



## Pre-Law Study

**L**AW schools in the United States require a bachelor's degree by the starting date of law study. They neither prescribe a particular course of undergraduate study nor favor applicants who have graduated from a formal pre-law program.

Students interested in attending law school should choose their majors based on their own personal and academic interests and abilities. Although many students who plan to become lawyers study political science, English, history, or philosophy, it is not a disadvantage when applying to law school to have majored in architecture, biology, business, chemistry, engineering, mathematics, or other subjects.

### PREPARATION FOR LAW SCHOOL

Information on pre-law study at Virginia Tech is available at [www.psci.vt.edu/prelaw/](http://www.psci.vt.edu/prelaw/). This web site includes general information on a variety of topics including how to decide whether to apply to law school, requirements for admission, how to prepare, and when to apply. This web site also lists printed references and provides links to pertinent electronic references (including a sample application schedule), along with information on the university's pre-law advisors and how to contact them.

Almost all accredited law schools in the United States require applicants to take the Law School Admission Test (LSAT) and to register for the Law School Data Assembly Service (LSDAS). Information on the LSAT and LSDAS, including test dates, how to register, and registration deadlines, is available at [www.LSAC.org](http://www.LSAC.org). Students who plan to go directly to law school should generally plan to take the LSAT in June between their junior and senior years of college or the first time it is offered in the fall of their

senior year.

Admission to law school is very competitive, based primarily on a student's grades and LSAT scores. It is important for pre-law students to devote themselves to getting good grades from the beginning of their undergraduate studies. When applying, it is critical to select an appropriate range of law schools. It is also a good idea to begin planning early for the typically high costs of law school.

### COURSE SELECTION

Law schools and academic advisors are reluctant to recommend particular courses or majors to undergraduates as preparation for law school. Pre-law students should choose a major they find interesting, as they are likely to receive higher grades in classes that interest them. In addition, it is a good

idea for students to take electives that will enhance and develop skills related to success in legal study.

The study and practice of law typically depend on careful analysis of written texts and on effective oral communication. Law schools also place a premium on critical thinking and analytic reasoning. To

the extent possible, it is advisable for pre-law students to take courses that emphasize these skills. Background knowledge in history, the social sciences, and the basics of business associations and accounting will also prove useful to law students.

### SPECIAL OPPORTUNITIES

Virginia Tech has an active undergraduate chapter of Phi Alpha Delta, an international legal society. All students interested in a legal career are invited

to join. This organization sponsors many activities of potential interest to pre-law students, including helping students prepare for the Law School Admis-

sion Test, arranging visits to regional law schools, and hosting visits from attorneys, judges, law school admissions officers, and other legal professionals.

## Contact Us

If you have questions or want more detailed information about Virginia Tech's pre-law resources, please contact:

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If you have questions about admission to Virginia Tech, please contact:

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