



## PRE-LAW AT LOYOLA

The Office of Pre-Law Advising provides information and advising to Loyola students and graduates who are considering law school. Specific services include:

- individual appointments with the pre-law advisor
- information sessions and on-campus events
- access to admissions-related materials

Loyola University Chicago has many resources available for students interested in pursuing a career in law:

- 11 departments offer more than 2 dozen law-related courses
- dozens of law-related internship opportunities
- student organizations, like Mock Trial and Model UN

### Advice for Pre-Law Students

- Do well in all of your academic courses.
- Choose the major that interests you most; there is no Pre-Law Major.
- Connect with professors who may write recommendations one day.
- Keep your mind open about possible careers; explore all of your options.
- Join a student club or learn about volunteer opportunities.
- Visit Loyola's Pre-Law Advising web site.
- Get on the Pre-Law Advising e-mail list.
- Check the Web site for upcoming Pre-Law Forums.

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# Six Tips for Pre-Law Students

**1. Choose a major that interests you.** There is no pre-law department or major, and law schools do not favor applicants from any particular major. About 1 in 5 students admitted to law school were political science majors in college, but 4 out of 5 successful applicants majored in something else. You should major in the subject that interests you the most. That way you will learn more and do better in your studies. Law schools do care about your GPA, but they review transcripts carefully to see whether you earned good grades in challenging courses. You won't be able to fool the admissions committee by taking a lot of easy classes to pad your grade point average.

**2. Connect with a few of your professors.** You will need letters of recommendation from several faculty members when you apply to law school. The letters they write will be better and more valuable to you if your teachers know you well. So make the effort before senior year to connect with a few professors you respect. Go to their office hours or email them a question that shows you are engaged and eager to learn. Consider doing a directed readings course with a professor or ask if there are research opportunities in your department. To impress a law school you must first impress your professors.

**3. Do a law-related internship.** One of the best ways to figure out whether a legal career is right for you is to do a law-related internship during your college years. You can earn course credit in an internship placement and see first-hand what attorneys do. Several departments have extensive internship programs. The best time to do an internship is during the spring semester of your junior year, before you begin applying to law schools. If you do the internship then it might suggest a "hook" around which you can craft your personal statement. The experience may also help you to identify the particular type of law in which you want to specialize. Chicago is teeming with internship positions, so don't pass up this invaluable opportunity.

**4. Go beyond the classroom.** You have to be a good student to get into law school, but law schools want more. They seek to recruit leaders and activists. To make yourself attractive to law schools you should have a demonstrated record of involvement in extra-curricular activities. So go out for a sport, join a student organization, volunteer your time, try out for a play, and so forth. But note that quality matters more than quantity. Law schools will be more impressed if you made a difference or did something innovative in one organization than if you played a passive role in many.

**5. Prepare carefully for the LSAT.** Your LSAT score isn't the only thing that matters to law schools, but it does matter a lot. More than half of the people who take the LSAT in any given year will score so low that their law-school options are sharply constrained. You should therefore prepare in advance for this test and score as high as you can on the first try. Many schools average all of your LSAT scores, so a high score the second time may not count as much if your score was weak on the first go. A number of businesses offer LSAT prep courses. Many students report that these courses are invaluable, but the classes are also expensive. If you are disciplined, you could prepare on your own for a fraction of the cost. But whichever strategy you adopt, start preparing well in advance of the test date.

**6. Keep your options open.** Consider attending a law school in another part of the country. Many Loyola students apply only to law schools in the Chicagoland area. That's fine, but 96% of the accredited law schools in America lie outside the borders of Illinois. Law school is a new chapter in your life, and it might be exciting to begin again in another region of the country. With a degree from an ABA-accredited law school you are eligible to apply to the bar in any state in the union; you are not restricted to practicing law in the place where you studied it. And because law schools seek to admit a broad mix of students, you might be a bit more attractive to a school if you come from far away. You should also consider the possibility of taking a year or two off before you go on to law school. More and more successful applicants have work experience after college before they are admitted to law school. Doing something interesting for a year can be a shrewd strategy to make yourself stand out from the crowd in the competitive race for a slot at a good law school.