

Baylor University Pre-Law



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Pre-Law Guide

Pre-Law at Baylor is not a major. Rather, it is a pre-professional track available to all undergraduate students. The American Bar Association (ABA) [Preparing for Law School](#) Web site does not recommend any particular group of majors for students interested in becoming lawyers. Rather, experts recommend maximizing your education by taking the most rigorous and demanding classes possible. For detailed recommendations on each stage of pre-law preparation, read the *Pre-Law Timeline*. If you wish to add or delete the pre-law designation on your student record, please see an advisor in Academic Advisement (freshmen), CASA (sophomores-seniors in Arts & Sciences), or the primary advisors in other schools and colleges.

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Course Recommendations

Many of the courses below might serve as upper-level electives or general education requirements. It is essential to consult with your academic advisor before registering for courses or choosing a major. She or he can advise you best on which courses best fit your degree plan, goals, and interests. Many of these courses could fall under several different categories. Please note that this list is not exhaustive, and these classes may not be offered each semester. Also, many courses have prerequisite requirements that must be satisfied in order to register for them.

Courses which help with LSAT preparation:

- MTH 1321 Calculus I
- PHI 1306 Intro to Logic
- PHI 1307 Critical Thinking

Courses related to specialties of law practice:

There are many areas of practice within the legal profession. For many practice areas, there are specific undergraduate courses that can help prepare students for the future practice of law. Some of these are listed below.

Practice Area and Description:	Useful Courses:
Administrative Law: Focuses on the practices of federal, state or local administrative agencies, and judicial review of agency actions. Some areas of specialization are energy, immigration, social security, professional licensing, and local land use planning.	ECO 4317 Economics of Regulation ECO 4320 Economics of Government PSC 4321 Administrative Law
Antitrust Law: Focuses on the laws governing the promotion and protection of competition in national and international markets.	ECO 3306 Intermediate Microeconomic Analysis ECO 4316 Industrial Organization ECO 4317 Economics of Regulation ECO 4319 Game Theory ECO 4347 Econometrics
Business/Corporate Law: Provides general legal and business advice to businesses across a variety of areas of law, including contracts, labor and employment, corporation law, securities regulation, and more.	ACC 2303 Financial Accounting ACC 2304 Managerial Accounting BL 4303 Employment Law ECO 4316 Industrial Organization FIN 3310 Introduction to Financial Management FIN 4360 Corporate Finance FIN 4365 Investment Analysis FIN 4366 Options, Futures, and Other Derivatives RMI 3305 Fundamentals of Risk Management and Insurance

Practice Area and Description:	Useful Courses:
Constitutional Law: Focuses on matters arising under constitutional rights, including criminal rights, free speech, freedom of religion, and due process.	PSC 2302 American Constitutional Development PSC 4361 American Constitutional Law PSC 4381 American Constitutional Law PSC/AMS/REL 3339 Law and Religion in the United States
Criminal Law: Focuses on enforcement of the criminal laws and administration of the criminal justice system. Criminal prosecutors and defenders handle offenses against the state, rather than claims belonging to individuals.	PSC 3302 Criminal Justice and Community Law SOC 4352 Criminology SOC 3360 Juvenile Delinquency SOC 3361 Extreme Deviance CCS 3372 Law, Justice and Community
Environmental Law: Focuses on matters related to the environment, natural resources, and energy.	ENV 3300 The Environment and Political Processes ENV 3306 Conserving Biodiversity ENV 3333 Watershed Assessment ENV 4335 Applied Environmental Analysis ENV 4307 Environmental Law ENV/ECO 4323 The Environment and Economic Analysis
Estate Planning: Assists in long-term financial planning, with a focus on transmission of assets at death, provision of care for minor children after death of parents, and creation of living trusts.	ACC 4377 Personal and Business Tax Planning FIN 3310 Introduction to Financial Management FIN 4365 Investment Analysis FSP 3301 Personal Finance FSP 3367 Introduction to Personal Financial Planning
Family Law: Handles matters related to the family, such as in areas such as adoption, divorce, custody, military law, alternative families, and elder law.	SOC 3330 Women in American Society SOC 3355/ECO 4355 Introduction to the Economics of Poverty and Discrimination SOC 3311 Race, Class, and Gender
International Law: Provides advice to clients on matters relating to international treaties, acquisitions, and trade activities.	BL 4398 International Law ECO/INB 3331 International Economics ECO 4338 Economic Systems of the World PSC 4305 International Law
Patent Law: Assists developers of new technology in protecting intellectual property rights in their inventions.	A general background in engineering is exceptionally valuable in the practice of patent law.
Real Estate Law: Provides advice in connection with real estate transactions ranging from residential to high-end commercial, including eminent domain laws.	ACC 2303 Financial Accounting ACC 2304 Managerial Accounting FIN 3310 Introduction to Financial Management FIN 4360 Corporate Finance Any RE (Real Estate) courses
Tax Law: Provides advice on tax consequences of a wide variety of activities.	A major in accounting with an emphasis on tax accounting would be very valuable, though not necessary.

Courses which help prepare for law school and the practice of law:

The [American Bar Association](#) recognizes a number of key values and skills as important for lawyers. As you explore whether law may be a good fit for you, you may want to consider taking some of the courses below that directly relate to these skill sets and values.

Analytic / Problem Solving Skills: Students should seek courses and other experiences that will engage them in critical thinking about important issues, that will engender in them tolerance for uncertainty, and that will give them experiences in structuring and evaluating arguments for and against propositions that are susceptible to reasoned debate. Students also should seek courses and other experiences that require them to apply previously developed principles or theories to new situations, and that demand that they develop solutions to new problems.

- Courses in Philosophy
 - PHI 1321 Intro to Philosophy
 - PHI 2310 Law, Science, and Society
 - PHI 2370 Business Ethics
 - PHI 3301 Moral Philosophy
 - PHI 4318 Philosophy of Law
 - PHI 4360 Contemporary Ethical Theory
 - PHI 4361 Social Philosophy
- Courses in Mathematics, beginning with MTH 1321 (Calculus I)
- Courses in Physics, beginning with PHY 1408 (General Physics for Natural and Behavioral Sciences I) or PHY 1420 (General Physics I)
- Courses in Statistics and Probability, beginning with STA 1380, 2381, or 3381

Critical Reading: Preparation for legal education should include substantial experience at close reading and critical analysis of complex textual materials, for much of what law students and attorneys do involves careful reading. Law school should not be the first time that a student has been rigorously engaged in the enterprise of carefully reading and understanding, and critically analyzing, complex written material of substantial length.

- Any 2000-level course in ENG or GTX
- GKC 1301-2320 (Can be used to fulfill the language requirement in many cases)
- LAT 1301-2320 (Can be used to fulfill the language requirement in many cases)
- Any 3000 or 4000-level course in the Humanities or Social Sciences

Writing and Research Skills: Students should acquire and refine fundamental writing skills before entering law school. Those preparing for legal education should seek as many experiences as possible that require rigorous and analytical writing, including preparing original pieces of substantial length and revising written work in response to constructive criticism. Those preparing for legal education should select courses and seek experiences that will require them to plan a research strategy; undertake substantial library research; and analyze, organize, and present a large amount of material.

- ENG 3303 Advanced Expository Writing
- ENG 4309 Advanced Argumentative and Persuasive Writing
- Any other 3000 or 4000-level course in the Humanities or Social Sciences requiring a substantial research paper
- Preparation of a thesis as part of the Honors, University Scholars, or Baylor Business Fellows programs

Oral Communication/ Listening Abilities: The abilities to speak clearly and persuasively and to listen effectively are essential to success in law school and the practice of law. Before beginning law school, individuals should develop their basic speaking and listening skills, including engaging in debate; making formal presentations in class; or speaking before groups in school, the community, or the workplace.

- CSS 1304 Argumentation and Debate
- CSS 3305 Advanced Public Speaking
- CSS 3307 Legal Communication
- CSS 3312 Non-Verbal Communication
- CSS 3316 Persuasion and Communication
- HIS 2389 Introduction to Model Organization of American States
- HIS 4389 Advanced Model Organization of American States

Public Service and Promotion of Justice: Members of the legal profession should be dedicated both to the objectives of serving others honestly, competently, and responsibly, and to the goals of improving fairness and the quality of justice in the legal system.

- CCS 1100 Civic and Community Service: There are various topics including Careers in Law.
- CCS 1102 Community Law Enforcement: Students in the College of Art & Sciences can petition this to count for an HP.
- CCS 3300 Citizenship/Community Service Learning: This class includes an internship in the legal community and provides students with solid law school preparation, including writing the statement of purpose.

Courses that may enhance knowledge useful for the practice of law: Students entering the law profession should have a broad understanding of history, particularly American history, and the various factors (social, political, economic, and cultural) that have influenced the development of the pluralistic society that exists in the United States. As law has become more woven into the fabric of our society, and as that society is increasingly influenced by disparate national and global forces, a broad knowledge base is essential for success in law school and for competence in the legal profession. Some additional courses that can help develop such knowledge are:

- ECO 4318 Law and Economics
- HIS 2365 The United States to 1877
- HIS 2366 The United States since 1877
- HIS 3371 History of Black Americans
- HIS 4357 Inter-American Relations
- HIS 4363 American Revolution and Constitution
- HIS 4365 The Early Republic, 1789-1860
- HIS 4368 Civil War and Reconstruction
- HIS 4371 The United States, 1877-1920
- HIS 4374 United States since 1920
- HIS 4375 The American Civil Rights Movement
- HIS 4377 History of American Women, 1600-1865
- HIS 4378 History of American Women since 1865
- PSC 1305 American National Government
- PSC 1306 American State and Local Government
- SOC 3322 Urban Sociology
- SOC 4322 Social Stratification

Special Academic Programs and Unique Opportunities

University Scholars Program: The University Scholars program gives students excellent pre-law preparation because all students must read widely on their own outside of the course requirements with a view to preparation for an exit interview in the junior year of study. Moreover, because the program gives each student an extremely flexible schedule, students can take courses from each of the areas outlined in this booklet, developing a unique, individualized course of study as excellent preparation for law school.

Baylor Business Fellows Program: The Baylor Business Fellows major is a program within the Hankamer School of Business targeted at students who demonstrate high intellectual standing and want to maximize their time to learn what will best benefit them in the future. Baylor Business Fellows is a special degree program offered to gifted, high achieving Baylor students, providing them the flexibility to reach their educational goals by allowing them to choose the pieces that compose their degree. Admission to Baylor Business Fellows is competitive and is separate from and subsequent to admission to Baylor University.

Honors Program: The Honors Program in the Honors College allows students to maximize their education along the lines recommended by the ABA. Because of the emphasis on critical thinking, research, and writing, the Honors Program is a good option for students wishing to pursue a career in law. In particular, the thesis component provides experience with rigorous and analytical writing, including preparing original pieces of substantial length and revising written work in response to constructive criticism. Successful lawyers have the ability to make persuasive arguments within complex circumstances, and writing a thesis gives undergraduate students the opportunity to bring together a great deal of information. The Honors Program also emphasizes the broad range of disciplines, fields, and practices. Law, like other professions, is an interdisciplinary practice, for which the best preparation is an interdisciplinary curriculum that helps future lawyers see the connections between the various subject areas.

Baylor Interdisciplinary Core: The Baylor Interdisciplinary Core is a general education alternative curriculum that can also be combined with the Honors Program. The World Cultures sequence is structured to enhance student's historical consciousness and uses discussion groups that focus on in-depth exploration of primary texts. The Rhetoric sequence develops reading, oral communication, interpretative, and thinking skills. Students develop skills in textual and contextual analysis as well as in forming well-developed ideas that may be communicated to a specific audience, clearly and cogently. The interdisciplinary focus of the program situated within the first two years of study at Baylor provides a strong foundation for upper level study in disciplines conducive to further preparation for law school.

Pre-Law Economics Track: The Economics major provides a sequence of courses of particular interest for students interested in pre-law, including ECO 4316 (Industrial Organization), ECO 4317 (Economics of Regulation), ECO 4318 (Law and Economics), ECO 4319 (Game Theory), ECO 4320 (The Economics of Government), and ECO 4322 (Forensic Economics).

Pre-Law Philosophy Track: The philosophy department has a track for Philosophy majors interested in pre-law. Please contact either advisor in Philosophy if you are interested.

Academic Contacts/Advisors with Pre-Law Expertise

These faculty and staff members are available for discussions about majors and your interest in pursuing law as a potential career.

Business School: Virginia_Ellis@baylor.edu (HSB 106)

Classics: Timothy_Heckenlively@baylor.edu (MH 203.7)

Communication Studies: William_English@baylor.edu (CC 156), Scott_Varda@baylor.edu (CC 147), Matt_Gerber@baylor.edu or David_Schlueter@baylor.edu (CC 155)

College of Arts & Sciences: Rosanne_Fuller@baylor.edu (SR 053)

Economics: Charles_North@baylor.edu (HSB 366)

Environmental Science: Julie_King1@baylor.edu (Goebel 109)

History: Joan_Supplee@baylor.edu (TB 310)

Honors Program: Albert_Beck@baylor.edu (MH 203.3)

Philosophy: Francis_Beckwith@baylor.edu (MH 220) or Michael_Beaty@baylor.edu (MH 217)

Political Science: Thomas_Myers@baylor.edu (B 301AB)

Service Learning: Thomas_Myers@baylor.edu (B 301AB)

Sociology: Randy_Jacobs@baylor.edu (B 319B)

University Scholars Contact: Alden_Smith@baylor.edu (MH 203.7)

All Majors: Charles_North@baylor.edu (HSB 366); Rosanne_Fuller@baylor.edu (SR 053); Joyce_Miller@baylor.edu (SR 114)

Resources

Phi Alpha Delta (Baylor's pre-law society): This organization hosts speakers from various fields of law who share their insights; provides networking opportunities with professionals, students and professors; and provides a variety of pre-law related resources including volunteer opportunities, job and internship listings, magazine articles, and Law School Admission Test information. For more information, contact Amabely_Alderete@baylor.edu.

Law School Admission Council Online: The council provides information on the LSAT and law school admissions, including online registration and links to home pages of law schools.
<http://www.lsac.org/>

Boston College Law School Locator: The Locator lists the median LSAT scores and GPAs of the entering first year class. It also helps students identify chances of admission.
<http://www.bc.edu/offices/careers/gradschool/law/lawlocator.html>

CLEO (Council on Legal Education Opportunity).
<http://www.abanet.org/cleo/whatis.html>

Overview of Pre-Law Student Services: This overview was compiled by students at the University of Texas, and it includes links to undergraduate-friendly websites with information on the LSAT, application process, school rankings, and more.
<http://www.ilrg.com/pre-law.html>

For more information, and a complete list of pre-law advisors, go to www.baylor.edu/prelaw .