

Preparing for Law School

Where do I begin?

- Enroll in courses that will help you develop your analytical, writing, and reading comprehension skills.
- Develop your logical reasoning ability and increase your awareness of human institutions, social values, and the world at large.
- Find out more about careers in law. Look for opportunities to obtain law-related experience (i.e. winter and summer internships).
- Visit Career Services to ask about shadowing opportunities with lawyers and SLU alums who work in the legal field.
- Observe trials at the local courthouse.
- Junior & Seniors - St. Lawrence County District Attorney's Office Internships
- Choose a major that reflects your academic interests.
- Focus on your studies. Your grades are an important part of your law school application.
- Find the right balance between academic coursework and extracurricular activities. Pursue your interests outside of class, but not at the expense of your grades.
- Begin to consider how you will finance a legal education.
- Consider attending an LSAC forum to learn more about law school (see attached).

Where can I go to find more information on law school?

Law School Admissions Council (LSAC)	www.lsac.org
Law School Academic Success Project	www.lawschoolasp.org
American Bar Association	www.americanbar.org
Discover Law	www.Discoverlaw.org
CLEO Scholars	www.cleoscholars.com
SLU Career Services	http://www.stlawu.edu/career-services
CSTEP	http://www.stlawu.edu/cstep-and-mcnaair
PreLaw Advising @ SLU	http://www.stlawu.edu/advising/pre-law

Who are my resources on campus?

Pre-Law Advisors:

- Elun Gabriel, PhD, Associate Dean of Academic Advising, egabriel@stlawu.edu
- Cathy Crosby, JD PhD, Associate Professor and Chair Department of Psychology, cacru@stlawu.edu
- Ron Albertson, Director, Career Services, ralbertson@stlawu.edu

Collegiate Science and Technology Entry Program (CSTEP):

- Marsha Sawyer, Director, msawyer@stlawu.edu
- Alie Sarhanis, Assistant Director, asarhanis@stlawu.edu

What do law school admissions committees consider in the application review process?

- The LSAT is either the first or second priority in admission; the highest score is considered.
- Academic records/transcript- have you taken rigorous courses? Have you taken courses that focus on analytical and writing skills?
- Letters of recommendation
- Personal statement - some schools provide prompts or assigned topics, but most schools look at a general personal statement. Think about the personal statement as an interview. What would you want to communicate to a director of admissions if you were interviewing? What makes you motivated/committed to earning a law degree? The admissions committee wants to be sure you're making a well-informed, thoughtful decision to pursue a law degree.

- Resume - how have you spent your time outside the college environment? What other skills/ talents are you bringing to the table?
- Letters of Recommendation - another way to get to know the student applicant

The LSAT

- The LSAT and the GPA are perhaps the most important criteria in the law school admissions process.
- Plan 3-5 months of prep time; more prep time means improvement; look at your schedule, budget and learning style to determine the best prep method
- Juniors are encouraged to take the exam in June and, if need be, re-take in October, December or February of their senior year
- Be ready to take the exam once but prepared to take it twice.
- Students may take the LSAT 3 times in a 24-month window.
- According to Charles Roboski, Assistant Dean, Admissions and Financial Aid, Michigan State University College of Law most law schools will not question 2 LSAT scores.
- Law school class who entered in 2012 - the median LSAT score was 157/180

Law School Resume

- Snapshot of who you are; does not need to be limited to 1 page
- The resume is a free-standing document; focus more on extra-curricular activities and work experience; academic information is readily apparent on transcripts. Don't repeat information that can be found elsewhere.
- The resume should be clear and readable.
- Emphasize leadership experience! Admissions committees want to see commitment to activities, work, etc. Make sure to include dates and, if possible, hours per week devoted to volunteer time, etc.

Personal Statement

- Serves as a statement of goals, commitment to law school and, most notably, writing skills.
- Opportunity to communicate something about yourself; it has to be well-written.
- Develop a general personal statement, but take the time to insert a paragraph or 2 (toward the end of the statement) to express interest in the particular school you're applying to. This demonstrates that you're taking more time and care in putting together your statement. You want to show that you're applying to a particular school for a particular reason.
- You don't want your personal statement to read like a resume (or like a chronological list of everything you've done). Instead, provide a personal narrative or story. It should be a short, succinct statement. Consider how the personal statement will complement your resume.
- Don't try to be too creative; the committee wants to learn about you as a person. Don't try to be fake or catchy.

Letters of Recommendation

- Give faculty the chance to write a good letter
- Use proper etiquette, talk to them in person, and give them your resume and personal statement
- You'll want a strong, detailed letter of recommendation. Follow up with a thank you note!

***Make sure to set up an account on LSAC (www.lsac.org); everything is processed through LSAC.**

Sources:

Michigan State University - "Tips for Strengthening your Law School Application" Webinar, October 2013