

PRE-LAW



PRE-LAW TIMELINE

SOME THINGS TO BE AWARE OF

This timeline suggests the steps you should take from your freshman year on, assuming you plan to apply to law school in your senior year. However: be aware that most law school applicants from Catholic University apply to law school in the first few years after graduating, so the information below about junior and senior years may need some adjustment if that is your plan. Consult the pre-law advisor to discuss.

All law schools advise this: There is no one major or academic program that “best” prepares you for law school, or gives you an edge in the application process. Instead, you should find the major that you love, and that you can do exceptionally well at, and then do exceptionally well; though it’s not all about numbers, GPA does definitely count. It helps if it’s a subject that trains you in analytical thinking and writing, but people from Catholic University apply to law school from every major you can imagine: as law schools themselves emphasize, the world needs lawyers from all backgrounds.

Freshman year

- Experiment and find your major and excel at it (see above).
- Register with LSAC (Law School Admissions Council: www.lsac.org). Take some time to explore their resources.
- Sign on to the pre-law advising email list (link [here](#)) and pay close attention to the messages you get through it.
- Attend as many events publicized by the pre-law advising email list.
- Contact the pre-law advisor (email poos@cua.edu) and arrange a meeting to discuss your plans.
- If you would like to consider the six year B.A./J.D. program with Catholic University’s Columbus School of Law (details [here](#)), be aware that this requires very careful planning from an early stage in your undergraduate career; make a point of meeting with your department’s Director of Undergraduate Studies and also with Dr. Lilla Kopár, the Assistant Dean for Undergraduate Programs in the School of Arts and Sciences (email kopar@cua.edu), to learn how to begin that planning process.

Sophomore year

- Continue to attend as many events publicized by the pre-law advising email list.
- Build relationships with professors in your major with whom you have been and are likely to continue to take courses with: make a point of going to their office hours, engaging in questions about coursework, discussing your career plans, enquiring whether there are any opportunities in your department to be

involved in research projects. Having faculty mentors who know you and your work and abilities well is going to be vitally important when you apply to law schools and need high-quality letters of recommendation (and anyway, professors like it when students reach out to them). Continue this throughout your college years.

- If you are planning for the six year B.A./J.D. program you must formulate your course sequence and choices by the middle of the sophomore year (and begin planning also for the LSAT exam at this point); for more information see [this link](#), and consult with your department's Director of Undergraduate Studies.
- Make an appointment to meet with the pre-law advisor to discuss possibilities for shadowing and other mentorship and experiences opportunities.

Junior year

- Continue to attend as many events publicized by the pre-law advising email list.
- [during summer before junior year, or at latest at beginning of junior year] Research via LSAC and consultation with pre-law advisor about
 - LSAT preparation
 - Investigating which law schools might be right for you
- [by middle of junior year at latest] Formulate your own plan and projected timetable for LSAT: ideally prep and take the LSAT spring of junior year or at latest earlier summer after junior year (to leave open the possibility of retakes). NOTE: Most law school applicants take the LSAT more than once, and most schools only take into consideration your highest score.
- [by middle of junior year at latest] Begin brainstorming your approach to the personal statement that is a part of the law school application. Consult with the pre-law advisor and see the separate resource on this subject. Aim to have a draft by mid-spring of junior year and share it with the pre-law advisor for comments.
- [by later junior year] Compile a list of your intended law schools to apply to.
- Ask for letters of recommendation from your chosen recommendors (the letters themselves to be available and submitted to LSAC as soon as you've initiated the application process at or near end of summer).

Senior year (or gap year if applying after graduation: see above)

- [during summer before senior year] Take or retake LSAT; if in doubt, discuss wisdom of retakes with pre-law advisor.
- [during summer before senior year] Subscribe to the LSAC Credential Assembly Service (CAS), a fee-based service required to apply to law school (this will take you through the mechanics of requesting that Catholic University forward your transcript to LSAC, and give you information about applying for CAS registration and application fee waivers, for instance).
- [very beginning of senior year] Initiate applications via LSAC.
- Aim to complete applications and have all materials submitted by early October. Many schools (and more so in recent years) have rolling admissions, meaning all other things being equal, the earlier you can submit a strong application, the better for you.
- Plan visits (wherever feasible) to law schools where you have been admitted; many have accepted-student events (check their websites). Consider scheduling a tour and sitting in on a class.