

JOINT JD/MAcc PROGRAM

Fall 2024

The JD/MAcc program involves two separate graduate degrees: Juris Doctor (JD/Law) and Master of Accountancy (MAcc), which are completed concurrently. Students must apply to each program separately, and they must attend law school at Brigham Young University. Acceptance into one program does not guarantee admission into the other, although the law school has historically looked favorably on students' backgrounds in accounting. Students will apply to and complete requirements for both degrees within a four-year time span following the Accounting Junior Core. For important dates and deadlines for applying to law school, visit the law school's website [here](#).

Once admitted, the student works with each program individually, although there will be an overlap of credits being taken:

MAcc	Juris Doctor (Law)
A maximum of 12 credit hours in the MAcc program are waived in recognition of classes taken in law school.	The law school waives up to 12 credit hours of electives in recognition of classes taken in the business school, as long as those 12 credits are taken <i>after</i> the student has started taking classes at the law school (i.e., during Years 3-4 in the table below).

In the first year, students will exclusively take MAcc courses. In the second year, students will exclusively take the standard first-year law courses. In years three and four, students will take a combination of MAcc and law school courses. A maximum of twenty-four credits will be waived through concurrent enrollment within these two programs. The following highlights a timeline for students interested in doing the JD/MAcc program:

	Year 1	Year 2	Years 3-4
Junior Core	1st Year of MAcc	1st Year of Law School or 1L	2nd and 3rd Years of Law School or 2L and 3L
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Complete the Junior Core ● Prepare for the LSAT* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Take only MAcc courses ● Take the LSAT* ● Apply to Law School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Take only Law courses 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Take Law and MAcc courses concurrently ● Complete BS, MAcc and Law requirements

*See notes at end of document about the LSAT and LSAT exemption.

The 1L year or first year of law school is similar to the Junior Core. You interview for a summer internship for experience and paid positions are hard to come by without being in the top 20% of your class (roughly). The summer before your 2L year, you recruit for the following summer associate position that can lead to a full-time job offer.

The JD/MAcc program opens many different career opportunities for its graduates. The average starting salary for JD/MAcc candidates over the past several years is roughly \$163,000. Salaries at the Big 4 accounting firms for JD/MAcc students may be between \$90,000 to \$120,000, depending on the firm, geographic location, and practice area. Furthermore, salaries at a law firm can range from around \$120,000 to \$215,000, depending on the size and location of the firm.

Careers in tax law are abundant, whether at a law firm, accounting firm, or inside of a corporation. Many JD/MAcc students also go on to become corporate transactional attorneys at law firms or in-house. For example, some specific practice areas in corporate law that past JD/MAcc students have accepted jobs in include: general corporate, early-stage/VC financing, private equity M&A, capital markets (IPOs), tax, estate planning, etc. These careers may include drafting corporate governance documents, negotiating terms of business transactions for clients, advising business owners on business and equity structures, mitigating risks of lawsuits, or planning for passing on generational wealth.

Professor Gladriel Shobe, who is a leading expert on the Up-C IPO structure and tax receivable agreements, is a big advocate for the program. She has seen the value that students pursuing the MAcc can bring to the profession. Rebekah Bingham, a 2022 graduate who joined Latham & Watkins in Texas working in corporate law, said, “I always loved business and discovered that I loved accounting. I had been reading some tax cases and realized I would love to shift gears into the legal profession.”

Duncan Hamilton, who is also a 2022 graduate and joining Gibson Dunn & Crutcher after graduation, said, “I was in the tax stem of the accounting program at the BYU Marriott School of Business and found that I really enjoyed the legal side of things. Law defines the reasoning and the policies underlying accounting rules. It becomes easier to comply with the rules and make sound judgment calls when you understand both.”

Holly Hafford joined Wilson Sonsini’s Salt Lake City office and said this of the JD/MAcc program: “My main reason for pursuing the JD/MAcc degree was to learn to think differently, to work on writing and communication skills, and to grow as an individual and as a professional. The JD/MAcc degree develops practical skills as well as connections with people who are willing and able to help. There are so many paths I can choose.”

When Andrew Juergen considered the program, he opted to choose the option that would open the most doors in his future. “Having a legal education that has trained me to read, draft, and understand contracts makes me a better accountant,” Juergen says. “On the other hand, the more familiar an attorney is with financial statements, taxes, cap tables, distribution waterfalls, valuation methods, and other topics covered in accounting classes, the better prepared they will be to help their clients. Law firms are looking for people who are familiar with businesses and how they work. Having an accounting degree has not only helped me to understand how businesses work but also has given me a skill set that aligns well with what I would be doing in a corporate law practice. It increases the value I can bring to whatever career path I decide to follow.” He joined Kirkland & Ellis after graduation.

These are just some of the perspectives that JD/MAcc alumni have shared, so reach out to others for more information on the opportunities this program offers.

If you have any other logistical questions, you may also contact each program directly:

- MAcc Program: julie_averett@byu.edu
- Law School: admissions2@law.byu.edu or <https://law.byu.edu>

*Although most applicants take the LSAT, the law school also accepts the GRE. Additionally, applicants who are eligible for the [LSAT Exemption](#) may apply to the law school without taking the LSAT or the GRE. Students interested in applying as an LSAT-exempt applicant should email admissions2@law.byu.edu to see if they qualify. Simply meeting the qualifications for LSAT exemption does not guarantee admission.

Given the competitive nature of law school admissions, the surer way to obtain admission into law school is by taking the LSAT and doing well on it. Additionally, the law school caps scholarship amounts for LSAT-exempt applicants, while students who take the LSAT may receive better scholarship opportunities than those who apply and are accepted LSAT-exempt, depending on how well they do on the LSAT. Once students take the LSAT, they can no longer apply as an LSAT-exempt applicant and must use their LSAT score in their application.