

PRE-LAW

Students who attend law school and become accomplished professionals come from a variety of educational backgrounds and majors. Students may choose to major in disciplines considered to be traditional preparation for law school such as political science, history, English, philosophy, business or economics. Or they may choose such diverse areas as science, nursing, public health and education.

Whatever major is chosen, students are encouraged to pursue an area of study that interests and challenges them, taking the opportunity to develop research and writing skills. Taking a broad range of courses from demanding instructors is an excellent preparation for law school.

Students will want to meet with the pre-law advisor as early as possible. This is absolutely essential, not only for identifying the best courses to take, but also for taking steps to become a competitive candidate for admission, preparation for the LSAT examination, the application process, financing a legal education, and researching and identifying law schools to which they want to apply. This is a process that spans the entire undergraduate education experience and should begin in the first year.

The core skills and values important for law students and attorneys include:

- Analytic and problem solving skills (thinking clearly and being open to all points of view)
- Critical reading
- Writing skills (writing carefully and with clarity)
- Oral communication/listening
- Caring about ideas and operating from a broad spectrum of knowledge including history, philosophy, and politics
- Research skills
- Organization/management skills (working cooperatively with others)
- Technology/numeracy (understanding numbers and data, skillful in the use of technology)
- Public service and promotion of justice

Whatever major is selected, students should supplement it with courses that provide them with general knowledge including:

- A broad understanding of history, social, political, economic and cultural phenomena. Courses in American and Western history, American politics, including political thought and the contemporary political system, sociology, and economics are recommended.
- Critical thinking and writing. Courses in philosophy and English, especially writing, and Communication Studies are recommended.
- Basic mathematical and financial skills. Courses in accounting, finance and economics as well as mathematics are recommended.
- A basic understanding of human behavior and social interaction. Courses in sociology, psychology and critical studies are recommended.
- An understanding of diverse cultures within and beyond the United States, of international institutions and issues, of world events and the interdependency of nations and communities around the world. Courses in international relations, economics, business, and critical studies are recommended.