

History of the Texas Wesleyan University School of Law

The Texas Wesleyan School of Law is a vibrant, American Bar Association-accredited school and a member of the Association of American Law Schools. With a 23-year history, and more than 3,000 graduates practicing law, Texas Wesleyan's School of Law is a major player in the Dallas-Fort Worth legal community.

The law school began in Irving in 1989 as the Dallas/Fort Worth School of Law. At the school's founding, DFW was the largest metropolitan area in the country with no night law school. The first class enrolled in August 1989 had 93 students.

At the school's outset, it only offered night classes, and was first located on the Dallas Province campus of the School Sisters of Notre Dame convent in Irving, a space shared with a boarding school. Frank W. Elliott, former dean of the Texas Tech University School of Law, was the school's first permanent dean. He currently serves as Professor of Law and Dean Emeritus.

The day school division began in 1991. That year, the school relocated to the former campus site of Recognition Equipment, Inc., also located in Irving.

Texas Wesleyan acquired the law school in 1992. The first class of the Texas Wesleyan University School of Law graduated in early 1993. Waivers were granted by the Texas Supreme Court on a vote of 9-0 so that Texas Wesleyan law graduates could take the Texas State Bar exam, even though the school had not yet been accredited by the American Bar Association. Provisional accreditation was granted by the ABA in August 1994.

The school moved to its downtown Fort Worth location in 1997, and, in 1999, the law school was granted full accreditation with the American Bar Association.

Texas Wesleyan University President Frederick G. Slabach served as Dean and Professor of Law at the School of Law from 2003-2006. Under his leadership, a \$6.5 million renovation project kicked off in March 2004, which transformed the second floor into a 40,000-square-foot area that included the Amon G. Carter Lecture Hall, Bernie Schuchmann Conference Center, classrooms and administrative office space. The second phase doubled the size of the Dee J. Kelly Law Library. Renovations were completed in October 2005.

In January 2012, Texas Wesleyan became a member of the Association of American Law Schools.