

Pre-Law Fact Sheet

Preparing for Law School

There are no specific prerequisite courses required for law school. However, law schools are looking for a set of skills. The American Bar Association identifies these desired skills and competencies in top applicants.

- Analytic and problem-solving skills
- Critical thinking skills
- Writing skills
- General research skills
- Oral communication and listening skills
- Values of serving others and promoting justice
- Background knowledge and experiential learning related to law
- Task organization and management skills
- Ability to build relationships and work collaboratively with others

Liberal arts education prepares you for law school

The Creighton Magis Core curriculum, in the Jesuit intellectual tradition, offers a broad-based education that challenges students to engage in inquiry and critical thinking across disciplines. All students develop skills in areas such as communication, ethical reasoning, and technology in a curriculum with a wide variety of course choices. Each Creighton undergraduate must integrate what they have learned and apply that knowledge to tough questions of ethics and justice. No matter the major, the Core curriculum can prepare future lawyers for serious intellectual pursuits.

Sample courses to prepare for law school

The following is a small sample of Creighton courses that may help students explore their interest in law. Students should consider the populations they wish to work with and types of law they might wish to pursue. Students can also visit with a pre-law advisor to talk about additional options.

- Symbolic Logic (PHL 399)
- Philosophy of Law (PHL 390)
- Legal Environment of Business (BUS 201)
- Business Law (BUS 301)
- Mock Trial (BUS 321/322)
- Judicial Process (PLS 320)
- Constitutional Law (PLS 337)
- Psychology and the Law (PSY 363)
- Sociology of the Criminal Justice System (SOC 321)
- Law and Society (SOC 423)
- Law of Mass Communication (JRM 529)

THE FIRST STEP: DISCERNMENT

Why are you interested in law? How do your strengths aligning with the skills and competencies preferred by the American Bar Association? Do you have an orientation toward service? Does your intended career path require a law degree?

There are many types of lawyers and many types of law careers, focusing on areas as varied as business, public policy, social justice and intellectual property. But all of them require discernment of your interests, strengths, and competencies for the profession.

Students can discern with help from advisors and professions, through informational interviews with lawyers, and by engaging in law-related part-time work or internships.

Majors, Grades and GPA

There is no preferred or recommended major for law school. Students can major in any discipline and develop essential skills in reading, writing, and critical thinking.

Applicants with a well-rounded education and a variety of interests and personal experiences are ideal candidates. Students should choose a major where they can demonstrate strong academic performance. Law schools look for students who demonstrate the ability to handle a rigorous course load.

GPA's calculated on law school applications include coursework completed at all colleges attended and all attempts at a course. If a course is repeated, both grades will be included in the GPA's calculated by the law schools.

Aim for GPA's of **3.3 or above**.

CREIGHTON UNIVERSITY'S 3-3 LAW PROGRAM

Creighton University's 3-3 Law Program offers pre-law students the opportunity to complete their bachelor's degree and Juris Doctor degree in six years, instead of the typical seven. The 3-3 Law option is available through both the Heider College of Business and the Creighton College of Arts and Sciences. Students in the 3-3 Law Program complete their JD at Creighton School of Law. Each college has designated majors that work well with the curriculum of the 3-3 program.

Entering law school early requires extra planning. Students interested should prioritize completing classes toward their major and Magis Core requirements. It is a good idea to meet regularly with academic and pre-law advisors.

STEPS TOWARD PRE-LAW

Phase 1: Exploration

- ☐ Join the Pre-Law Information Group on Blueline. Email cars@creighton.edu to be added.
- ☐ Attend a Pre-Law 101 group advising session in the fall semester or watch a video recording in the Pre-Law Information Group Blueline.
- ☐ When you meet with your Academic Advisor, let them know about your pre-law interest. Discuss Magis Core classes that would develop your reading, writing, and critical thinking skills.
- ☐ Work to answer the question "Why am I interested in the law?"
- ☐ Meet with a pre-law advisor early if you are interested in the 3-3 program.

Phase 2: Get involved on campus and engage with the profession

- ☐ Continue to take challenging Magis Core and major courses.
- ☐ Find campus activities and volunteer opportunities to help you engage with your community, practice leadership, and serve others.
- ☐ Seek work or internships that foster skills that lawyers need, such as organization, communication, and collaboration.

Phase 3: Active application

- ☐ Work with a pre-law advisor to plan to take the LSAT, prepare a personal statement, and understand your application timeline. Begin this the school year before you wish to apply.

PRE-LAW: BEYOND COURSEWORK

Internships and Work Experience

Students are encouraged to seek internship or work experiences that offer opportunities to build skills in problem solving, teamwork, and critical thinking. Such experiences also strengthen a student's professionalism. These experiences do not need to be in a legal field, and in fact it can be challenging for undergraduate students to find legal-related internships. All internship and work experiences can help students build vital skills and can connect them with employers who may write letters of recommendation on their behalf.

Building Relationships

Attorneys are called on to connect with and help people different from themselves. Students should seek out experiences that help them build interpersonal relationships and interact with people from many walks of life.

Leadership and Teamwork

Students must demonstrate leadership and teamwork skills. Consider initiating group projects, serving as an officer in a student organization, or working as a teaching assistant. Seek opportunities to work collaboratively with others, even when a role doesn't have a leadership title.

Volunteer and Service

It is important to demonstrate sustained commitment over time. Check out the Schlegel Center for Service and Justice for opportunities: blogs.creighton.edu/scsj

Research

Research experience is not required for admission to law school, but may add an extra layer to an application. See the Center for Undergraduate Research and Scholarship for opportunities: www.creighton.edu/curas