

Academic Advising for Master of Energy Regulation and Law (MERL)

Program Planning Guidelines

Curriculum: The MERL is a 30-credit master's degree program. The following will set forth the degree requirements. All online classes are 3 credit hours. Please refer to the Academic Regulations for official regulations and policies.

Required classes (12 credits)

_____REQ7186 Legislation and Regulation Survey

_____ENV5226 Energy Law & Policy in a Carbon-Constrained World

_____ENV5228 Energy Regulation, Markets, and the Environment

_____ENV5220 Environmental Economics & Markets

Energy Electives (minimum of 6 credits)

(Other residential classes may substitute; see VLS catalog for residential options)

_____ENV5344 Alternative Fuels and Renewable Energy

_____ENV5469 Oil and Gas Development and the Environment

Experiential/Writing Requirement (Select at least 1 of the following)

_____Independent Research Project on an Energy topic (2-6 credits)

_____WRI7301 Advanced Writing Seminar

_____MERL Externship (4-10 credits)

_____Institute for Energy and the Environment (IEE) Research Associate Program*

_____ENV5303 Advanced Energy Writing Seminar*

*offered on campus only

General Electives (Choose remaining credits from online and/or residential classes)

MERL Externship (4-10 credits)

Externships are an option to further develop your skills. Students may arrange an externship on their own or select from the many postings at the VLS Career Services Office. Externships may be local or worldwide. Students design their own Externship with the advice and consent of a Faculty Supervisor. Each externship is carefully defined in a contract with the

sponsoring organization. Contract Forms are completed by the student in accordance with the LLM guidelines as set forth below.

Note: 1 credit is the equivalent of 45 hours of work <http://www.vermontlaw.edu/academics/clinics-and-externships/masters-externships>

MERL Independent Research Projects (2-6 credits)

The following will outline the procedure for undertaking an Independent Research Project (IRP). The first step in the process is to choose a member of Vermont Law School's faculty to serve as your faculty sponsor. Although this truly is an independent project, your faculty sponsor may be able to suggest additional research resources, provide occasional feedback and comments on your progress, and assess your final project with a letter grade. The final work product should be the equivalent to a scholarly piece of legal writing. Alternatively, you and your faculty sponsor may agree to the submission of a different sort of final written product, provided that the substituted written work product itself clearly sets forth the underlying legal research engaged in by the student.

Prior to registering for this IRP, you will need to draft a contract which sets forth the obligations and expectations of your IRP to include the following:

- nature of project
- goals which the student seeks to achieve by undertaking this particular project
- brief description of the research resources necessary for the project (Your faculty sponsor may be able to suggest some additional research resources)
- summary of preliminary work already undertaken
- an estimate of the amount of time the student will spend undertaking the IRP
- a statement of expectations regarding the amount of time and effort the sponsor will devote to aiding the student in carrying out the project (you will need to work out the details with your sponsor in terms of how often and by what means you will communicate progress)
- a timetable for completion of various stages of the project
- a description of the estimated size and scope of the final work product
- number of credits
- a statement as to the mode of evaluation of the final work product. (For example, evaluation of this research project could be by both your faculty sponsor and one other member of the VLS faculty, or, it could be by your faculty sponsor and a highly qualified individual in the field of research covered by the IRP).
- Indication as to how the IRP will be graded. In general, an IRP is graded with a letter grade unless you agree and incorporate within the IRP contract that the project will be evaluated on a Pass/Fail basis.

Note: 1 credit is equivalent to 10-15 pages of scholarly work.