

Preparation for Graduate and Professional Study

Law

A pre-law advisor is available to guide students interested in pursuing the study of law upon graduation. This advisor currently is Dr. Elizabeth Swenson, Department of Psychology.

Any major can be a suitable preparation for a career in law, especially when combined with carefully chosen courses outside the major field. Students interested in law school are especially urged to consider double majors or a minor or a concentration which complements the major field of study.

A broad background of knowledge, which is obtained through the University Core Curriculum in the Liberal Arts, and a major in some specific field, are required for the study of law. In addition, certain skills are important in learning and practicing law. These skills include the ability to speak and write effectively, to organize and absorb large amounts of information, to read carefully and critically, to analyze and evaluate complex issues, and to deal with problems creatively. Also important is knowledge of the social, political, and economic structure of society and an understanding of the human values of this structure.

The pre-law advisor can also give advice on admission to law schools, on the choice of a career in the legal profession, and on the construction and content of a personal statement. In addition to the undergraduate degree, law schools require students to take the Law School Admission Test (LSAT) and to apply through the Law School Data Assembly Service (LSDAS). Forms for both of these are available from the pre-law advisor.

Admission to law school is based on high academic standing, a correspondingly high score on the LSAT, and recommendations from faculty and others who are familiar with the applicant's character, academic preparation, and aptitude for law school. Extracurricular activities, part-time employment, and special achievements also play a role.