



Prelaw at Case

General Information for Undergraduates at Case Western Reserve University

COURSE SELECTION AND MAJORS

Prelaw at Case is not a fixed course of study. Students are free to choose any one of the many major fields in the arts and sciences or engineering. Students may also choose a double major or a major and a minor field.

While political science is still the single most popular prelaw major, it is chosen by no more than 1 out of 5 of the total national pool of law school applicants. More than 200 different majors are usually represented in each year's pool of applicants. The chart on the next page shows more information about some of the popular majors selected by prelaw students nationwide.

Recent Case graduates who have been admitted to law school have majored and double-majored in accounting, anthropology, biology, business, chemistry, communications, computer science, economics, English, geology, history, music, nursing, political science, psychology, sociology and several different fields of engineering.

ESSENTIAL SKILLS AND VALUES

The American Bar Association, which accredits the nation's 187 law schools, considers the following core skills and values to be essential for competent lawyering:

- Analytic and problem-solving skills;
- Critical reading ability;
- Writing skills;
- Oral communication and listening skills;
- Research ability;
- Task organization and management skills;
- The personal values of serving others and promoting justice.

General education and core requirements at Case, as well as the various majors and minors, all help our students to develop these skills. In addition, Case students can choose from a wide

range of extracurricular activities that also help to develop these skills and values, including such traditional prelaw favorites as the Model United Nations, mock trial team, Prelaw Society, and student government.

RECOMMENDED AREAS OF KNOWLEDGE

The American Bar Association recommends several areas of knowledge as important preparation for law school. Each of these areas is an important component of the liberal arts education available to all students at Case, including those who major in engineering or nursing.

- A broad understanding of history, particularly American history, and the various factors (social political, economic and cultural) that have influenced the development of the pluralistic society that presently exists in the United States;
- A fundamental understanding of political thought and theory, and of the contemporary American political system;
- A basic understanding of ethical theory and theories of justice;
- Grounding in economics, particularly elementary micro-economic and macro-economic theory, and an understanding of the interaction between economic theory and public policy;
- Some basic mathematical and financial skills, such as an understanding of basic pre-calculus mathematics and an ability to analyze financial data;
- A basic understanding of human behavior and social interaction; and
- An understanding of diverse cultures within and beyond the United States, of international institutions and issues, and of the increasing interdependence of the nations and communities within our world.

REPRESENTATION OF MAJORS IN NATIONAL APPLICANT POOL

This chart shows only a few of the more than 200 different majors that are usually represented among the national pool of law school applicants. This particular data relates to the class that entered law school in 1998 and graduated in 2001.

The large group of “Other” majors, more than 1 out of every three applicants, includes a broad range of engineering fields and nursing, as well as languages, dance, music, theatre, area-studies, and dozens of other fields in the arts and sciences.

“Success Rate in Admissions” refers to the percentage of each group of majors who were admitted to at least one law school.

Major	# of total applicants	% of total applicant pool	Success Rate in Admissions*
Political Science	13,341	18.57%	73.01%
History	5,178	7.16%	78.93%
English	5,017	6.94%	76.96%
Psychology	3,828	5.59%	73.20%
Criminal Justice	3,231	4.47%	56.29%
Economics	2,610	3.06%	78.05%
Accounting	2,124	2.94%	71.47%
Sociology	1,918	2.65%	67.27%
Business Admin.	1,799	2.49%	56.59%
Finance	1,667	2.30%	71.09%
General Biology	1,164	1.61%	75.17%
Business Mgt.	1,103	1.52%	60.47%
Marketing	967	1.37%	64.01%
Biology – Spec.	513	.71%	82.26%
Environmental Sc.	456	.63%	82.24%
Chemistry	453	.61%	75.72%
Mathematics	328	.45%	76.52%
Computer Science	307	.42%	62.54%
Physics	115	.16%	87.83%
Other	26,131	36.12%	65.63%
TOTAL	72,340	100.00%	69.68%

Based on data obtained from LSAC for the 1998 entering class.

Table compiled by Dr. Carol Leach, Chicago State University.

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A PRELAW TIMETABLE

Freshmen are encouraged to focus their attention first on becoming acclimated to college life and their academic studies. If time allows, prelaw students can become involved with the Prelaw Society and also introduce themselves to the Prelaw Advisor, who is a part of the team of advisors available in the Office of Undergraduate Studies.

Sophomores may also wish to join the Prelaw Society and become active in other extra-curricula activities that help build their prelaw skills. Since an applicant’s GPA is a key factor in law school admissions, sophomores are also encouraged to stay focused on their coursework.

Juniors often meet with the prelaw advisor in the fall semester to begin researching law schools

and preparing for the LSAT (Law School Admissions Test), which is required by all accredited law schools. The LSAT consists of multiple-choice questions in analytical reasoning, reading comprehension, and logical reasoning, as well as a thirty-minute writing sample. The applicant’s GPA and LSAT score are the two most important factors in law school admissions. Juniors are advised to take the LSAT in June following the junior year. Those anxious for a head start on the LSAT can log onto www.lsac.org, the website of the Law School Admission Council, to find an LSAT “Question of the Day”, an easy way to become familiar with the format of the exam even before you start serious preparation. The LSAC website is also where you register on-line for the

LSAT and where you can purchase books and sample tests to help you prepare.

The LSAC website includes links to all of the ABA-approved law schools to help students begin researching law schools. Juniors should also attend one of the several regional and local Law School Fairs to talk with admissions staff and to gather bulletins, brochures, disks and CD's with information about the various law schools.

Seniors who plan to enter law school right after college are especially busy in the fall semester working with the Prelaw Advisor to select their final lists of law schools and to prepare the resumes and personal statements that are part of the applications. Seniors who didn't take the LSAT in June should take the October test so that they will have results in time to refine their selection of law schools

Seniors not already registered will return to the www.lsac.org website to register with the Law School Data Assembly Service (LSDAS) that acts as a central repository for transcripts and letters of recommendation.

Law schools and LSAC are doing everything they can to make the application process fast, easy, and less expensive. Applicants can purchase the LSACD or web access that includes the application forms for all of the accredited law schools. Applicants can submit many of their applications on-line using the LSACD or directly at the websites of the various law schools.

Not everyone plans to attend law school right after college. There are many other options available to prelaw seniors, including prestigious fellowship opportunities, Master's programs, or employment for a year or more before applying to law school. In fact, nationally and at Case, nearly two-thirds of law school applicants have been out of college for a year or more before applying and the average age of entering law school students is 25.

RECENT SUCCESS WITH LAW SCHOOL ADMISSIONS

Each year a large number of Case seniors and alums are admitted to our own School of Law. In addition, over the years Case seniors and graduates have been admitted to nearly every one of the nation's other accredited law schools.

In the five groups that started law school from fall 1999-2003, one or more Case

applicants were admitted to the following law schools:

Albany University
American University (DC)
Arizona State University
Ave Maria School of Law (MI)
Baylor University (TX)
Benjamin Cardozo (NY)
Boston College
Boston University
Brooklyn Law School
California Western University
Capital University (OH)
Case Western Reserve University
Catholic University of America (DC)
Chapman University (CA)
IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law (IL)
Cleveland State University
Columbia University
Cornell University
DePaul University (IL)
Drake University (IA)
Duke University
Emory University
Florida Coastal School of Law
Florida State University
Fordham University
Franklin Pierce Law Center (NH)
George Mason University (VA)
George Washington University
Georgetown University
Golden Gate University
Harvard University
Hofstra University (NY)
Howard University
Indiana University – Bloomington
Indiana University – Indianapolis
John Marshall Law School (IL)
Lewis & Clark - Northwestern (OR)
Louisiana State University
Loyola Law School - Los Angeles
Loyola University of Chicago
Loyola University - New Orleans
Marquette University
McGeorge School of Law (CA)
Michigan State University
New England School of Law (MA)

New York Law School
New York University
Northeastern University (MA)
Northwestern University (IL)
Ohio Northern University
Ohio State University
Oklahoma City University
Pace University (NY)
Pennsylvania State University (Dickinson)
Pepperdine University (CA)
Quinnipiac University (CN)
Regent University (VA)
Rutgers – The State University – Camden
Rutgers – The State University – Newark
St. John's University (NY)
St. Louis University (MO)
St. Thomas University (FL)
Santa Clara University
Seton Hall University (NJ)
Southwestern University (CA)
South Texas University
Stanford University
State University of New York – Buffalo
Suffolk University (MA)
Syracuse University
Temple University (PA)
Thomas Jefferson School of Law (CA)
Thomas M. Cooley Law School (MI)
Tulane University (LA)
University of Akron
University of Arizona
University of Arkansas
University of Baltimore
University of California Los Angeles
University of California - Berkeley
University of California - Davis
University of California - Hastings
University of Chicago
University of Cincinnati
University of Colorado
University of Connecticut
University of Dayton
University of Denver
University of Florida
University of Hawaii
University of Houston
University of Illinois

University of Kentucky
University of Louisville
University of Maine
University of Maryland
University of Miami
University of Michigan
University of Minnesota
University of Missouri - Columbia
University of Nevada - Las Vegas
University of North Carolina
University of Notre Dame
University of Oregon
University of Pennsylvania
University of Pittsburgh
University of Richmond
University of San Diego
University of San Francisco
University of Southern California
University of Texas
University of Toledo
University of Utah
University of Virginia
University of Washington
Valparaiso University (IN)
Vanderbilt University
Vermont Law School
Villanova University (PA)
Wake Forest University (NC)
Washington and Lee University (VA)
Washington University (MO)
Wayne State University (MI)
Western State University (CA)
Whittier Law School (CA)
William and Mary (VA)
Yale University

THE RESOURCES OF THE CASE SCHOOL OF LAW

Undergraduates at Case have a wealth of prelaw resources available at our own outstanding school of law. Those who undertake law-related research projects have access to the excellent law library. Several law professors also teach undergraduate courses in history, political science and economics. Both law faculty and law students participate in programs of the Prewlaw Society and law students and graduates help coach the undergraduate Mock Trial team.

Prelaw students have also participated as jurors in mock trials held as a part of the law school course in Trial Tactics.

Some undergraduates are employed by the law school in part-time positions as library or office assistants or as actors portraying clients in courses that train law students to interview and counsel. Others take advantage of opportunities to sit in on a law school class or to watch law students compete in moot court or mock trial programs.

Undergraduates are also invited to attend the many lectures offered each year at the law school by nationally known legal scholars and experts.

And, of course, undergraduates can learn a lot about law school just by meeting and talking with current law students at the law school, on campus, or even in their dorms, where frequently law students are Resident Directors.

BOOKS AND WEB RESOURCES

The Case Library, local public libraries, and local bookstores have a variety of books about preparing for the LSAT, applying to law school, succeeding in law school, and finding employment in the legal profession. A recent search for prelaw resources at www.BarnesandNoble.com and www.amazon.com yielded over 150 books on LSAT preparation alone, and more than 30 books about applying to, and succeeding at law school!

A variety of websites also offer valuable information and resources for prelaw students. Here are just a few useful sites to get you started.

Go to: www.abanet.org/legaled/prelaw/prep.html for the complete recommendations for prelegal education from the American Bar Association.

Go to: http://law.baylor.edu/new_prosp_students/thinking.htm for discussion of seven important questions to test your aptitude for a legal career.

Go to: www.lsac.org for information about the LSAT exam and on-line registration. Try your hand at the LSAT Question of the Day or link to all of the ABA-accredited law schools. Look for information on Minority Perspectives on Law School and read the statement of law schools Deans concerning the various rankings of law schools.

Go to: www.ilrg.com/pre-law.html for the Internet Legal Resources Guide links to many prelaw websites including several related to financial aid, law school rankings, LSAT commercial prep programs and additional on-line college prelaw handbooks.

Go to www.uky.edu/Law/prospective_students/faqs.html For an excellent set of prelaw FAQ's answered by Drusilla Bakert, Associate Dean for Admissions at the University of Kentucky School of Law.

PRELAW ADVISOR

Undergraduates who have questions about prelaw education and opportunities at Case or who want more information about legal careers and the law school admissions process are invited to contact the Prelaw Advisor, Dr. Terri Mester. She received a BA, MA and Ph.D. from CWRU and is a SAGES Lecturer. Her professional writing workshops for lawyers have been accredited by the American Bar Association.

For information about Dr. Mester's office hours at Sears 357 (Office of Undergraduate Studies) and to make an appointment, call 368-2928.

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