalo carved out a route known as the Natchez Trace. This same path would later be traveled by Native Americans, traders, missionaries, and early pioneers. Chickasaw and Choctaw, Scotch and Irish, slaves, and settlers have all called Mississippi home. This state grew up with our nation.

When the Mississippi Territory became the 20th state to join the union in 1817, it was comprised largely of the Chickasaw and Choctaw nations. With statehood came an influx of Europeans – largely English, Scottish, and Irish – who sought opportunity in what was then the frontier of a rapidly growing country. The Magnolia State continued to leave its imprint on America throughout history, playing a pivotal role in the Civil War and a few years later it was the backdrop for some of the landmark events in the struggle for Civil Rights.

Today, Mississippi is regarded as a unique and rich intersection of history, architecture, commerce, culture, and the arts.

B. Weather

Throughout most of the state Mississippi's climate is warm and humid year-round. In



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the far northern region it gets a bit cooler than in the southern region of the state, like the Gulf Coast, which enjoys very balmy winters. But most of the time it is either hot and humid or rainy with a couple of windows of comfortable conditions. Winters in Mississippi are quite pleasant. The average weather in January is 48°F, though the Gulf Coast is typically in the low 60s °F. During the Summer season between June and August, one can expect daytime highs in the mid-90s°F coupled with humid conditions. May and September are slightly cooler being in the upper 80s °F, but the humidity levels remain high. Summer is also when thunderstorms strike with frequency throughout the state, particularly in the southern region. Mississippi gets an average of 27 tornadoes each year, mostly hitting in the late spring and summer, while in August and September the chances increase for deadly hurricanes.

Be sure and keep track of the weather forecast if you are visiting any time between March and October.

C. Industry

Mississippi is known for providing a favorable business environment which promotes continued industry success. Because of this, the state has a proven track record in recruiting world-class companies, from aerospace and automotive to agribusiness and energy. Mississippi's top-ranked business climate provides fertile ground for today's companies to grow and succeed. The state's winning combination of commercial assets coupled with its can-do approach make Mississippi the perfect location for today's growth industries.

2. JACKSON-CITY GUIDE

A. Culture

Jackson, MS is known for her perseverance and her triumphant spirit earning her the recognition of the "City with Soul". She's birthed many historical marks that have shaped this country and beyond, from Civil Rights, to Civil War, to music, to world-



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class museums and exhibits, to thriving festivals and events, to award winning attractions, to James Beard Foundation chefs and restaurants; she has so much to offer.

B. Art & Music

Steeped in southern culture, Jackson is home to a multitude of world-class painters, sculptors, dancers, actors, architects, photographers, filmmakers, musicians, and artisans of many disciplines. The city pulses with music from classical to inspirational, home-grown gospel, blues, jazz, rock 'n roll, R&B and more that can be found all around town. Beautifully changing seasons offer numerous fall and holiday events rich with tradition, surprising spring flings, and laid back summer celebrations that detour off the fast lane. This all makes Jackson a soulful place for a weekend getaway, family fun, a group tour, a reunion, a convention or a small business meeting. Let us show you how it's done in the "City with Soul"!

You can indulge in live music all over the city of Jackson. In fact, Jackson has more historical markers celebrating blues heritage than anywhere else in the state. Enjoy festivals from CelticFest Mississippi, to Blue Monday at Hal & Mal's, or a concert at Thalia Mara. If you're looking for authentic Blues, check out F. Jones Corner or Johnny T's for a mix of Rhythm & Blues. Experience the Mississippi Music Experience located at The Iron Horse Grill, where you can see lifelike wax statues of famous Mississippi musicians and an expansive collection of memorabilia.

Jackson is a gold mine for artistic express. Legendary authors like Eudora Welty, Richard Wright and Margaret Walker Alexander have called Jackson home. A plethora of artistic demonstrations can be found throughout the "City with Soul". Gallery 1, on the Jackson State campus, is a cultural meeting place where Art educates and enlightens the community. And Offbeat serves as an alternative culture store showcasing minority artists' work.



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C. Food

Jackson is where Grandmother's cooking and sacred recipes merge with world-class cooking techniques. The culinary scene in Jackson is comprised of phenomenal chefs and committed Mom and Pop restaurants. It's impossible to talk about the culinary scene without mentioning these staples in the community. It's not just the locals saying the food is good either. Several awards have been won by local restaurants and chefs, including Bully's Restaurant being named a James Beard 2016 American Classic, Chef Jesse Houston was recognized as a Best Chef semifinalist in the James Beard competition, and Chef and owner of The Manship Wood Fired Kitchen, Alex Eaton, was crowned the Mississippi Seafood King!

D. Culture & History

Jackson was at the forefront of so many events that have shaped America. It was the center of attention during the Civil War, in which Grant burned the city down three times. Monumental events are recognized throughout the city with Mississippi Freedom Trail Markers. Medgar Evers served as the first Field Secretary for the NAACP in Mississippi and led the charge for voter registration that eventually cost him his life. The home where he was assassinated in 1963 serves as a museum that contains period furnishings, exhibits and family photographs. The home was used in the film *Ghosts of Mississippi*, which tells the story of the 1994 retrial and conviction of Evers' murderer, Byron de la Beckwith.

Jackson's civil rights history continues with two Historically Black Colleges and Universities; Jackson State University (JSU) and Tougaloo College. JSU is the Urban University that has notoriety for producing legendary athletes like Walter Payton, its world renowned band, The Sonic Boom of the South and its role in the Civil Rights Movement. Tougaloo College has a storied past and is recognized as "The Cradle of the Civil Rights Movement in Mississippi."



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Excitement starts with a diverse offering of 29 unique museums and attractions from arts, to sports, to history, including two new museums which recently opened in December of 2017: The Museum of Mississippi History and the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum! Smith Robertson Museum and Cultural Center, recognized as one of CNN's 50 States 50 Spots to see, served as the first public school for African-American students and is now the home for thousands of artifacts.

After the museums, you can explore the Farish Street Historical District. A 125-acre, late nineteenth-century grid-patterned neighborhood, listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Here, you'll find over 100 years of rich African-American heritage. Next, discover the newly renovated Alamo Theater followed by a stop at Johnny T's where the likes of Duke Ellington, Lionel Hampton, and Louis Armstrong once performed.

The blues and civil rights has a rich history in Jackson. You can visit all of Jackson's blues markers for a wealth of blues heritage stories or you can follow the historic route of the Civil Rights Driving Tour. On this route, you will get a tour of the state and also have the opportunity to check out sites which have played a pivotal role in the Civil Rights Movement such as: Freedom Corner honoring Medgar Evers and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., the former home of slain Medgar Evers, the Medgar Evers Library/Statue, Jackson State University, Margaret Walker Alexander National African-American Research Center, and, the new home of the Mississippi Civil Rights Museum. Seven more markers are in the process of being added in Jackson during the next few years.

Along the Civil Rights Driving Tour you will also find plenty of historical churches to get your sing on such as Christ Temple Church of Christ Holiness, U.S.A. Old Mt. Helm Baptist Church, Central United Methodist Church, Farish Street Baptist Church, or Woodworth Chapel at Tougaloo College.

After the tours, you can experience a refreshing and authentic shopping experience from charming upscale boutiques at Highland Village, to antique furnishings and budget friendly shops and boutiques in Fondren, to familiar stores found at Metrocenter, to nearby Outlets, to fresh produce found at The Mississippi Farmers



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Market.

3. VISA APPLICATION PROCEDURE

After completing your degree program, you have the option to apply for Optional Practical Training (OPT) to experience working in the field of study before returning home, or possibly obtaining a job in the future.

OPT is essentially a period during which undergraduate and graduate students with F-1 status who have completed or have been pursuing their degrees for more than nine months are permitted by the USCIS to work towards getting practical training to complement their field of studies.

You are allowed to make a request for Post-Completion OPT 90 days before your graduation date. This means you apply for a sort of “visa” that allows you to work in the legal field after graduation. It takes about 60-90 days for United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to approve your request, upon which you are issued a work employment authorization card (EAD), which is valid for a year.

PROCEDURE:

For work authorization, you must mail a completed Form I-765 –“Application for Employment Authorization,” to U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) and pay a filing fee.

USCIS will send you a Form I-766, “Employment Authorization Document,” (EAD) upon approving your Form I-765.

Upon completing such form, the student makes an appointment with Wen Weng at the Office of Global Education at Mississippi College of Law in Clinton, and brings the following needed items to the meeting:

- Form I-765 (On this form please use the Office of Global Education Address below as your address if you don't have a permanent address)
- Form G-1145, E-Notification of Application/Petition Acceptance
- Recommendation Letter from a professor (optional)
- Copy of your Social Security card (if you have one)
- Copy of your I-94



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- Copy of your Passport and Visa
- Copies of all previous Forms I-20
- Copies of previous OPT applications and approvals (if you have one)
- Copies of previous Employment Authorization Card (if you have one)
- 2 passport-style photos (must be taken within 30 day of filing your application)-see detailed instructions in the attachment
- Application fee-check/money order for \$410

After receiving the EAD card, you are able to work and obtain whatever position you wish to in the legal field.

If you decide to stay in the US, this is a perfect time and opportunity to find an employer which will sponsor your H-1B visa, which will be required if you wish to continue working. The students cannot apply for the H-1B status themselves, as the employer must initiate the application process on behalf of the employee. A student must therefore find a job with an employer who will be willing to petition for the H-1B. While you are in the F-1 practical training status you may apply for the H-1B visa. This visa category is reserved for people who have a job offer that require the particular degree that they already possess.

65,000 H-1B visas are available every year, and another 20,000 if you possess a Master's or Ph.D. from a United States academic institution. The quota opens up every year on April 1st, and then if your H-1B is approved it will start in October of that year. If your Optional Practical Training (OPT) expires between April 1-September 30, then you will need to extend your OPT until September 30th by contacting your international student advisor.

For any other information the students can contact the Office of Global Education which handles all the visa processes as well as any other questions and inquiries by international students who attend Mississippi College School of Law.



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WEBSITE FOR MORE INFORMATION:

<https://www.uscis.gov/working-united-states/students-and-exchange-visitors/students-and-employment/optional-practical-training>

4. STUDENT TO STUDENT RECOMMENDATIONS

WHERE TO LIVE?

The easiest way to start your studies at MC LAW is to rent a room in Sterling Towers, which is located across the road from school. Until you get to know people and the city, it will be the easiest way to begin your student-experience. The minimum lease term is 6 months, but you can always find someone who lives alone and would take you for few months as a co-occupant. STERLING TOWERS is not luxury place, but there is a new part of the building with better rooms. Since law students usually spend most of their weekdays in school and the school's library, it is convenient to live practically next door.

If you decide not to live in downtown Jackson (recommended: Fondren, Belhaven, Clinton, Madison), you will need your own vehicle. Public transportation in Jackson is almost non-existent, the only way you could move around without your own vehicle is with Uber or with a friend who has a vehicle and is willing to give you a ride to wherever you need to go.

OTHER POPULAR FACILITIES: King Edwards, Standard Life Flats, NEJAM Properties Agency, Belhaven Gardens, Belhaven Springs, The District Lofts.

BUYING A CAR

Use caution when purchasing a vehicle. The best way is through a certified dealership, but always ask if it is possible to check the car at the mechanic before entering into the contract (on your own expenses). There are many scams regarding automobile sale in Jackson.

SAFETY



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Be aware of your surroundings. It is not recommended to walk around the city alone, especially at night. There are several bars and party places in the city, but it is not recommended for law students to move around during night hours.

5. ADDITIONAL CONTACT

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Center za mednarodne študije,**

Address: Delpinova ulica 18/b, 5000 Nova Gorica,

Contact person: Ass. Eva Jambrek, cms@evro-pf.si

Mississippi College School of Law: <https://law.mc.edu>

Evropska pravna fakulteta- Mississippi: <https://www.evro-pf.si/dejavnosti/mednarodno-sodelovanje/program-izobrazevanja-za-mednarodno-izmenjavo-mississippi/>



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