

LAW SCHOOL PREPARATION AND APPLICATION TIMELINE

First & Second Year

Get to know your academic advisor*. Start taking courses that will enhance your writing, reading comprehension and analytical skills. Develop your logical reasoning ability. Don't overload--balance your schedule. Test your aptitudes and interests. Read books, newspapers and magazines. Stay informed.

Work or volunteer for offices and/or community service projects that interest you. If you get the opportunity, engage in research. Keep a journal of these activities.

Try to obtain law-related experience. Develop a realistic view of legal careers through readings, informational interviews, shadowing experiences, summer jobs and internships.

Consider joining a pre-law student organization such as SEALS or PLS.

Start investigating law schools--check their websites on the Internet. Attend relevant programs and activities sponsored by L & S Advising Center, including the fall Law School Fair.

Attend Pre-Law workshops and campus visits. All law school admissions offices have great information to share.

Cultivate relationships with professors.

Become very familiar with the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT).

Use credit cards wisely. Don't jeopardize your ability to borrow money for your legal education by wrecking your credit history now.

Junior Year

Study for the LSAT!

Continue to work/volunteer in fields interesting to you. Take leadership roles in clubs and organizations. Stay informed and continue to shape your awareness of human institutions, social/cultural values, and the world at large.

Continue investigating law schools and programs. Consult the latest edition of *The ABN/LSAC Official Guide to U.S. Law Schools*. Write to law schools for applications and admissions information during the summer following your junior year. If possible, visit some schools.

Set up an appointment with the Pre-Law advisor in the L & S Advising Center.

Take logical reasoning courses in Philosophy.

Register and study for the LSAT**. Take the LSAT (Law School Admissions Test) by June of your Junior year. (The test is also offered in October, December and February.)

Register with LSDAS (Law School Data Assembly Service) and notify them about how many schools you plan to apply to. After summer grades appear, send official transcripts from UW-Madison and any other institution attended to LSDAS.

Attend the fall Law School Fair and other relevant programs and activities. Submit letters of reference to LSDAS by the beginning of the fall semester of your senior year, if not before.

Senior Year

Register and take the LSAT in fall if you did not take it in June or need to improve your score. Upon receipt of your LSAT score, review your selection of law schools. Check resources available at the L & S Advising Services at B-12 Bascom Hall.

Take advantage of the UW-Madison Writing Center for personal statement reviews. Complete and submit all law school applications in fall. Your letters of reference should be sent to LSDAS, if not already sent.

Expect to hear admissions decisions anytime from late fall, through winter and spring. Patience and a tolerance for ambiguity help at this stage. After January 1, submit your FAFSA application for financial aid.

If accepted, celebrate! Investigate financial aid, housing, etc. Release your offers as you narrow down your options. If rejected, don't panic--decide on a course of action.

Take your fall semester in college seriously: many top law schools will want to see those grades too!

* Pre-Professional Advising: <http://www.lssaa.wisc.edu/l sac/>

** LSAT, LSAC, and LSDAS: <http://www.l sac.org/>