

Pre-Law Workshop

Career and Community Learning Center



College of Liberal Arts
UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA

Career and Community Learning Center

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Do I Want To Be A Lawyer? Should I go to Law School?

This is a difficult question to answer. Some people claim that they knew they wanted to be a lawyer from the time they were quite young, but most struggled with their decision up until the time they applied to law school. In fact, many law students and even recent graduates are still unsure of the answer to this question.

Self-Reflection

The Wrong Reasons to Go to Law School¹

I'm a liberal arts major, and I don't know what else to do with my degree

My parents want me to go.

I have always wanted to go to law school/be a lawyer.

I have always been fascinated by the law. It's intellectually stimulating.

I want to change the world.

I like to argue/debate.

Everyone else in my family is a lawyer.

I did well on the LSAT, so why not?

I want to make a lot of money.

Law school is so versatile. I can use it as a stepping stone to something else, like business.

The Right Reasons to Go to Law School

I want to be a lawyer. (If you don't know what that means, go find out!)

The mistake many students make is that they focus on law school instead of on careers in the law. Law school can be a fun, intellectually challenging endeavor. It can also help you to please your parents and to postpone your career decision-making for a few more years. But ultimately, law school is just that- three years of schooling that prepares you for a career in the law. You are not even a lawyer when you graduate! You don't know enough to be one. You'll need to take and pass the bar before you can call yourself a lawyer, and you'll need to gain experience before you'll feel comfortable with that label.

Since law school prepares you to be a lawyer, you will need to find out as much as possible about what being a lawyer is all about before you decide to go to law school. That means at least the following:

Talk to lawyers. Ask them if they like their jobs and why. Find out what they do, and what they like and dislike about their daily activities. Find out if they are happy or stressed, challenged or bored. Ask them whether they'd do it again. Read legal journals and newspapers to find out about the advantages and disadvantages of the legal profession, current trends in hiring, current salary scales, and the like.

Most importantly, take a legal job of some sort. Spend a summer- or even better, a year- as a paralegal or legal intern in a law office, volunteer for a district attorney's or public defender's office, or assume some other legal undertaking. Nothing can substitute for this experience. Once you learn first hand what the practice of law is like, you'll be much better prepared to decide whether or not it's for you.

¹ "The Wrong Reasons to Go to Law School" and "The Right Reasons to Go to Law School" copied with permission from Kathleen Uradnik, Esq., Assistant Professor of Political Science and Coordinating Pre-Law Advisor, St. Cloud State University, St. Cloud, Minnesota

Self-Assessment Questions

One of the more meaningful ways of determining whether you want to be a lawyer is look at the types of skills that one must develop to be a competent lawyer.

Ask yourself the following questions:

Do I enjoy working closely with people regarding significant events or issues affecting their lives?

1 The practice of law is a “people business.” Lawyers do not work merely on “cases” or research interesting legal issues. A lawyer makes a living by helping people who have come for aid and advice regarding personal, criminal, social, or business related problems. A lawyer must enjoy working with people and must derive specific satisfaction from helping people work through difficult, threatening and significant events in their lives.

Can I empathize with a client’s situation; yet have the ability to objectively analyze the issues and their consequences in light of the existing law?

2 The main task of a lawyer is to solve a client’s problem. People come to a lawyer for help in solving their problems. A lawyer must be able to show both empathy and objectivity so that he/she can address the potential legal issues of the client. Then the lawyer must be able to formulate a plan to reach a result that is consistent with the client’s desires as well as the requirements of the law.

Do I enjoy educating or teaching a person about a subject about which he or she may be ignorant or have significant misconceptions?

3 We live in a very complex society that has required the development of very far-reaching, technical laws. Understandably, most clients are either wholly uninformed about the existing law or have significant misunderstandings of what the law prohibits or requires. A lawyer must be able to educate competently his or her clients. This teaching task is complicated by the fact that the “student” has a direct interest in the subject area. The degree of comprehension will be affected by the client’s vested interest, an unwillingness to hear the bad news, a strong disagreement about the goals of the law, etc. The need to educate is critical, though, so that a client can make an informed choice about how to proceed. Tact is required in telling a prospective client that his or her view of the applicable rules is incorrect.

Am I able to articulate in a clear and concise manner my analysis of a problem to others, whether it is verbally or in writing?

4 Two vital skills of a lawyer are the ability to speak and write in a clear, articulate manner. Since a lawyer’s job is to solve problems, the key to success is the ability to convince others of the correctness of one’s analysis of the factual problem, the requirements of the law, and the best result that can be reached for all concerned parties. A lawyer must be able to educate and convince his or her clients, other lawyers, juries, judges or mediators. He or she must be able to perform this task equally well by speaking or writing. The skill and art of verbal communication is an important key to success of becoming a competent lawyer.

Do I enjoy being an advocate? Can I argue both sides of the questions with enthusiasm?

5 A lawyer’s personal satisfaction must come from helping others achieve a desired result or avoid or ameliorate the consequences of a difficult situation. A lawyer must provide the client with sufficient information concerning all possible alternatives to allow the client to make an informed decision. The lawyer must be able to accept and advance the client’s decision, even if he or she would not have personally chosen the particular course of action, so long as the attorney stays within the ethical parameters of the Code of Professional Responsibility. Whether one is writing a will, negotiating a contract, litigating a lawsuit, or settling a divorce, a lawyer is advocating the personal needs, desires, and goals of the client.

Do I like detail work? Do I enjoy searching for the facts of a situation?

The practice of a law is a jungle filled with pockets of quicksand for the sloppy, lazy lawyer. The law has made great strides in eliminating unnecessary requirements of form to allow cases to be resolved on the merits rather than by one's ability or failure to follow rules of procedure. However, rules of form, practice and procedure are necessary for the orderly conduct of business within the law. A lawyer must pay strict attention to facts and detail, for detail work is a significant aspect of the practice of law.

Do I like to read and study?

A lawyer never stops reading the law. From the day one enters law school until the last day before retirement, a lawyer must keep abreast of the ever-changing law. Whether it is statutes, agency rules and regulations, or court decisions, a lawyer may never assume the law remains static. Each and every competent lawyer must dedicate a significant number of hours on a regular basis to educating him or herself. This study time may be added on top of the many hours spent in the law library completing legal research on very specific issues of law pertaining to particular cases.

Further Self-Exploration

Deborah Aaron, author of "Why Good Lawyers are Getting out of the Legal Profession" and "What Can You Do with a Law Degree" has developed the following list of traits that satisfied lawyers have in common.

1. display a love of learning
2. pay attention to details
3. respect the rules
4. possess strong analytical abilities
5. are achievement oriented
6. are competitive
7. are steady and stable
8. are patient and persistent
9. are more realistic than idealistic
10. are more conventional than innovative
11. are more dispassionate than emotional
12. are thick-skinned

Additionally, you can take her personality preference quiz to add to the information you are learning about yourself before you make your decision of whether or not law practice is a good fit.

1. Do I like to get emotionally involved with my work?
2. Do I dislike or attempt to avoid conflict?
3. In resolving conflict, do I prefer to decide what's fair based on the circumstances of each situation?
4. Do I like to create or start projects and let others finish or maintain them?
5. Do I dislike paying attention to details?
6. Do I prefer short-term projects?
7. Do I value efficiency?
8. Do I like to do things my own way, on my own schedule, and according to my own priorities?
9. Do I get more satisfaction being part of a team than being a solo act?
10. Do I want to change the world?

"If you answered "yes" to any of these questions, this should raise serious doubts about whether you would be happy in the practice of law. If you answered "yes" to more than one, you might want to engage in some serious self-assessment (consider taking a more comprehensive personality test, for example) to determine which career area are best suited to your personality."¹

¹ Adapted from "Should I Go To Law School? (Part II)", hand out authored by Kathy Uradnik, Esq., Assistant Professor of Political Science and Coordinating Pre-Law Advisor, St. Cloud State University.

Learn about the field of law and law school

Important Qualities and Skills

The qualities needed for a successful legal career are dedication to justice and the public, integrity and high ethical standards, motivation, attention to detail, thoroughness of preparation, and respect for others and the system of law.

Other important abilities include a good vocabulary and sound reasoning skills; the ability to understand complex written material, as well as to write clearly and concisely; a good memory; the ability to communicate well orally; and skill in applying relevant law to the facts of each case. It's also important to listen well.

Lawyers interested in a career in a courtroom rather than in an office also need the ability to think quickly on their feet, speak with ease and authority in public, pursue details, and understand courtroom strategy.

The skills and values essential include:

- Analytic and problem solving skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Critical reading abilities
- Writing skills
- General research skills
- Oral communication and listening abilities
- Task organization and management skills
- The values of serving faithfully and civilly the interest of others while also promoting justice

Important Basic Areas of Knowledge

This background will help you have a full appreciation of the legal system in general, understand how disputes might be resolved, and understand and apply various legal principles and standards. You get this background from:

- A broad understanding of history, particularly American history, and the various factors (social, political, economic, and cultural) that have influenced the development of our pluralistic society.
- 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.
- A basic knowledge in economics, particularly elementary micro-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.
- 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.

Experiential Activities

There are a number of activities that can help you gain insight into whether a law degree is an appropriate choice for you. Some of the following activities will help you in making these difficult informed career decisions:

Consider taking career assessments. The most popular career assessments used in career services offices are the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) or the Strong Interest Inventory (SII). If you are a College of Liberal Arts student, you can visit 135 Johnston Hall to take the assessments for a fee (\$15 for SII and \$10 for MBTI). All other students and alumni should visit University Counseling and Consulting Services (109 Eddy Hall): <http://www.ucs.umn.edu/career/carcounsel.html>

Conduct informational interviews with some practicing lawyers

Visit some law schools- talk with admissions counselors and sit in on some law school classes

Sit in on a criminal trial

Get a mentor who is a lawyer through an alumni mentor program on campus. Visit <http://www.alumni.umn.edu> and click on "career resources and mentoring" then click on "mentor connection" then on "mentor programs" to find the mentor program that is the best fit for you (there are some requirements for each program such as major).

University Student Legal Services (USLS) also has a mentor program. For more information, contact Mark Karon at 612.624.1001 or e-mail usls@tc.umn.edu.

Shadow your mentor or another lawyer at their place of work on an ordinary work day

Join the pre-law society by e-mailing prelaw@umn.edu

Search for an internship by visiting the CCLC-sponsored CLA Link web site: <http://clalink.cla.umn.edu>

Visit the CCLC Resource Room in 135 Johnston Hall to read about careers in law through books and visit identified internet links relating to law schools, law career centers and sites that provide information about the field of law.

Volunteer Opportunities

Legal Aid Society of Minnesota

430 First Avenue North, Suite 300
Minneapolis, MN 55401
612-332-1441
<http://www.mnlegalservices.org/mmla/lsmrec.shtml>
Available experience: Intake-interviewer

WATCH

608 Second Avenue South, Suite 1001
Minneapolis, MN 55402
phone: 612-341-2747
fax: 612-339-1171
www.watchmn.org
watch@watchmn.org
Available experience: Court-Room Monitor (internships also available)

Community Placement Service (CPS)

Career and Community Learning Center (University of Minnesota)
345 Fraser, 106 Pleasant St SE
Minneapolis, MN 55455
612-626-2044
<http://www.servicelearning.umn.edu/students/cps/index.html>
Available experience:

A peer advisor will help you connect with an organization that matches your interests.

Researching Law Schools

Liberal Arts Career Services

The University of Texas at Austin

Pre-law students are invariably faced with the task of selecting which law schools to apply to. The question "What is the best law school?" is not always the most pertinent. The question "What is the best law school for me?" however, takes into account the needs and desires of each student and allows for a better selection.

What are you looking for in a Law School?

Some things that a student might consider in selecting a law school are:

Location

Is the law school located in the geographical area you prefer? How important is the geographical location to you, and why? Is the location on a campus? In a city? In a college town? What geographic area do you want to work in after graduating law school?

Size

Do you prefer a large (1,000 or greater), an intermediate (500-1,000), or a small (500 or less) sized student body? The advantages of a larger law school are a greater number of courses offered and diversified interests within the faculty. In a smaller law school there is usually closer contact with the faculty and a more relaxed ambiance within the student body.

Character

Is the institution characterized as a national, state, or regional law school? Where are the alumni employed? Pay particular attention to the job placement patterns of law schools if geographic location is important to you.

Student Body

Any professional program is competitive. Some law schools are very competitive and have student bodies that are vocationally oriented and grade conscious. Others are less competitive and possess student bodies which might be classified as "more supportive". The best way to find out about the student body of a law school is to visit the school and talk to the faculty and students. If possible, sit in on a few classes and talk with the students after class.

Faculty

What is the strength of the faculty at a particular law school? The law school's Web site will list the faculty along with their professional activities, publications, etc.

Library

Is the size of the law library adequate both in terms of holdings and space? Can students be accommodated during examination time? Does the library have computer facilities, wireless capabilities, etc.?

Strengths

Some applicants have an area of the law in which they are particularly interested - international law, environmental law, tax law, patent law, etc. If so, you should examine law school catalogs closely to find those that have faculty and curricular expertise in the areas of your particular interest.

Cost

Somewhere along the line, money will become an issue. Unless you have access to a large nest egg, look at the total cost for three years of study. This estimate should include tuition, room and board, fees and expenses, insurance, and travel.

Where can I get in?

Assessing your chances of gaining admission to any particular law school requires a review of the most current admission's data available. There are several resources to help you:

ABA/LSAC Official Guide To ABA-Approved Law Schools

This book is available for purchase from The Law School Admission Council, free on the Law School Admission Council's Web site (<http://www.lsac.org>), or available to review in [the Career and Community Learning Center, 135 Johnston Hall]. This handbook includes facts and information on all ABA-approved law schools in the country. Data such as admission results for prior applicants are helpful to see how others with your GPA and LSAT scores fared last year.

Law school catalogs

Some law schools don't print all of their admission results in the *ABA/LSAC Official Guide To ABA-Approved Law Schools*; therefore, you can obtain an application booklet and/or catalog by contacting the law schools that you are interested in and requesting information. Many schools do have this available online.

Midwest Association of Pre-Law Advisors (MAPLA) Profiles This reference guide is full of useful information such as tuition costs, joint degree options, specialties, demographics of students, and median entering statistics. It is available for use in the [CCLC library, 135 Johnston Hall].

What are "REACH", "TARGET", and "SAFETY" schools?

It is rare that an applicant will gain admission to all of the laws schools they apply to. Therefore, it is helpful to make educated guesses based on three categories of prospects.

1. **REACH** This is a law school where about 20% or less of the applicants with your GPA and LSAT scores were recently admitted. Using The Liberty University Law School's grid information (see following page) to construct an example, an applicant with a 3.3 GPA and 154 LSAT score should consider Liberty University a "REACH" school because Liberty University only admitted 4 of the 73 applicants with those numbers last year. Your "REACH" applications should be your dream schools. Work hard to make your application one of the 4 they might accept.
2. **TARGET** This is a law school where your GPA and LSAT scores are approximately the same as the medians for last year's entering class. Using the same example, applicants with a 3.27 GPA and a 161 LSAT stood a good chance of getting in. "TARGET" schools present at least a 50/50 chance.
3. **SAFETY** This is a law school where at least 80% of the applicants with your GPA and LSAT scores were admitted last year. Using the same grid, an applicant with a 3.1 GPA and 166 LSAT might consider Liberty University a "SAFETY" school because 30 of the 31 applicants were admitted. Include several "SAFETY" schools on your list due to the accelerating applicant pools in terms of quality. What may have been a "SAFETY" school last year may have suddenly become a "TARGET" school instead.

Borrowed from Margot S. Baker, Pre-Law Advisor, Southern Methodist University.

Liberty University School of Law (fictitious school)

This grid includes only applicants who earned 120-180 scores under standard administrations in the 1998-1999 testing year.

Questions to ask when visiting law schools.

The best way to figure out if a particular law school is right for you would be to visit. Below you will find a list of potential questions that you could ask during your visit. Remember, this list is not exhaustive.

Questions concerning a law school's admissions process:

1. Please describe your review process for applicants' folders. Do you have an advantage over new college graduates in your admissions process?
2. How did your applicant pool change last year and what projections are you making for this year?
3. With my grades and LSAT- (tell them specifically), what would be my chances of gaining admissions to your law school?
4. How do you evaluate the more subjective factors of an application and how important are they?
5. What advantages exist for applicants who apply early? What do you consider "early"?
6. When do you typically let applicants know your admission decisions?
7. (If state-supported school) How do you treat residency status in the admissions process?
8. Do applicants with post-college work experience
9. What do you look for in the personal statement or essay to accompany the application?
10. Can you give me examples of the kinds of recommendations that can make a difference?
11. What should I anticipate the cost to be in attending three years of your law school?
12. How do most of your students pay for law school?
13. How does your office handle financial aid awards? Can I expect to know my aid award before I'm required to pay a deposit?
14. What merit scholarships do you offer to incoming students?

Questions about the character/ambiance of the law school:

1. What are the curricular strengths of your faculty?
2. How are first-year classes organized and taught?
3. How many students are typically enrolled in each entering class.
4. How much (or what kinds) of contact with faculty would the typical law student have outside of class?
5. How many graduates practice law in your state (or region) after graduation?
6. What factors shape the career interests and options available to your graduates?
7. What complaints do your students have about your law school?
8. What is the atmosphere within your student body concerning competition?
9. How are students selected for your law school journals/reviews?
10. Can students leave their class books and notes in a study carrel without fear of theft?
11. When your students say what they like about your law school, what things are frequently mentioned?
12. When students turn down your school in favor of another, what reasons do they cite for doing so?
13. What features do you believe set your school apart from "comparable" schools?

Questions concerning career outcomes:

1. What is the job search experience like for your law school's graduates who want to work here in [Minnesota] (or any other specific place)?
2. How many (what percentage) of your graduates have their jobs lined up before [Winter Break] of their final year?
3. To what extent do your students get their summer jobs through your on-campus recruiting program?
4. What kinds of jobs do your first year students line up for their first summer job?
5. To what extent does class rank affect your students' job search success?

For more information on the LSAT, letters of recommendation, researching law schools, and the rest of the application process, please visit the Career and Community Learning Center:

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135 Johnston Hall
101 Pleasant Street SE
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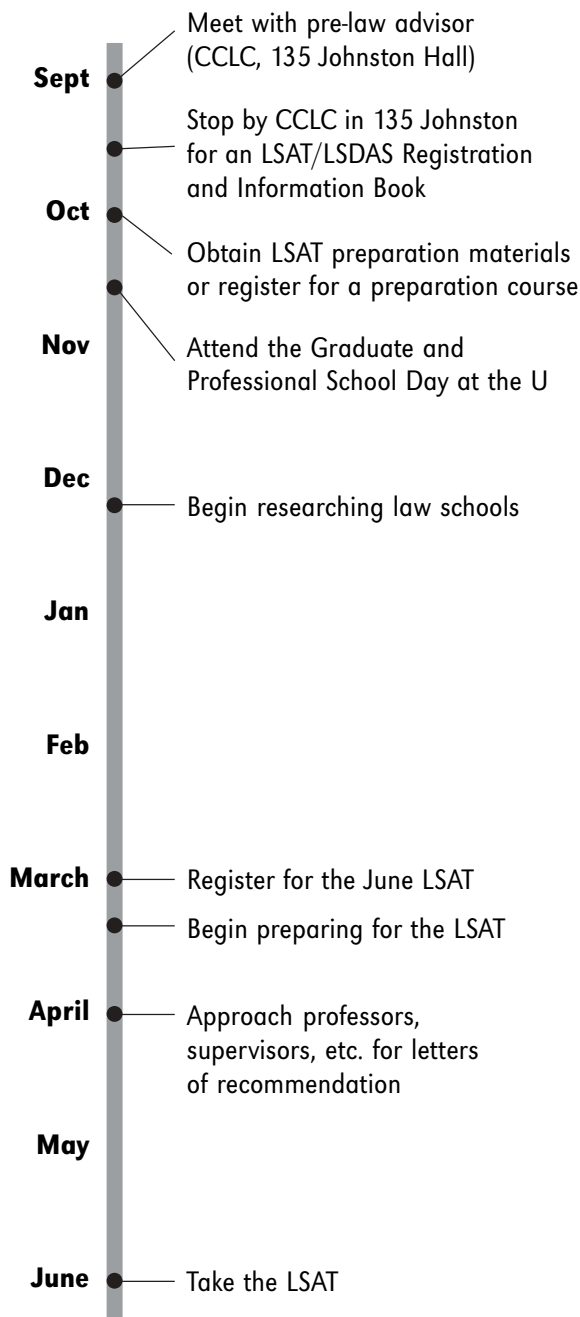
A Application Process

First & Second Year

- Join pre-law society
- Attend law school workshops presented by the Career and Community Learning Center (CCLC)
- Start developing rapport with professors who you may want to write recommendations in the future

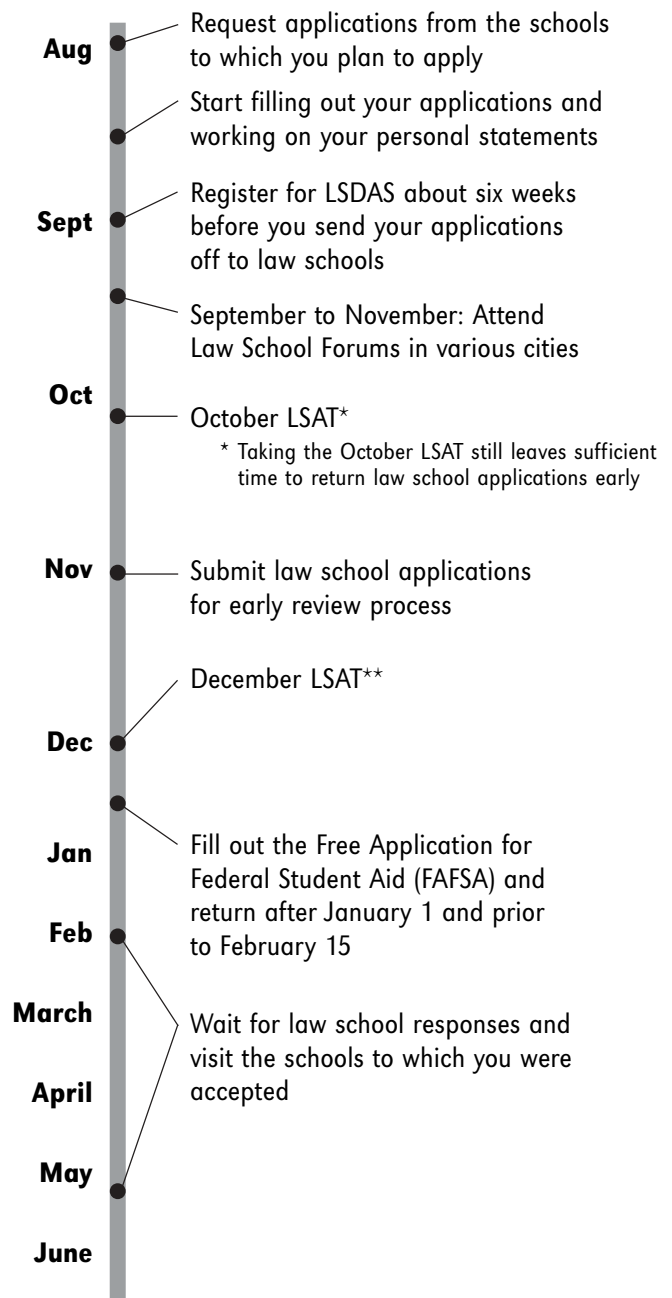
Junior Year

Or two years prior to intended start of law school



Senior Year

Or one year prior to intended start of law school



The Basic Components of Your Application

Official Transcript

1 Official transcripts can be obtained from the University of Minnesota Office of the Registrar <http://www.onestop.umn.edu/registrar/transcripts/index.html>.

Law School Admission Test (LSAT) Scores

2 Visit www.lsac.org for more information on LSAT test dates.

Letters of Recommendation

3 Depending on the law school application requirements you will need 2–3 letters of recommendation. Admissions officials agree that the title of your letter writer is not what is important; it is the content of the letter.

Your Personal Statement

Completed law school application form

5 Individual Law Schools generally begin dispensing their applications in the summer. Each application will be different and plenty of time should be set aside for completion. Many applications can be done online. If you are filling out several applications, you may want to consider purchasing the LSACD which is an electronic means of filling out applications. For more information on this product, visit <http://www.lsac.org/LSAC.asp?url=lsac/lscad-main.asp>.

Dean's Certification/Recommendation

6 Some schools require a Dean's Certification/Recommendation which is a form to be filled out by the Dean of your undergraduate college. For example, if you are a College of Liberal Arts graduate, you will need to send or bring your form to the Assistant Dean's Office in 106 Johnston Hall.

Where Do I Send the Application Materials?

to the Law School Data Assembly Service

Official Transcript
Letters of Recommendation
LSAT scores will be included in their report

to the Law School

Application & Fee
Personal Statement

How important is the Personal Statement?

This statement is a critical sample of your ability to write clearly and cogently, as well as an important opportunity for you to tell the admissions committee about yourself. Since most schools do not conduct interviews, the statement represents an opportunity for you to present yourself as more than just a GPA and an LSAT score. On that note, many applicants will use GPA and LSAT scores to choose prospective law schools. With so many applicants possessing identical qualifications, the statement can be the critical factor that distinguishes you from the applicant pool. What you say in your statement can also help you offset weaknesses in your application. So, take writing the statement very seriously.

How do I get started?

Many law schools have their own guidelines and topics for the personal statement, but most require you to draw upon information from your academic and personal background, work experience, and extracurricular activities. The subject of the essay is you, after all. By keeping a record of experiences and accomplishments, you can easily access all the necessary information to write a personal statement.

To get started, gather a pool of information about yourself including:

- Work, school and community experiences, such as positions you have held, volunteer opportunities, and projects you have participated in
- Extracurricular activities, such as clubs, sports teams, leadership positions
- Personal challenges and experiences, including travel, disabilities, goals you have accomplished
- Unique talents or interests

For each activity, make a list of your duties, accomplishments, and other specifics, such length of commitment, name and contact information of related people, and so forth—anything that will remind you of your experiences. Also, review your school transcripts and resume because you may want to address particular group projects you have participated in and courses you have completed in your personal statement.

What should I say in my Personal Statement?

Above all, follow the instructions given by each school. In general, you need to express why you want to study law and why you have a special interest in each particular school. But, each school will have their own particular instructions for the statement, so avoid writing a generic statement for all schools. Some schools will ask about your academic and personal background, work experience, activities, etc. Schools often seek information on matters that relate to their desire to have diverse student bodies. The development of an applicant's interest in law is a matter of concern to some schools but not to others. In contrast, some schools request a writing sample on any subject of the writer's choice. As appropriate, tailor your statement for the school to which you are applying, but avoid emphasizing this over your experiences, attributes and goals.

Should I use the Personal Statement to address weakness in my application?

Weaknesses, such as a string of low grades or a low LSAT score should be addressed somewhere in your application. If clarifying weaknesses flows with your statement, you may use your statement to address them. On the other hand, you may wish to use an addendum. In either case, be brief and honest while offering a sympathetic explanation and assure the admissions committee that a similar weakness is unlikely to occur again.

Does writing style count?

Absolutely! Beyond the personal knowledge they may be able to obtain about you, law schools use the personal statement to learn about your ability to write concisely, precisely, and well. The personal statement gives you an opportunity to showcase your abilities. So, the best statements not only follow the schools' instructions, but are tied together by a theme and a logical progression of ideas, making good use of transitions. They also employ perfect grammar and are written in a direct, simple style that avoids pretentious language. The best statements are not laundry lists of accomplishments and activities, but essays that describe a unique episode or two from your experience that demonstrate both your motivation for pursuing legal education along with positive, interesting aspects of your personality.

How long should the statement be?

Some schools will explicitly state their word or page limit. Adhere to their wishes. You will not impress admissions committees with an overly long statement and your inability to follow directions. If no word count or page limit is stated, aim to write a statement that's about two pages long, double-spaced.

Tips for Writing a Successful Personal Statement

Sherolyn Hurst, Assistant Director of Admissions, University of St. Thomas School of Law

1. Have a strong opening sentence or paragraph.
2. Write well, using strong grammar, punctuation and spelling.
3. Be honest and be positive, while avoiding being self-congratulatory.
4. Remember this is your personal statement and you should be the primary focus.
5. Be sure to double-space and type it using standard formats and fonts.
6. Acknowledge negatives but be brief while trying to put them in perspective of your entire application (an addendum is the ideal place for this).
7. Do not be overly verbose; abide by any word or length limitations.
8. Do not be overly dramatic or portray yourself as a victim.
9. Do not sound as if you have chosen words from a thesaurus.
10. Follow any directions provided for the topic of your personal statement.
11. Highlight what draws you to a particular law school.
12. Do not repeat information found in other places (e.g. resume).
13. Avoid hot button issues that can offend.
14. Proofread your statement; use a second pair of eyes to critique the statement.
15. Proofread! Proofread! Proofread!

Ideas for Drafting Your Personal Statement

Consider drafting your personal statement as if it is a personal interview:

Focus on 1 to 3 things that you most want to convey about yourself. This is your chance to become 3-D and stand off of the paper. Write the first draft without self-editing as you write; write everything. Review what you have written after you have achieved some distance; typically 1 to 2 days later. Have a trusted reader critique what you have written for clarity, honesty and writing skills. Be as honest as your comfort level allows: Sincerity is the key; we know when you are "faking" it. You don't have to have a hard-luck story. Remember, this is a writing exercise. We are looking for: Strong writing skills: grammar, spelling, attention to details. Clarity of thoughts and ideas. Judgment: topics chosen, use of word limits wisely (clear and concise), answered any questions posed

R Resources

Career and Community Learning Center, 135 Johnston Hall

www.cclc.umn.edu

<http://.clalink.cla.umn.edu>

Pre-Law Advisor

Janelle M. Larson, jl Larson@class.cla.umn.edu

Individual appointments available to further discuss law school as an option; gain information on the application process; resume and personal statement review.

Books Available in Resource Room

Law School information:

ABA/LSAC Official Guide to ABA-Approved Law Schools

A Woman's Guide to Law School

Essays That Worked For Law Schools: 40 Essays from Successful Applications to the Nations Top Law Schools

Financing Your Law School Education

Graduate Admissions Essay

How to Get Into the Right Law School

How to Get Into the Top Law Schools

Law School Admissions Advisor

Law School Confidential: A Complete Guide to the Law School Experience

Pre-Law Companion

So you want to be a Lawyer?

The African American Pre-Law School Advice Guide

The NAPLA/SAPLA Book of Law School Lists

The Official Guide to Legal Specialties: An Insider's Guide to Every Major Practice Area

What Can You Do With A Law Degree?

Law School bulletins from many ABA-approved law schools

Career information

Law Careers Binder

Opportunities in Law Careers

VGM Career Portraits: Law

Occupational Outlook Handbook

Vocational Biographies: Government and Law (Book 7)

Becoming a Mediator

University of Minnesota Resources

Pre-Law Society

Send e-mail to prelaw@umn.edu

Request to be placed on mailing list and you will receive information regarding meeting times and location. Membership dues are \$10.00 a semester.

University Counseling and Consulting Services

109 Eddy Hall

612-624-3323

University Student Legal Services

<http://www1.umn.edu/usls/>

160 West Bank Skyway

612-624-1001

USLS offers a Mentor program which matches students interested in legal careers with professionals. Several off-campus site visits are scheduled each semester. A Careers in Law Fair also takes place in the spring semester.

Law School and Law Career Related Websites

Pre-Law

Law School Admission Council:

<http://www.lsac.org/>

The Law School Admission Council (LSAC) is the organization that creates and administers the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT). You should become extremely familiar with this site because you can register online for LSAT, subscribe to the Law School Data Assembly Service, order LSAT study materials, and purchase the LSACD (software which may expedite your application process). You can also check on the status of your file from this website. You can also use this site as a springboard for researching law schools and utilize the free online version of the ABA/LSAC Official Guide to ABA Approved Law Schools to perform a LSAC Data search which will give you your likelihood for admission into all ABA approved law schools.

Council on Legal Education Opportunity

<http://www.abanet.org/cleo/>

Law Related Internships

<http://www.4lawschool.com/internships.htm>

Internet Legal Resource Guide

<http://www.ilrg.com/>

Hieros Gamos (Pre-Law Section)

<http://hg.org> (direct link: <http://www.hg.org/students.html#pre>)

St. Cloud State University Pre-Law Advising Website

<http://web.stcloudstate.edu/prelaw/>

LSAT Preparation

University of Minnesota Compleat Scholar

<http://www.cce.umn.edu/scholars/>

Princeton Review Web Site

<http://www.review.com/>

Kaplan Web Site

<http://www.kaplan.com/>

Law School Admissions Council

https://os.lsac.org/Release/Shop/Shop_Books.aspx?po=Y

Purchase previously administered tests from the Law School Admissions Council. Taking timed, full-length tests is an ideal way to study for the LSAT.

Selecting Law Schools

Official Guide to ABA-Approved Law Schools

<http://officialguide.lsac.org/docs/cgi-bin/home.asp>

Law School Ranking Game

<http://monoborg.law.indiana.edu/LawRank/index.html>

The Ranking Game allows you to use your personal preferences to rank law schools.

Boston College Law School Locator

http://www.bc.edu/bc_org/svp/carct/matrix.html

Frequently Asked Questions about American Bar Association Approval

<http://www.abanet.org/legaled/miscellaneous/faqs.html>

Financial Aid

Access Group (Financial Aid Information)

<https://www1.accessgroup.org/index.htm>

Law School Admissions Council

<http://www.lsac.org/LSAC.asp?url=lsac/financial-aid-introduction.asp>

U.S. Department of Education, Financial Aid Section

<http://studentaid.ed.gov>

Legal Careers

National Association for Law Placement (NALP)

<http://www.nalp.org>

American Bar Association

<http://www.abanet.org/>

The Legal Employment Search Site

www.legalemploy.com

Law Employment Center

www.lawjobs.com

Lawyer Locator

<http://www.martindale.com/xp/Martindale/home.xml>

Department of Justice

www.usdoj.gov

Minnesota Law Schools and Minnesota Bar Association

University of Minnesota Law School

<http://www.law.umn.edu/>
Walter F. Mondale Hall
229-19th Avenue South
Minneapolis, MN 55455
Tel: 612-625-1000

William Mitchell School of Law

<http://www.wmitchell.edu/>
875 Summit Avenue
St. Paul, Minnesota, 55105-3076
Switchboard (651) 227-9171
Toll-Free 1-888-WMCL-LAW (962-5529)

Hamline University School of Law

<http://web.hamline.edu/law/>
Hamline University School of Law
1536 Hewitt Avenue
Saint Paul, Minnesota 55104
651-523-2800

University of St. Thomas School of Law

<http://www.stthomas.edu/lawschool/>
Terrence Murphy Hall, Suite 440
1000 LaSalle Ave
Minneapolis, MN 55403-2005
Phone (651) 962-4892
Fax (651) 962-4881
lawschool@stthomas.edu

Minnesota Bar Association

<http://www.mnbar.org>

Paralegal Education

The National Federation of Paralegal Associations

www.paralegals.org

National Association of Legal Assistants

<http://www.nala.org/>

Training to be a Legal Assistant/Paralegal

Hamline University

4-year program (receive a BA degree as well as a legal assistant certificate)

American Bar Association Approved

Inver Hills Community College

2-year program

Minnesota Parlegal Institute

16-week program

American Bar Association Approved

North Hennepin Community College

2-year program

notes

Law School Workshop Evaluation

Date: _____ College (e.g. CLA, Carlson, IT): _____ Year (e.g. Fresh, Soph.): _____

How did you hear about our workshop? (Circle One):

CCLC Staff CCLC Flyer MN Daily Website CCLC Email U Publication/Newsletter
 Adviser Friend Instructor Another U Office Other: _____

Please circle the appropriate response below with 1: Disagree to 5: Agree

- | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|
| 1. | The workshop covered the information that I expected it to cover. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 2. | This workshop was offered at a convenient time for me. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 3. | The workshop was the right length of time for the amount of material covered. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 4. | I learned valuable information from this workshop. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 5. | The information provided to me in this workshop was current/up-to-date. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 6. | I feel that I can confidently apply the information learned today to apply for law school. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 7. | The workshop presenter was knowledgeable. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 8. | The workshop presenter was engaging. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 9. | The presenter addressed my individual questions. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | NA |
| 10. | The handouts were useful. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 11. | I am aware of other resources at the Career and Community Learning Center. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | |
| 12. | What would you add/change about this workshop to make it more valuable to students? | | | | | | |
| 13. | Do you have other suggestions for workshop topics or ways we can better promote our services? | | | | | | |