

# Pre-Law Quick Facts



**Pre-Law Advising**  
*Pre-Professional Advising Office*  
**UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA**

You should prepare for a career in law by building credentials in scholarship, leadership, humanitarian/community service, shadowing, and professional development. There is **no “best” major** for pre-law students. Pursue a major you are genuinely interested in so that you will excel academically. GPA is a primary factor in the law schools admissions process.

## General Information

### What is a JD?

A three-year degree that will prepare you to pass a state bar exam. Most jobs in the legal field are bar-passage required positions. If you want to be a lawyer or judge, you will need to pass the bar. JD programs are three years long.

### Components of a J.D. Application

- GPA (transcripts)
- LSAT (or GRE in some cases)
- Personal Statement
- 2 Letters of Recommendation
- Resume/CV

Law schools want to see evidence of certain skills in an application. Use **your coursework, extracurricular activities, and work opportunities to develop the following skills.**

- Problem solving
- Critical reading
- Writing and editing
- Oral communication and listening
- Research
- Organization and management
- Public service and promotion of justice
- Relationship-building
- Background Knowledge
- Exposure to law

## GPA Expectations

Law schools look for evidence of sustained academic success when evaluating an application. They want to admit applicants who are committed and prepared for the academic rigor of law school. Do not give up if you have one poor semester. Law schools will observe the trends in your academic performance and appreciate continuous improvement. However, they will also notice negative trends and multiple course withdrawals. While an instance or two is not a deal-breaker, a pattern of behavior should be avoided. You must demonstrate the ability to handle difficult courses. Law schools will primarily take in to account the GPA for your first undergraduate degree earned (UGPA). Although, law schools will have access to transcripts for graduate work.

**DISCLAIMER:** There are NO required courses for pre-law. You might also find courses not listed to the right which will develop your skills for law school, or give you some exposure to the law.

### Courses to Consider

**Philosophy** 2010, 2020, 2030, 2500

**Political Science** 4700, 4710, 4720, 4730  
4740, 4750,

**History** 2111, 2112, 4060, 4990

**Sociology** 3070, 3140, 3150, 3810, 3830,  
4830

**JURI** 2000 or 3000-level courses

### Minors/Certificates

Certificate of Legal Studies

Minor in Law, Ethics, and Philosophy

Environmental Law Minor

Minor in Law, Jurisprudence, and the State

## Law School Admission Test (LSAT)

The LSAT is required for admission into most law schools and is usually offered eight to ten times per year at a cost of \$222. You should plan to take the LSAT only once. The LSAT consists of four sections designed to assess your reading comprehension, analytical reasoning, and logical reasoning skills. You will have 35 minutes to complete each section. Three sections are graded. Registration for each LSAT test administration closes six weeks in advance. Make sure to register early! In order to receive your score for the LSAT, you must complete the written portion of the LSAT. **Changes will be coming to the LSAT in August 2024. Consult [LSAC.org/LSAT](https://lsac.org/LSAT) if you plan to take the test after June 2024.**

To prepare for the LSAT you should plan to devote 6-9 months for preparation. LSAC offers free resources through Khan Academy. You may qualify for the LSAC fee waiver. This is a need-based fee waiver. Make sure to apply to this at least six months before you plan to take the LSAT. Consider using an online platform to prepare for the LSAT, or a live-online prep course.

## Campus Involvement, Volunteering & Research

Your resume should reflect your values, skills, and preparedness for law school.

**Extracurriculars/Volunteering:** Evidence of leadership is critical to a successful law school application. Join a campus club or volunteer with a community organization that interests you. Do not over-extend yourself. Demonstrating continuous involvement with increasing responsibility is preferable to the quantity of activities. Your extracurriculars do not have to be related to the law. Law schools want to see that you care about your campus or local community.

**Work Experience and Internships:** Try to find a position or internship that will help you develop professional skills. No legal experience is required. Consider shadowing a lawyer. Shadowing allows you to observe the day-to-day activities of an attorney or legal professional to better understand the complexities of legal professions. Look into UGA's Mentor Program at [mentor.uga.edu](http://mentor.uga.edu) if you need help getting connected with a practicing attorney. Finally, you must invest time in honing your research and writing skills. Look for Research Assistant positions that will introduce you to professional-level research. You don't need to find a research position in the legal field. Show that you can master a subject's technical language and citation format.

## Letters of Recommendation

You will need at least two Letters of Recommendation (LOR) to apply to law school. Some law schools will allow you to submit up to four. Make sure to develop a relationship with professors or a TA early-on. It's preferable that you submit LORs from those that can attest to your academic success. If you have been out of school for several years, a LOR from an employer is acceptable. Law schools do not care about the prestige of the LOR writer. Do not ask a politician or dignitary who has no specific knowledge of your academic abilities. No character references will be accepted.

## Academic Honesty & Personal Conduct

To be admitted into a state's bar you will have to pass a moral, character, and fitness review. Law schools want to fill seats with students who will be accepted into the bar. Any lapse in judgement can impact your chances of getting into law school or being certified to practice law. You will have to disclose any felonies, misdemeanors, personal misconduct, or violations of UGA's Academic Honesty Policy. Do not under any circumstances plagiarize the work of others. SEE: [honesty.uga.edu](http://honesty.uga.edu)

## Law School Application Timeline

### Freshman & Sophomore Year

Build credentials for law school: shadow, volunteer, do research, build relationships with faculty, etc.  
Do **not** wait until junior year to begin!  
Attend the UGA Law Fair to meet with recruiters

### Junior Year

Fall	Continue shadowing, doing research, volunteering, etc.
Sept - May	Study for the LSAT.

### Summer

April - August	Take the LSAT (Make sure to register at least six weeks in advance).
Summer	Request Letters of Recommendation.
July/August	Send all academic transcripts to LSAC. Start drafting your personal statement and optional essays.

### Senior Year

September 1st	Most law school applications open – APPLY EARLY IN THE CYCLE Decide if you will apply Early Decision
Sept/Oct/Nov	Complete application requirements and pay for the Credential Assembly Service (CAS).
October 1st	Fill out FAFSA application to ensure that you are prepared to apply for financial aid.
December 1st	Plan to have your applications completed and submitted.
Feb-June	Law school application window closes (check each law school for precise deadlines).

