

## PRE-LAW TIMELINE & TIPS

### First & Sophomore Years

- Develop a well-rounded curriculum. There are no required courses. Emphasis should be on planning a program that meets your needs and interests.
  - Be a committed student and take your academic coursework seriously because your cumulative undergraduate GPA will be a significant factor in the law school admissions process.
  - Students interested in the law may want to consider the Legal Studies interdisciplinary minor operated out of the College of Liberal Arts.
- Expand your education by seeking summer jobs or internships in fields of interest.
- Pursue extracurricular activities on campus that are of interest.
  - Join the Prelaw Club.
- Get to know faculty members and let them get to know you. Establishing relationships with faculty early on in year academic career will be a great asset when you are considering who should write your letters of recommendation.
- Sign up for the Prelaw club listserv. This is a great way to get information about events and opportunities both on campus and across the region.

### Junior Year

- Continue strong academic preparation.
- Start asking individuals—professors, employers, supervisors, mentors—if they are willing to write letters of recommendation on your behalf. When doing so, be your own best advocate and ask individuals if they can write you a “strong” or “good” letter of recommendation.
- Take a practice LSAT and determine if you want to enroll in a preparation course.
- Consider taking the LSAT in June after your junior year, if possible. This gives you the opportunity to take the LSAT again in September/October if you decide to take it for a second time.
  - \*\*\*That being said, if you are not ready to take the LSAT in June do NOT take it on a whim. All LSAT exam scores are reported to schools when you apply and you are best served by taking it once when you are ready as opposed to rushing to take it in June.
- Register with LSAC and subscribe to the Credential Assembly Service (CAS). CAS coordinates the application materials for each student (LSAT score, letters of recommendation, personal statement, transcripts, etc.) and sends them to your designated prospective law schools on your behalf
- Begin to investigate law schools, legal education, and legal careers.
  - LSAC offers a great online resource that enables students to search for potential law schools using different key words, states/regions, and it enables you to input your LSAT score and undergraduate GPA to find schools that are appropriate given these basic qualifications. The Official Guide to law school is available at: [https://officialguide.lsac.org/release/OfficialGuide\\_Default.aspx](https://officialguide.lsac.org/release/OfficialGuide_Default.aspx)
  - In addition, LSAC has prepared a list of numerous law schools with links to their websites available at: <http://www.lsac.org/jd/choose/law-school-links.asp> This is a helpful way to familiarize yourself with and investigate potential schools,

- Be certain to look into a variety of schools in order to designate some safety schools (those schools you expect to be admitted to because your GPA and LSAT score are commensurate with those of past incoming classes) as well as one or two reach schools (those that may be a stretch but you would like to attend if admitted).
- Take the opportunity to visit schools if possible. There are three law schools within close proximity to the CSU campus and each will gladly host you for an on-campus visit including the opportunity to sit in on classes if you contact them when they are in regular session.
- Over the summer, it is a great time to begin work on your personal statement. This is a key component of one's application and it usually takes multiple drafts and iterations to get it right.

### **Senior Year (or Year before Entering Law School)**

- If you did not take the LSAT in June, be sure to take it in September/October. If absolutely necessary you may push back to December, but preparing for the September/October exam provides you with the opportunity to take the exam a second time if December is needed.
- Register with LSAC if you did not do so in your junior year. Using the Transcript Request Form in the Registration Book, send your undergraduate transcript(s) to Credential Assembly Service. Law School Reports are normally processed within two weeks.
- Attend prelaw workshops and meet with law school representatives at regional law fairs.
- Attend the Law School Forum in September/October. Precise dates and locations are available on the LSAC website and will be shared via the prelaw listserv.
- In accordance with your timeline, distribute recommendation forms and other material—it may be helpful to share your resume, up-to-date transcripts, and/or personal statements—to letter writers.
  - You must request letters of recommendation via CAS at LSAC. You may choose to have these requests sent via email or you may complete and deliver a hard copy of the LSAC letter request form to the letter writers. Be certain to provide writers with the completed—including signed privacy waiver—paperwork because it is required to be submitted with all letters of recommendation.
  - Give your letter writers 3-4 weeks to complete the letters and submit them to LSAC.
- Make final revisions to your personal statements. It is always a good idea to share the personal statement with people who know you well—family members, friends, significant others—to ask if your statement reads in your authentic voice.
- Send first semester grades to law schools via the Transcript Request Form at CAS. If you requested in December and want the law schools to defer reaching a decision about you until they receive your December score, you must inform the schools yourself.
- Research and apply for grants and scholarships, both school-related and outside award programs. Obtain and submit all financial aid forms by deadlines noted.
- As soon as you begin to get decisions from schools, decide whether you need to apply to additional schools or investigate optional programs. Update law schools you have not yet

heard from regarding new evidence about your candidacy (honors, awards, an extra recommendation letter that does more than mirror information in previous letters).

- To help you decide where to matriculate, visit schools; attend classes, speak with current students & faculty members. Compare financial aid packages.