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May 2014 E-newsletter Student Spotlight: Mats Meyer (LL.M'14)

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News @ Georgia Law May 2014 Student Profile



Name: Mats Meyer

Age: 24

Hometown: Schoten, Belgium

Expected graduation year: 2014

Georgia Law achievements and awards: Graduate Assistant for Assistant Professor Timothy Meyer

Georgia Law extracurricular activities: Sports & Entertainment Law Society, Business Law Society and Trial Practice Association

Undergraduate degree/ institution/ year: J.D. / University of Alicante (Alicante, Spain)/ 2013

1. What did you do before attending law school?

The university system is different in Spain. Unlike in the United States, we go into law school right after we finish high school. My first year of law was actually in Belgium. However, after a couple of months there I found I couldn't really adapt to my home country anymore, so I decided to move to Spain and start my legal career there.

2. Why did you choose to attend the University of Georgia School of Law for your Master of Laws in U.S. law?

My main career goal has always been to become a licensed attorney in New York. This requires you to take the New York bar exam. However, foreign-trained attorneys are required to take a Master's program at an American Bar Association accredited law school in order to meet the bar requirements. UGA offered to best and most versatile program that would allow me to take the required courses in American law. Furthermore, their graduate assistantship program allowed me to finance my studies.

3. What inspired you to become a lawyer?

I believe in justice. I know this might sound cliché, but it's true. I believe that we, as lawyers, have the privilege to have the opportunity to make a difference in people's lives by gaining the necessary knowledge to apply those abstract, and sometimes very confusing, principles of justice to day-to-day cases.

4. What are your plans after graduation (if applicable)

Take the New York bar in July, and then it's on to job searching for me!

5. Where do you see yourself 10 years from now?

Hopefully I will be an associate at an international law firm that will allow me to grow both on a professional and on a personal level.

6. Who is your favorite Georgia Law professor? Why?

I must say Prof. David Shipley. His personality simply brightens up the classroom. This is not always an easy task, especially not in a class like Civil Procedure.

7. Thus far, what is your most memorable experience from your time at Georgia Law?

Meeting all my wonderful friends. As an international student, being away from your family back home can sometimes get lonely. Your friends become your family.

8. What are some activities/clubs/clinics you are involved in at the law school?

I try and get involved in as many projects as I can, especially those related to entertainment law. So far, the different law school associations I have been involved in have really done a good job in getting us closer to the practical side of the areas of law they represent.

9. What made you decide to join/enroll in your corporate law classes?

I have always been more inclined towards intellectual property law. This was because I wanted to specialize in entertainment law. However it never occurred to me that a great deal of what goes on in the area of entertainment law is actually business related. That why I decided to take multiple courses related to corporate law, and so far, it has been great!

10. What do you enjoy most about the U.S. legal system?

As a civil law practitioner, practically everything we learn in law school is based on statutes and legislation; translation: very boring and dry material that does not give law students the necessary tools to actually know how to apply those rules to a real life case. This causes us to be less prepared once we enter our mandatory internships. In common law countries such as the United States, most of the teaching is case-based. This makes the material much more dynamic and gives you a very good idea on how the law applies to specific fact patterns. I believe this allows us to be much more prepared for when we enter the work force.

11. What has been your most rewarding experience through the LL.M. program at Georgia Law?

It's been a crazy ride from day one, but in a good way. Meeting new people, exploring a new country, learning about a new legal system ... It's all been very exciting.

12. How has this experience affected your career plans?

It has allowed me to have a better understanding of the U.S. legal system, as well as to meet the requirements for the New York bar.

13. What are your hobbies?

Aside from law, travelling is definitely my biggest passion. Exploring new cultures, new people, etc., opens the mind and the heart. It allows you to have a different and broader view on things.

14. If you could share an afternoon with anyone, with whom would you choose to spend it?

I think I speak for most of us girls when I say with Chris Hemsworth in his Thor costume, for obvious reasons (wink!)

15. Where is your favorite place to study? Why?

The law library. It's simply breathtaking.

16. What are two things you always have to have with you when you study?

My laptop and my highlighters. No student can live without either!

17. What do you like most about living in Athens?

I love that although it has the charms of a small southern town, there is always something to do. It is very involved in the music scene, and I love it.

18. What do you do to handle the stress of law school?

Because I have been doing this for such a long time (J.D.s in Spain are five years long), I have learned to calm down and take some perspective. My best advice to first-year students is to work hard but also try and look at the bigger picture. Many others have taken the same exams as you and have stressed over it in the exact same way. They succeeded, and so will you.

19. What would you consider your greatest accomplishment in life?

Getting my graduate assistantship at UGA. My life goal has always been to practice as a lawyer in New York City and getting to Georgia was a big step towards that direction. I consider myself very lucky, since it was the only way I could afford coming to the States and pursue my legal career here.

20. What is your favorite place on campus? Why?

The law library. I believe it's the perfect place to sit down and focus on your work. It's a perfect setting to go and feel inspired.



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