



Preprofessional Advising Center  
Silver Center, Room 901  
College of Arts and Science  
New York University

**Preparing to Apply to Law School:  
PUTTING ALL THE PIECES TOGETHER**

**THE APPLICATION**

**A. Transcripts & GPA**

*Admissions committees require official transcripts from **every** higher education institution attended, both undergraduate and graduate, even if you took only one or two courses. Competitive applicants should strive for a minimum 3.5 GPA, but this number is higher at many law schools. (Consult the [ABA Official Guide to Law Schools](#) to find the minimum GPA for schools that interest you.)*

**B. Law School Admissions Test (LSAT)**

*The LSAT is the standardized test required for law school admissions. The test will be offered six times a year and consists of five 35-minute sections of multiple choice questions, and a 35 minute writing sample. Section questions measure reading comprehension, analytical reasoning, and logic skills. Competitive applicants should strive for a minimum score of 160, but many schools look for higher scores. We advise taking the LSAT in June of the year in which you will apply, with September as a backup date. A number of ABA accredited law schools also accept the GRE General Test in lieu of the LSAT (check [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org) for a list of schools).*

**C. Personal Statement**

*As most law schools do not offer interviews, the personal statement may be the only time for an applicant to speak directly to the admissions committee. Applicants should reflect upon and think carefully about how to describe themselves—their values and motivations—and how to go beyond their résumé and transcript. It is recommended to consult with the Writing Center and attend workshops sponsored by CAS Preprofessional Advising.*

**D. Recommendations**

***Two** letters of recommendation from instructors are highly recommended for those applying in their senior year of college and recent graduates. Letters should speak to the applicant's academic performance, intellectual promise, creative abilities, writing and research skills, communication skills, etc. **One** additional letter may be submitted by a recommender who can speak to an applicant's leadership ability, professionalism, work ethic, and/or personal character.*

**E. Résumé and Extracurricular Experiences**

*Applicants should submit a résumé that highlights their education, professional experiences, community service, and other extra-curricular activities. Law schools prefer well-rounded applicants who have done more than simply attend classes and pay close attention to your extracurricular involvement. Applicants are strongly advised to take full advantage of the Wasserman Center to create a résumé that speaks to their strengths.*

**F. Dean's Certification**

*Some law schools require a Dean's Certification Form to verify a student's good standing in the NYU academic community. CAS students seeking certifications should complete a Dean's Certification Request form online, found on the NYU Prelaw website. Certifications typically require two weeks for processing. (Students in other NYU divisions should go to their own Dean's Office.)*

**G. Timing of Applications**

*Students and alumni are advised to apply to law schools in the fall (November is ideal), as law schools admit applicants on a rolling basis.*



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**“I THINK...I THOUGHT...I’M NOT QUITE SURE...”:  
LAW SCHOOL FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS**

**Q: Do law schools prefer certain majors or courses?**

**A:** *No. Law schools value particular skills and a well-rounded liberal arts education rather than one specific major or list of courses. Students should major in their area of interest, and focus on refining their skills in analytical thinking, critical reasoning, expository writing, oral communication, and research. Students can develop these skills and gain foundational knowledge in such disciplines as History, English (and world literature), Politics, Social and Cultural Analysis, Economics, Sociology, and Philosophy.*

**Q: When should I take the LSAT? Can I take it twice?**

**A:** *We advise taking the LSAT in June or the GRE in the summer, so that you have your scores back a few months before you apply, but if you are not prepared in June you may take the exam in September. Applicants should use practice tests as an indicator of readiness and strive to take the LSAT or the GRE **once**. While there is no limit to the amount of times an applicant can sit for the LSAT, law school admissions committees vary in how they treat multiple scores (some emphasize the highest score, others average scores together). To register for the LSAT and open your account with the Law School Data Assembly Service (LSDAS), go to [www.lsac.org](http://www.lsac.org) or, if considering the GRE for qualifying schools, register at [www.ets.org](http://www.ets.org).*

**Q: My classes are too large. How can I obtain strong letters of recommendation?**

**A:** *Take advantage of office hours and appointments with faculty. Ask questions about readings and topics covered in class, so that you establish a connection before asking for a letter. It is helpful to provide recommenders with your résumé, a draft of your personal statement, and perhaps your unofficial transcript. Be sure to ask recommenders well in advance, and send thank-you notes after submission.*

**Q: How important are professional experience and extracurricular activities?**

**A:** *We encourage students to participate in clubs and organizations which connect to their passions and foster opportunities for leadership experience. Exposure to the legal field or other professional environments is advised.*

**Q: How well do CAS students fare as applicants?**

**A:** *Approximately 90% of our students applying as college seniors receive acceptance into at least one law school. Our alumni applicants have almost an 80% success rate of acceptance.*

**Q: I want to attend law school later. Should I apply now and defer admission?**

**A:** *Deferring law school means delaying an offer of admission for one year. Law schools vary widely in how they process deferment requests, so check their websites or contact them for their policy. When in doubt: the best time to apply to law school is when you are ready to attend, and your credentials are as strong as possible.*

*The Office of Preprofessional Advising invites students to learn about our programming by subscribing to the prelaw listserv [here](#) and also to familiarize themselves with our website: [www.nyu.edu/cas/prelaw](http://www.nyu.edu/cas/prelaw)*

*Students with further questions or a general interest in Pre-Law are encouraged to schedule an appointment with an advisor in the Office of Preprofessional Advising located in Silver Center Room 901, (212) 998-8160.*