

Junior Year

September

Begin establishing a relationship with faculty members.

- Faculty members are great resources for advice and recommendations in the future.
- Research various law schools that may be of interest to you.
- Prepare for the June Law School Admissions Test (LSAT)

March

- Register for the June LSAT
- Discuss your options with a pre-law advisor or other faculty member.
- Create a list of faculty to write your letters of recommendation.

June

- Take the LSAT
- Begin preparing your personal statement.
- Begin preparing your resume.
- Create a list of schools you would like to apply to.

July-August

- Register with the Law School Data Assembly Service (LSDAS)
 - This service allows you to apply to schools with electronic applications. It is also required to use when sending your transcripts.
- Send transcripts to LSDAS
- Request information (viewbooks) from schools.
- Visit schools.
- Register and prepare for the October LSAT, if necessary

Senior Year

September

- Finish personal statement and resume.
- Request letters of recommendation from faculty.
- Continue to visit schools.

October

- Take the October LSAT, if necessary.
- Complete applications.
- Have someone review your application for possible mistakes.

November

- Send completed applications to law schools.

December

- Keep in contact with law schools on the status of your application.

January

- Send an updated transcript to LSDAS.
- Submit financial aid forms, including the FAFSA.

February-April

- Evaluate offers, including financial aid awards.
- Submit an acceptance and deposit to your school of choice before their deadline.
- Notify other schools of your decision not to attend.

Careers Using a Law Degree

TEACHING:

Teaching undergraduate or graduate students on such topics as legal history, political science and communications.

ADMINISTRATION:

Assistant and associate deans, placement and admissions directors, academic advisors, financial aid officers and coordinators of legal education programs

UNIVERSITY COUNSEL:

Work with contracts, labor relations and tax matters, as well as with issues specific to educational institutions.

CORPORATE COUNSEL:

Labor relations, contract administration, tax, mergers and acquisitions, real estate development, and interpretation of state and federal regulations.

PUBLIC ACCOUNTING FIRMS:

Mergers and acquisitions, corporate reorganization, estate planning and foreign taxation.

BANKING:

Probate matters, personal pensions, corporate trusts and profit sharing.

ASSOCIATIONS AND PROFESSIONAL ORGANIZATIONS:

Legislative and regulatory work, administrative, managerial, and communications functions.

FEDERAL GOVERNMENT:

Civil rights activist, patent examiner, contract administrator, criminal investigator, employee relations specialist, tax law specialist, etc.

CAPITOL HILL:

Advising members on legislative proposals, writing position papers/speeches, developing policy positions and legislative initiatives, dealing with constituents and the press, and handling a variety of administrative matters.

MILITARY:

Commissioned officers.

STATE AND LOCAL GOVERNMENT:

Prosecution, energy, environment, criminal justice, health and education.

JUDICIAL ADMINISTRATION:

Judicial clerkships.

PRIVATE PRACTICE:

Corporate Law, wills and trusts, small businesses, public interest law, etc.

LEGAL SERVICES:

Legal Aid, Public Defender, family law, housing, public assistance, consumer lending and employment law.

PRIVATE FIRMS & LAW CENTERS:

Public interest law dealing with consumer rights, immigration, abused children, civil rights, employment discrimination, housing, environment, labor-side labor law, the elderly, health care, criminal law, sexual harassment, as well as many other areas.

OTHER NON-TRADITIONAL CAREERS:

Affirmative Action

Agent Work for Performers,

Artists and Sports Figures

Banking, Insurance & Finance

Business (Restaurants, Museums, etc.)

Journalism

Labor Relations

Law Enforcement

Law Librarianships

Lobbying

Consulting
Corporate and Management Positions
Government Contracts
Government Relations

Mediation & Arbitration
Public Relations
Real Estate
Writing & Publishing

Major Components of a Law School Application

- General Application:
 - Includes general information, such as name, address, honors received, residency, and social security number.
- Resume:
 - Not required to submit to all schools, but recommended. Include education, work experience, organizations and clubs, and special interests.
- Personal Statement:
 - Describe yourself and your accomplishments and any information you see a important to your application. Most schools allow you to write about almost anything that you want to, but some schools have a specific question that also needs to be answered.
- Criminal Background Questions:
 - Each application has a serious of questions regarding your history of academic dishonesty and criminal background. If you answer yes to any of these questions, an attachment is necessary to explain the situation. Answering yes does not disqualify you from admittance.
- Additional Explanations or Statements:
 - Most schools encourage students to submit explanations of anything on their application. They may also submit a statement about why they chose that school to apply to if there is a specific reason.
- Financial Aid Application:
 - Many schools have a separate financial aid application (in addition to the FAFSA) that must be submitted. Pay attention to deadlines and directions.
- Application Fee:
 - Fee amounts vary significantly by school. Contact each school and inquire about their application fee waiver policy. Some schools allow students to waive the fee if they do not have the funds available.
- Signature:
 - If you submit your application online, do not forget to print and mail the signature page with your application fee.
- LSDAS report:
 - Will be automatically submitted to each school you apply to if you have sent your transcripts to LSDAS and apply electronically.

The LSAT

- It costs \$118 to take the Law School Admissions Test.
- Besides the writing sample, there are 3 categories of test sections.
 - **Reading Comprehension**
 - Passages from one of four fields: law, humanities, social sciences, or natural sciences.
 - Each passage is accompanied by 5-8 questions.
 - 35 minutes to complete the section. Usually 4 passages and 27 questions.
 - **Logical Reasoning**
 - 2 separate sections of 24-26 questions.
 - Short argument, then one or two questions to analyze and evaluate the argument or draw inferences.
 - 35 minutes to complete each section.
 - **Logic Games**
 - Four scenarios or games, followed by 4-7 questions.
 - 35 minutes to complete this section.
 - Multiple practice exams can increase the score in this section.
- The LSAT also contains an experimental section. This section will be one of the 3 explained above, and is difficult, if not impossible, to predict which one it is.
- After the 5 sections described above, there is a 35-minute writing sample. This section is not scored, but is sent to law schools that you apply to.

LSAT Preparation

- There are many ways to prepare for the LSAT.
- People prepare differently in order to accommodate their own learning style.
- **Self-Preparation:**
 - Numerous study guides and tools are available to assist someone preparing for the LSAT.
 - Past LSAT tests are available to purchase. The answer key is included in order for you to test yourself and see the results immediately.
 - Other tools, such as Kaplan, include an in-depth look at each section, sample tests, and explanations of why each answer is correct. They also may include a CD-ROM to assist in studying.
 - The most important preparation technique is practice. If you take multiple practice tests, you will not be surprised on the day of the real test and will discover certain techniques to answering the questions.
- **Preparation classes:**
 - Classes are available to teach you how to prepare for the LSAT.
 - These classes range from \$300 to \$2,000. Most classes are approximately \$1,000.
 - Classes range in length and include the administration of multiple practice test sessions.
 - Classes offer instructors who have scored extremely high on the LSAT.
 - Some classes guarantee a higher score.
- **Most importantly:** Use the best preparation techniques that will work well with your own style of learning and test taking.

The Personal Statement

- An essay, approximately 1-3 pages, that is intended to set you apart from the other applicants.
- Aside from your GPA and LSAT score, the personal statement is an extremely important part of the application.
- Demonstrate your ability to effectively argue for yourself.
- There is usually not a specific question that needs to be answered. Your topic should be derived from your personal experiences and inspirations.
- Most schools would like to know about any personal tragedies that you have overcome, what inspires you, or why you have chosen to apply to law school. You may even include your specific reasons for applying to that particular school.
- If the school requests that you answer a specific question, or remain within a certain length, it is imperative that you follow those directions.
- Grab the reader's attention right away.
- Use one central theme and include a conclusion.
- Make sure to have other people review and critique your rough draft.
- Do not use this to explain your low test scores or grades or any other negative factors. Do that in a separate addendum.

Financial Aid

- Fill out the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as possible.
- Unlike for your undergraduate degree, your parents' income is not included on the **FAFSA** for graduate school students.
- Pay attention to the deadlines for each school. They are often different and can be due anytime from February to April.
- Fill out any additional forms requested by each school. If you do not adhere to these deadlines, you could miss out on thousands of dollars in grants and loans.
- **Scholarships** are also available at most, if not all, schools.
- Consult each school's website or viewbook for a list of scholarships, applications, and deadlines.
- Apply for any and all scholarships through the law school and any others you may come across in online searches. Free money is always great!
- The federal government may offer you loans up to \$18,500 each year. Any additional money you need can come from private loan institutions. This part of the financial aid process is often completed after choosing which school you will attend.

Acceptance or Rejection

What do all of these letters mean?

- **Acceptance:**
 - These do not always come in the large envelope, so do not be discouraged if you have received a small envelope.
 - These letters will congratulate you and offer you a seat in the entering class.
 - Acceptances are contingent upon completing your undergraduate degree.
 - Each school will ask for a seat deposit if you plan to attend that school. They can range from \$100-300 or more and are usually due between April 1st and 15th.
- **Waitlist:**
 - Some students are put on the waitlist for the school they have applied to.
 - This means that you are on a list of students who are next in line to be accepted after some students withdraw their application or acceptance.
 - You may have to wait until the summer before class starts to find out the results of your application.
 - Unless this is your top choice school, you may want to put a deposit down at another school that has accepted you.
- **Hold:**
 - If a school wants to take the time to look further at your application, they may place you on hold.
 - This means they have not yet made a decision on whether or not to accept you, reject you, or place you on the waitlist.
 - As with a waitlist, you may have to wait until the summer to hear about the status of your application.
- **Rejection:**
 - The school does not offer you a seat in the entering law school class.

How Can I Decide?

- Make a table of all the law schools you have applied to.
- Things to include are: their national ranking according to US News, location, population of the city, cost for resident and non-resident tuition, incoming class size, bar passage rate, average GPA and LSAT scores, and any other criteria that is important to you in making your decision.
- As your letters come in, update the list with scholarship offers and cross off any schools you no longer wish to attend.
- Ideally, you want to go to the school that you are most excited about attending. You should also factor in costs and programs available.