Preparing for Law School at The College of William & Mary
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Pre-Law Website: www.wm.edu/as/government/prelawadvising

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Law schools are looking for great students with analytical and logical reasoning skills—the liberal arts curriculum at William & Mary is designed to enhance these skills

• There is no “pre-law” major at William & Mary
• There is no one preferred major for attending law school—in fact a less traditional major (for law school applicants) can be an advantage in terms of distinguishing you from other applicants
• There are NO required courses for law school—if you are interested in taking law-related classes at W&M, there is a list of such courses on the website, however they are NOT required for law school
• The two most important factors in law school admissions are your overall GPA and LSAT (Law School Admission Test) score
• A double-major can be helpful if it is in two fields that illustrate different skills (i.e. History and Neuroscience), but is not necessarily helpful if it is in fields more closely related (i.e. History and Government)
• Let me again stress the above point—you do NOT need to have a double-major for law school

Internships & Work Experience

• Internships or work experience in law-related fields are nice, but are not required for law school
• The quality of an internship or work experience is much more important than the field in which it is conducted—so, a great experience in a biology lab where you got to conduct serious research would be preferable to an internship in a law office where you made photocopies and did filing work
• You can find out information about internship opportunities from the Career Services Center, from the Pre-Law Website, and from the William & Mary Washington DC Office

Studying for and taking the LSAT

• If you plan to attend law school directly after graduating from William & Mary, you should register to take the LSAT in the June after your junior year (http://www.lsac.org)
• If you cannot take the LSAT in June for some reason, take the LSAT in October of your senior year
• Taking the LSAT early will allow you to retake the test if you need to (though do NOT plan on taking the test twice) and still get your applications out early
• For students planning to take time off between graduation and law school, you can take the test at the time that is best for you; scores are good for 5 years
• Some students take a prep class for the LSAT, others study on their own; I do not endorse any particular program or method of study

Application Process:

• All other things equal, applying earlier is preferable to applying later
• More highly ranked schools tend to have earlier deadlines—getting out your applications by Thanksgiving is great, you should shoot for no later than the end of December

As a freshman, sophomore or first-semester junior, there is nothing in particular you need to be doing to prepare for law school other than take your classes, do well and be involved in on-campus (again quality is likely superior to quantity of activities) or off-campus activities.

In the spring semester of your junior year or fall semester of your senior year, come to a law school application workshop. I hold one of these within the first two weeks of the start of classes each semester. In that workshop I will cover strategies for applying to law school, putting together your application, personal statement and recommendation letters, and taking the LSAT.