



# The Graduate Advisor

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## Northwestern Kellogg: The Toast of the Third Coast?

*By John Sherry,  
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It is easy to understand why foreigners often think of the United States only in terms of its two coasts. To the east, on the Atlantic, lie Washington, the American capital, and New York, arguably the capital of the world. And to the west, on the Pacific, one can find cosmopolitan San Francisco and the cultural behemoth that is Los Angeles. These four cities, in turn, account for almost all the images of America that are disseminated overseas, and they have helped, for better or for worse, create the image of a country that is at once politically powerful, morally dubious, culturally complicated, and, above all, immensely attractive.

What is harder to fathom, though, is the fact that many Americans think of the United States in the same way, envisioning a sort of bicoastal entity held together by an invisible glue called "the Midwest". For these people, the middle U.S. states are considered "fly-over" territory, since they amount to little more than the five-hour interval spent on a plane from New York to Los Angeles. But although the American Midwest has a well-deserved reputation for being flat, homogenous, and socially



*Northwestern University's Kellogg School of Management*

conservative, that stereotype ignores the presence of thriving, cosmopolitan Chicago, the region's unofficial capital.

In reality, the American Midwest offers several business education options that are not only competitive with their coastal rivals, but in some ways may be superior to them. By ignoring these schools, Russian students are doing themselves a disservice. That is why we at Pericles have chosen it as a focus area for this issue's business school profile. And while there are several Midwestern schools in Business Week's latest "Top 10" rankings (including Chicago Booth and Michigan Ross), we have chosen Northwestern Kellogg and its home city as the subjects of this article.

**See KELLOGG, page 2.**

## Inside the Rankings

*By Marian Dent, Dean,  
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All prospective graduate students have heard it from their teachers and advisors: "Don't put too much weight on the rankings!" And almost all students have ignored that advice.

There is great disagreement about the results of all the rankings. Every time a rankings article comes out, the fans and flammers rise up *en masse* to argue whether the ranking is correct or incorrect, as they alternatively laud or criticize the treatment of their particular favorite schools. Let's face it: no one agrees on any one ranking method.

The noise isn't surprising. Rankings represent big money, both to the schools, whose deans proudly solicit donors with every gain in a rankings point, to the students, for whom a higher-ranked diploma means more interest from recruiters, and to the publishers, who can be assured of readers and advertisers flocking to every rankings page. Widespread availability on the internet means rankings are read by more and more recruiters and potential applicants.

**See RANKINGS, page 4.**

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*Northwestern Campus Panorama, Evanston, Illinois*

## **KELLOGG, cont from pg. 1.**

### **About the School**

Northwestern University is probably one of the best-known institutions in the United States, laying claim to such diverse alumni as Supreme Court Justice John Paul Stevens, actor Charlton Heston, and current White House Chief of Staff Rahm Emanuel. Located in Evanston, Illinois, Northwestern is on the immediate outskirts of Chicago, America's third largest city with a metropolitan area of about 10 million people. Evanston itself is home to approximately 75,000 people, making Northwestern's surroundings a unique combination of urban and suburban environments, with many business districts, residential neighborhoods, parks, and the North Shore beaches that line Lake Michigan all in the immediate area.

Individually, the Kellogg School of Management has many positive attributes to brag about. First of all, students at Northwestern enjoy access to one of the largest university libraries in America (with over 3.5 million volumes), and those on the MBA program will study at Kellogg's Donald P. Jacobs Center, a modern building equipped with more than 17 classrooms, student lounges, and 50 further rooms reserved for seminars, group discussion, and quiet study. Furthermore, Kellogg cites its long history in the field of business education as a selling point. Founded in 1908, the school is currently ranked by Business Week as having the third best full-time MBA program in the United States, just behind Harvard and fellow local business school Chicago Booth. Admissions standards at Kellogg are therefore quite stringent. While there is no set minimum score required on any English language proficiency test, entrants to the 2009 class from non-English-speaking nations demonstrated an average TOEFL score of 110 on the computer-based exam; GMAT scores were also high, with a median of 710 for the same entering class.

For the Russian student in particular, Northwestern Kellogg might be an

attractive option not least because of the school's general international focus. First of all, the Kellogg School is home to many international student clubs that promote cultural exchange, including the European Business Club. And while only a small number of the international students come from Eastern Europe and Central Asia, the school does seem to accommodate those who make the journey. For those enrolled in the full-time, two-year MBA program, for instance, Kellogg boasts of its American Culture and English for International Business Students program. Through this outfit, students can complete a four-week intensive program designed to acclimate them with the environment of an MBA classroom at Kellogg. The courses teach new foreign students about American culture through the medium of lectures, simulations, and group projects, all of which aim to provide them with the necessary English conversation skills for a future in business. Since this program is limited to those enrolled in the full-time MBA program, students should hopefully also receive a course of study that is tailored to the business-minded individual.

Kellogg's Global Initiatives in Management trips also present a unique opportunity for international students. Under the auspices of this program, an MBA student has the opportunity to plan the curriculum for a two-week overseas research trip that that individual will make along with fellow students. The students

then, in turn, meet with government and business dignitaries in their chosen region. This could therefore be a potentially fruitful option for those foreign students interested in using the business skills they hope to acquire with an overseas MBA in the context of their home countries. Indeed the program has proven quite popular, with over 500 Kellogg students participating in 2008 alone. That year, students completed projects in a myriad number of countries around the world, including Russia.

Finally, for students seeking an MBA education that is broader in scope, Kellogg also conducts exchange programs with an impressive number of foreign business schools. These include some of the top European institutions, such as ESSEC, IESE, LBS, and Bocconi, as well as non-European options in Australia, China, India, Japan, Israel, Chile, and Thailand.

With all of these accolades and amenities, Northwestern Kellogg is clearly a business school to be reckoned with. But there are drawbacks to every institution, and this one is no different. For instance, Evanston itself is a community that students will likely either love or hate. Although it has a charming downtown, the city is mostly residential and family-oriented. This is not a place to party! In fact, the community often boasts of the fact that it is a convenient place to have a small-town lifestyle in an urban area. That, of course, is a wonderful option if you have

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*University Library at Northwestern*

a spouse and a small child, but it probably is not the right fit for a single, 28-year-old businessman. Furthermore, Evanston (along with the other communities that make up Chicago's "North Shore") is one of America's wealthiest areas, and cheap accommodation does not abound. Students therefore may find that the limited number of affordable apartments are substandard as compared to other options in the metro area.

On that note, one always has the option of living elsewhere in the Chicagoland area and commuting to school, but that task may prove difficult as well. While the local system of public transportation is adequate by American standards, Russians should not expect the ease of access to Evanston and Northwestern that one would find in Moscow. While there is a stop of the "El" (Chicago's version of the Metro) in Evanston close to Kellogg, trains are slow and infrequent by European standards. Most students will therefore likely find it difficult to keep up the pace of their American colleagues without the aid of an automobile. America, after all, invented urban sprawl, and nowhere is that more evident than in the big industrial cities of the Midwest. Students who cannot afford those sort of transportation costs might therefore want to look elsewhere.

Perhaps the biggest considerations to account for, though, are the peculiarities associated with Kellogg's location in Chicago, one of America's most lauded and maligned metropolises.

#### **About the City**

As I mentioned earlier, Chicago is the third-largest city in the United States (after New York and Los Angeles) and by far the largest in the state of Illinois. In total, the

area's 10 million people are spread out across three states in an urban conglomeration known as "Chicagoland". With its impressive skyline and location along America's "Third Coast" (Lake Michigan), Chicago is certainly among the country's most iconic metropolitan areas as well.

If it is sheer size and glamour you are looking for, Chicago cannot compete with New York. But it is the atmosphere of "The Windy City" that often draws people here instead of to "The Big Apple". While New York's outlook is truly global in nature, Chicago is, despite its size, a quintessentially American place. Midwesterners are known for being good-natured, friendly, and hospitable, and Chicagoans steadfastly retain these traits even in their urban surroundings. Unlike in other large American cities (especially New York), the street culture of Chicago is

polite and open, and strangers are by and large helpful and approachable. Furthermore, the city is expected to be a more popular destination than ever, having hosted 1.15 million foreign visitors in 2007 alone.

Perhaps more than anything else, though, this city is known for its often extreme weather, and not everybody will consider the friendly locals to be fair compensation for the unfriendly climes. Although Chicago's "Windy City" moniker was derived from the behavior of local politicians, it is equally accurate as a description of the local climate, with piercing gusts off of Lake Michigan that compound with snow and cold temperatures to make for particularly bitter winters. Although the city is on average no colder than Moscow at this time of year, the wind definitely makes for a less hospitable climate. And, paradoxically, summers are long, sunny, and hot, often uncomfortably so. Visitors who arrive in the summer are therefore often shocked to find that the view from the beaches lining Chicago's downtown fit better with a mental picture of Miami than of the Midwest.

Conveniently for students, though, the city plays the role of America's foremost transportation hub, making travel to and from Chicago, both domestic and international, easy and relatively cheap. If all roads used to lead to Rome, now they lead here, with America's interstate highway system and Amtrak railways both radiating from the city. More crucial for the foreign student, however, is the city's claim to the world's second busiest airport in terms of total traffic, Chicago O'Hare International. This massive facility provides connections

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*Chicago Skyline*

to all corners of the United States and over 60 foreign destinations, although no cities in Russia are currently among them. Formerly, Moscow was serviced directly from O'Hare by both Aeroflot and American Airlines, and it is possible that American will resume seasonal service in the near future. Even without a direct flight, however, the many connection options that exist between O'Hare and other destinations in America and Europe should ensure that travel options to and from Moscow are readily available and relatively inexpensive.

Finally, the Russian student in Chicago should not want for a taste of home in the city either. As one of the United States' premiere destinations for immigrants, Chicago and its surrounding areas are home to sizable ethnic communities from almost every corner of the globe, including the former Soviet Union. To those in the know, Chicago is synonymous with its massive Irish, Mexican, and Slavic (especially Polish) populations. While Russians are not nearly as large a presence in the metropolitan area as Poles and those from the former Yugoslavia, the Russian community is still sizable enough that Russian shops, restaurants, and even discotheques can be found (the last of which, your author can attest, are an experience not to be missed!). Chicagoland's Russian-speaking community is also centered in the suburb of Skokie, right next to Northwestern Kellogg's home in Evanston.

#### **About Time?**

In light of all the information above, maybe The Kellogg School of Management is an attractive option for a foreign MBA student, even one who did not yet know much about it. But above all else, interested Russian students should visit the school and the city to assess the situation for themselves, since there is nothing that can compare with a firsthand impression. Foreigners do not have the same inherent familiarity with Chicago that they do with New York, and students certainly ought to become more acquainted with Kellogg and the Midwest before moving to Chicago. If you do make that effort, however, maybe you will discover that it is about time to consider completing your MBA in America's heartland at Northwestern Kellogg.

For more information see: [www.kellogg.northwestern.edu](http://www.kellogg.northwestern.edu), and for information on the Chicago area, try the U.S. Census Bureau and Crain's Chicago Business [www.chicagobusiness.com](http://www.chicagobusiness.com).



## **RANKINGS, cont from pg. 1.**

Keep in mind that all the rankings have been under a lot of criticism recently, and there is much disagreement about their value. As rankings increase in importance, schools are finding ways to "play the game" to increase their standing.

The push to raise rankings may or may not be in the long-term best interests of the students. For example, rankings have been blamed for boosting admissions test scores to unrealistically high numbers, but have also been credited with increasing the number of merit scholarships available to entering students who meet those high numbers. They have been criticized for promoting popular professors over academically excellent professors, but they have been credited with ensuring that teachers keep their work relevant to the real world.

In addition, there are now so many different publishers jumping on the rankings bandwagon that many prominent schools have limited the number in which they will participate. The recent Wall Street Journal ranking of one-year MBA programs, for example, states that 13 well-known schools, including HEC, Cambridge, Rotterdam, and Marshall, declined to participate. Given the small number of one-year MBAs available in the first place, that is a significant refusal rate. It can't help but affect the accuracy of the results.

But, knowing that you will focus on rankings no matter how much I warn you against them, I'm writing this article to show you how rankings work, and how you can use them intelligently.

Because there are far more rankings for B-schools than for any other degree, we will focus here on B-school rankings, and just touch on the U.S. News law school rankings.

None of the rankings systems think alike, meaning that each ranking favors a different type of school. Each major rankings provider uses its own criteria, which, of course, it says are better than the criteria used by any of its competitors. U.S. News has a unique emphasis on faculty and professional opinion. Business Week is the most strongly based on student opinion. The Financial Times concentrates mostly on career placement. Forbes cares only about return on investment. And perhaps the most scientific of the ranking systems is that of the Economist Intelligence Unit, which polls schools, students, and graduates on a number of objective criteria, then tabulates the results the same way year-to-year.

So let's look at these one by one to see what you get.

### **U.S. News & World Report—the Academics'Advice**

U.S. News is the largest and longest-running college rankings service around. It isn't well known in Russia because it only ranks U.S. schools. U.S. News ranks all undergraduate programs in the U.S., and a good number of the U.S. graduate programs. Their B-School and Law School Rankings are the most popular in the United States.

U.S. News concentrates on the opinions of professionals in the educational field. It polls deans, program administrators, and senior professors for their opinions of their competitors. Each high-ranking educational professional is asked to grade other schools in the same field on a 1-5 scale. By creating this peer-ranking system, U.S. News is telling its readers who the top academics respect.

At first glance, this is an admirable methodology, but in practice it gets criticism from some of those same academics who are asked to do the grading. A few weeks before the annual U.S. News surveys are sent out, schools mail out slick color brochures publicizing their activities, lauding their famous faculty members, and advertising their newest publications. At conferences of professional educators, schools sponsor lavish receptions designed to ensure that their activities are remembered for a long time to come. Some say this is a waste of resources. Schools are pressured to spend money on impressing their peers when they might otherwise spend it on improving services to students.

Of course, there is more to the U.S. News rankings than simply the grades of other academics. U.S. News also developed additional criteria appropriate to the specific graduate and professional programs it ranks. For MBA programs, for instance, peer ranking is combined with the rankings of corporate recruiters to produce the school's final grade (40% of the ranking), statistics on job placement and mean starting remuneration count for another 35% of the school's ranking, and finally an objective selectivity assessment based on entering GMAT scores, undergraduate GPAs, and the fraction of students who were accepted over those who applied makes up the last 25% of the school's rank.

For law schools, U.S. News has replaced the corporate recruiter opinions with the opinions of lawyers and judges, and LSAT scores, of course, are measured instead of

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GMAT scores. Mean starting salaries are not even considered in law school rankings, and instead these are replaced by a 20% value of the rank that combines the school's employment rate and the school's bar exam pass rates. Finally, the last 20% of the law school rankings is made up of the school's expenditures per student, student/faculty ratio, and number of books in the school's library.

One long standing criticism of U.S. News' B-School and Law School rankings is the high emphasis on GMAT, LSAT, and undergraduate grades. With 25% of the rank based on selectivity, raising a school's rank means pressure to drive up the "numbers" of the entering class. Schools with high U.S. News rankings may be forced to require higher than necessary standardized test scores from successful applicants. This especially affects non-native speakers of English, for whom the GMAT verbal score is often lower than average. Some schools are guilty of needlessly sending otherwise perfectly qualified applicants back to retake the GMAT, just so the school can maintain those impossibly high average scores that help maintain its rankings.

#### **Business Week—Mr. Popularity**

The one area noticeably absent from the U.S. News rankings is the students' impressions of their schools. For MBA programs, this is where Business Week steps in to fill the void.

Business Week uses three major sources for its ranking: a student survey (which is 45% of a school's ranking), a recruiter survey worth another 45%, and an "intellectual capital" ranking accounting for the remaining 10%. The latter, based entirely on the number of publications in certain business journals and the number of books published per faculty member, arguably has absolutely nothing to do with the actual intellectual capacity of faculty members and absolutely everything to do with pushing professors to concentrate on publications rather than teaching. (BW awards 5 points per book, 3 points for a long article, and 1 point for a short one. But would you not prefer to know if anyone actually ever read these publications?)

Business Week's surveys are sometimes accused of being "flawed" by critics, both because the surveys are inherently subjective and because the survey questions are changed every year. Thus, very possibly a school's year-on-year boost or drop in the rankings could be because of different questions being asked, rather than because of any real drop or increase in

quality. BW's defense to this criticism is that the changing questions help prevent schools from unfairly influencing the rankings, and that the subjective factor is counteracted by statistical analysis of the answers to spot when responses appear to have been "coached" by the dean or other B-school personnel.

Students, though, put a lot of weight on the Business Week MBA rankings, making Business Week the most popular ranking for MBAs. Surveys are emailed each year to students in all major business schools, and in many schools students are encouraged to participate by actually having to opt out of (rather than opt into) completing a Business Week survey. This student survey method necessarily means that current students hear from and know a lot about the Business Week rankings. They look at them, talk about them, and pass them on to their future-B-school-applicant friends. Thus, among students, Business Week is Number 1. It both reflects and makes student opinion more than any other ranking service.

Business Week, then, is the place to go if you want to find out which MBA programs are doing a good job in terms of student satisfaction. Avoiding criticism about how the Business Week survey compels schools to concentrate on the popular programs over the academically sound ones, these schools are most likely to be the places where you will enjoy the educational experience and be the most satisfied during your two years in B-school. BW's high-ranking schools are likely to have active student organizations, lively professors, and high levels of student services. These factors arguably won't be as well reflected in any other ranking service.

Before getting carried away with all that, though, you have to think about why you're worrying about the rankings at all? Is it student reputation or professional reputation that really counts? All the major ranking services for business schools are highly concerned with employer opinion and the career-boosting potential of the degree. Business Week includes recruiter surveys in order to account for that. But another service may reflect that focus on career potential even more strongly...

#### **The Financial Times—Show Me the Money!**

If you are looking for a rankings system based on career prospects, FT is the place to go. FT surveys alumni three years after graduation to see how they have progressed in their careers and to determine how they assess the effect of their MBAs

on their subsequent career advancement and salary growth. Fifty-five percent of their ranking is based on career progression.

In total, a large part of that alumni survey is geared toward determining career growth. Alumni are asked to reveal both their salaries and salary increases since B-school to rank the school for placement success and international mobility. Salary data is adjusted according to "Purchasing Power Parity" data supplied by the World Bank, and, in the case of larger schools, it is also evaluated per industry sector, so that FT obtains as accurate a picture as possible about an MBA's real earning power.

FT also questions the school itself for statistical placement data. It asks questions about the percentage of students employed within three months after graduation, the percentage of people employed internationally, etc.

Financial Times also looks at the diversity and international reach of the school. A large percentage of the ranking is based on the diversity of the faculty and student body and the international experience of its MBA students.

For female applicants, the FT ranking is a good place to look because schools are also polled for the percentages of women in the faculty, on the board of directors, and in the student body. This data is available on FT's Global MBA Rankings page: <http://rankings.ft.com/exportranking/global-mba-rankings/pdf>

Finally, like Business Week, FT awards the last 10% of the ranking on the basis of faculty publications. However, since FT is more geared to international schools than Business Week, it includes a broader range of publications when determining the number of articles a professor has written.

#### **Forbes—Looking for the Bargain**

If you care as much about current expenditures as you do about future salaries, you might want to look at the Forbes rankings. Forbes forgets all other criteria and unabashedly claims that its rankings are based only on "return on investment."

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They ask alumni for their pre-M.B.A. salary figures as well as compensation numbers for three of the first five years after receiving their degrees. Then they calculate the opportunity costs—tuition plus forgone salary while in school—and compare it to alumni's post-M.B.A. salaries to determine which school offers the most value for money.

One difficulty with this is that Forbes does not account for industry sector placement in determining which schools rank highest. Although it lessens the effect of industry ebbs and spikes by accounting for results over five years, the outcome can still look unusual. For example, Forbes's number one school this year is Stanford—a school ranked not quite as high by any other publisher. Stanford's strong suit is in placing entrepreneurs. Is it any surprise that, with the banking industry in collapse, Stanford's graduates have a much higher annual income than those of the East Coast finance-oriented B-schools?

Unusual results aside, Forbes might be the place to turn if you want to know whether B-school is worth it at all. Forbes brags that graduates of its five top-ranked M.B.A. programs typically earn more than \$200,000 once they're five years out of school. But, Forbes also explains, rising tuitions and higher pre-M.B.A. salaries mean it's now taking longer for graduates to get a solid payback on their investments.

### **The Economist**

Last but not least, the Economist Intelligence Unit probably offers the most objective, long-term rankings system.

The Economist is valuable because of its long-term focus. Unlike Business Week, which changes its questions from year to year, and unlike the Wall Street Journal, which seems to use a different system with each different ranking it issues, the Economist's methods remain stable. Thus, just as investors can rely on a company's year-on-year annual reports because the law requires the same data to be used each year, you can rely on the Economist's annual rankings to show real year-on-year school improvement. What less would you expect from a bunch of top research economists?

The Economist surveys both students and recent graduates, but this subjective survey is only worth 20% of a school's ranking. 80% is based on statistics provided by the schools, looking at a weighted average of data over three years.

The Economist's rankings consist of four categories: new career opportunities

opened up (35%); students' personal development and educational experiences (35%); salary increases (20%); and networking potential (10%). Each ranking category examines both subjective components from the students and alumni, as well as objective components from the schools.

Factors examined from the statistical data include the student/teacher ratio, the average GMAT and work experience of the entering class, the diversity of students, pre- and post-MBA salaries, and many of the other usual statistics that schools can provide.

The subjective profile allows students to rank their professors, the range of special programs and electives, and even the quality of their classmates.

Uniquely, the Economist also allows each school to list its own particular strengths, and it allows students to list the school's weaknesses. The publication stresses, though, that a student's listing of a weak area is limited to that student's particular knowledge of B-schools. Thus, the weakness is only a weakness within the school, and not necessarily a weakness in comparison to other similar schools.

### **Conclusion**

Again, I want to stress that rankings should not be your main criteria for choosing a school. Ideally, you should visit a school, see the city, meet some students and sit in on some classes. At the very least you should correspond with students and alumni and examine the school's programs, course choices, and placement statistics. Above all, make sure you feel personally comfortable with the choice you are making.

But, to the extent you consider the rankings, I hope this article has helped you understand what particular rankings really assess.

For more information, check the following websites:

[http://www.economist.com/business-finance/business-education/whichmba/displaystory.cfm?story\\_id=14488732](http://www.economist.com/business-finance/business-education/whichmba/displaystory.cfm?story_id=14488732)

<http://www.usnews.com/articles/education/best-graduate-schools/2009/04/22/how-we-calculate-the-graduate-school-rankings.html>

[http://www.businessweek.com/bschools/content/apr2006/bs20060420\\_4380.htm](http://www.businessweek.com/bschools/content/apr2006/bs20060420_4380.htm)

<http://online.wsj.com/article/SB1000142405297020425140457434784066900244.html>

<http://www.forbes.com/2009/08/05/best-business-schools-09-leadership-careers-intro.html>

<http://www.ft.com/cms/s/2/5f2fb300-05c8-11df-88ee-00144feabdc0.html>



## **Pursuing Human Rights Law**

*By Andrew Mendelsohn,  
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Young lawyers and law students face many challenges when deciding to focus their careers on Human Rights Law. The many problems which potential students might face include defining a working definition of Human Rights, finding specialized degree and training programs, funding their educations, and facing the ultimate decision of whether work, study, or a combination of the two will better serve their career objectives.

As basic as it seems, one of the main problems faced by young lawyers is actually defining the term "Human Rights" and finding a standard for Human Rights Law. The question of what constitutes Human Rights is basic to the field of study, and national standards can differ significantly.

Indeed, in some places Human Rights are simply considered a specialized area of public international law, or a different field entirely. This intramural aspect of Human Rights study is reflected in many of the available degree programs. A quick review of potential degree programs reveals that many of the so-called Human Rights masters degrees are not in fact Masters of Laws (LL.M.) degrees but are Masters of Human Rights degrees, or degrees in International

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Relations with a concentration in Human Rights. The following listing, <http://www.humanrightstools.org/courses/masters.php>, comes from the Human Rights Tools website and provides a good representative listing of potential degree programs from which applicants might choose.

Reviewing possible Human Rights degree programs reveals another fact, namely that Human Rights Law is international and not national in character. This should be obvious from the fact that the most commonly accepted definition framework for Human Rights Law exists as a subset of Public International Law. However, the main implication for the potential student is more practical in nature: most students contemplating a career in Human Rights are actually thinking of International Human Rights, and, thus, must face the necessity of going abroad to further their studies. With a few exceptions, the potential student must consider leaving his or her home country for an extended period of study or work.

A review of the available choices reveals degree programs ranging from dedicated LL.M.s in Human Rights Law to part-time programs in Human Rights (in general) that run a few years. Representative universities exist in North America, Europe, and further afield. All of the programs have advantages and disadvantages.

A good example of an LL.M. program dedicated to the study of Human Rights is that offered by Northwestern University, in the U.S. Northwestern is among a select group of American universities which actually offer an LL.M. in Human Rights (and Northwestern also offers a joint JD/LL.M. program in Human Rights). However, even a review of the program description ([http://www.law.northwestern.edu/graduate/llm\\_ihr.html](http://www.law.northwestern.edu/graduate/llm_ihr.html)) and required core courses reveals the aforementioned problem in defining what exactly constitutes Human Rights studies. Northwestern defines their program as “an in-depth study of the norms and methods of international human rights law and international criminal law and their implementation by international courts and organizations and in domestic legal systems.” In other words, the program does not simply cover Human Rights Law, but in fact delves into international criminal law, domestic and international implementation and trial advocacy, as well as comparative law issues.

Further, as the course is designed in part for international students (i.e., students trained outside of the U.S.), it includes

among its core courses classes which most students would normally consider as part of an undergraduate or JD legal education. Among the required first semester courses is Legal Writing and Analysis, a class most potential students would consider more deserving of a primary legal education. Students are also strongly encouraged (but not required) to take Trial Advocacy, another class which also seems like it should be part of a primary education.

Hence, while Northwestern’s program is excellent, it is also broadly designed to go past the mere study of Human Rights into basic legal training and ancillary issues. This approach is representative of how most of the U.S. law schools design their LL.M programs in Human Rights. While the programs largely consist of a year or more studying core Human Rights subjects, they also include basic legal training, a thesis, and some required study in related fields.

This “required study in related fields” in fact sometimes eclipses the “legal” nature of graduate Human Rights Law study. Many universities in fact do not issue specialized degrees in Human Rights Law, but instead treat the subject as a subset of Political Science or International Relations.

A good example of this latter approach is the program offered by Yale University. Yale does not offer a specialized LL.M. in Human Rights, but instead offers a Masters in International Relations with a specialization in Human Rights (<http://www.yale.edu/macmillan/iac/mainternational.htm>). This program is undoubtedly excellent, but it is self-described as “a unique program that allows students to tailor an interdisciplinary degree to their particular academic and career interests.” Hence, the degree would be excellent for somebody looking for an international career working in government, private industries, or NGO’s, but does not seem to be an exact fit for a student looking to study International Human Rights Law with an intention to actually practice, absent some other work experience or education.

Another question to consider is that of paying for this graduate education. Human Rights lawyers are not known for their high salaries, and none of these degree programs are inexpensive. While most U.S. universities will do their best to assist students in finding financial aid, Europe has more programs that are either wholly or partially government funded.

The Raoul Wallenberg Institute of Human Rights and Humanitarian Law (<http://www.rwi.lu.se/index.shtml>) is representative of dedicated European

programs that are primarily government funded. The Institute is in Sweden and is named after the Swedish diplomat, Raoul Wallenberg, who issued Swedish passports to Jews in Hungary during the Second World War in an attempt to save them from deportation and extermination. The Institute offers a two-year LL.M. program in Human Rights Law, administered by the Lund University Faculty of Law. The program requires that students have a primary legal education, but as of 2010 the program does not charge tuition fees. The Masters program, in its own words, offers training in general “human rights law” with optional specializations in international labor law or IP.

Lastly, students must face the question of whether their careers are better advanced through learning via study or learning via work. For many, simply jumping head first into international human rights practice is an option, both on the national and international level. Most members of the Council of Europe offer internships, the UN also offers various internships, and even non-participants in the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), such as the U.S., send students there to intern.

The ECHR has a number of options for those wishing to practice in Human Rights Law (<http://www.echr.coe.int/ECHR/EN/Header/The+Court/How+the+Court+works/Employment+and+traineeships/>). Besides job listings, the ECHR also offers both traineeships aimed at lawyers who already have some experience with human rights issues, especially experience related to the European Convention on Human Rights, and, perhaps more importantly, the Assistant Lawyers’ Scheme. The Assistant Lawyers’ Scheme is open to lawyers from Council of Europe member states, and is aimed at helping them to start their careers. Under the scheme, lawyers work at the Registry with documents and applications to the court from the lawyers’ home countries and in their native languages. Since the program is meant to assist lawyers to start their careers, terms of employment are limited, but salary ranges are the same as those for standard Council of Europe employment. Furthermore, positions are chosen on a national level, so while competition might be stiff, a potential applicant is competing against others with presumably similar backgrounds and educations.

Two UN programs are also worth mentioning, the UNICEF Young Professional Programme ([http://www.unicef.org/about/employ/index\\_ypp.html](http://www.unicef.org/about/employ/index_ypp.html)) and the UN Associate


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Experts Program (<http://esa.un.org/techcoop/associateexperts/index.html>). Both programs have restrictions which may or may not be problematic for potential candidates. The Young Professional Program requires that candidates possess a Masters degree education and a minimum of three years work experience. The Associate Experts program requires no specific professional skills, but applicants must be citizens of one of twenty-three donor countries or be sponsored by one.

Lastly, one educational program that does not fit into any one category is still worth mentioning: Oxford University's Masters degree programme in International Human Rights Law (<http://humanrightslaw.conted.ox.ac.uk/MStIHRL/index.php>). Oxford's program differs from those previously mentioned in that Oxford has designed its program with the assumption that students are already employed. The program consists of two years of distance study with approximately a month each summer spent in lectures at the university. The program is roughly similar that offered by Northwestern, but it also gives students the freedom to study without taking a one or two year break from their professional career.

Thus, students wishing to pursue an education in Human Rights Law face many decisions, but ultimately every student should be able to find a degree or work program in the field that will fit his or her



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needs. The real problem is simply to choose, and then to pursue the choice with dedication, as competition for all of the programs is fierce.

For further information, or to review potential employment opportunities, please see the following websites:

<http://humanrightstools.org/>

<http://www.humanrightsjobs.com/>  
(subscription needed)

UN Jobs: <http://unjobs.org/>

ICC Jobs: <http://www.icc-cpi.int/Menus/ICC/Recruitment/Job+opportunities/>

Centre for Human Rights, University of Pretoria, South Africa:

[http://www.chr.up.ac.za/about/hr\\_opportunities.html](http://www.chr.up.ac.za/about/hr_opportunities.html)

Human Rights Resource Center, University of Minnesota: <http://www.hrusa.org/field/joblinks.shtml>

Eurobrussels: <http://www.eurobrussels.com/>

Public Service Law Network: <http://www.PSLawNet.org> (subscription required)

[Traineeships etc. in the FRA \(EU Fundamental Rights Agency\)](#)

[Eldis.org](#)

European Court of Human Rights: <http://www.echr.coe.int/ECHR/EN/Header/The+Court/The+Registry/Employment/>

European Personnel Selection Office: [http://europa.eu/epso/working/workhome\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/epso/working/workhome_en.htm)

Commonwealth Human Rights Initiative Jobs: <http://www.humanrightsinitiative.org/jobs/>

Amnesty International: <http://www.amnesty.org/en/jobs>

International Development Law Organization: <http://www.idlo.int/English/Jobpages/JOBprofessional.asp>

Internships at Amnesty International (Swedish): <http://net19.amnesty.se/jobb/praktik/>

Jobs, internships: <http://cambodiajobs.blogspot.com/>



*The European Court of Human Rights*

