Pre-Law

Academic preparation for law school takes place at the undergraduate level through a rigorous, comprehensive educational experience. Law schools are looking for well-rounded individuals with highly developed skills in the following areas: written and verbal communication, critical reading, analysis and problem solving, listening, general research, and task organization and management.

Taking the Right Classes

Academic preparation for law school includes taking challenging coursework from disciplines that will enhance your writing, critical thinking, and research skills.

GWC courses that provide broad knowledge for Pre-Law

Writing and Critical Thinking	ENGL G100,110, PHIL G125, PSYC G130
Oral Communication Skills	COMM G110, COMM G220, G225
Understanding of American History, development of pluralistic society	HIST G170 + G175
Understanding of Political Thought, Political Theory	PSCI G100, G150, G180
Understanding of ethics and theories of justice	PHIL G100, PHIL G115, PHIL G120, PSCI G130, PHIL/PSCI G150
Understanding of economic structures, economic theory and public policy	ECON G170 + G175
Accounting skills to understand and analyze financial data	CS G130 + ACCT G101
Understanding of statistics and how to analyze statistical data	MATH G160
Understanding of human behavior and social structures	PSY G100, PSY G255, SOC G100, SOC G160, SOC G185
An understanding of diverse cultures within and beyond the United States, of international institutions and issues, and of the increasing interdependence of nations and communities within our world	SOC G133, PSCI G110, G185,
Computer Skills	Highly Recommended. CS G130 if needed.
Other courses that may be beneficial	BUS G108/BUS G110, CJ G123, G128, G140, CJ G141, Foreign Language

Choosing the Best Major

What is the best major for pre-law students? The answer is: *there is no best major*. Choose a major that you find most interesting, challenging and satisfying. You should study subjects that you really enjoy, and avoid choosing a major because it might "look good" on your application. No points are given for the major that you choose, however, you will probably perform better in a major that captures your interests. Programs that requires you to think logically, analyze issues and propose possible resolutions, and develop strong writing skills will be of benefit to students in their legal studies. While some students choose traditional majors such as English, History, Philosophy, Political Science, Economics, and Business, this is not required. Students may choose to study disciplines as diverse as art, music, science, math, computer science, and nursing.

LSAT Preparation

The Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) is a standardized examination that most U.S. Law Schools require for admission. The LSAT is designed to measure skills that are considered essential for success in law school: the reading and comprehension of complex texts with accuracy and insight; the organization and management of information and the ability to draw reasonable inferences from it; the ability to think critically; and the analysis and evaluation of the reasoning and arguments of others. The LSAT plays a very significant role in the application process. The secret to a performing well on the LSAT is preparation, preparation, preparation. The LSAT is a half-day, standardized test administered four times each year at designated testing centers. The test consists of five 35-minute sections of multiple-choice questions. Four of the five sections contribute to the test taker's score. A 35-minute writing sample is administered at the end of the test. LSAC does not score the writing sample, but copies of the writing sample are sent to all law schools to which you apply.

LSAC

Law School Admissions Council (LSAC) simplifies the admission process for law school applicants. All college/university transcripts; letters of recommendation; and evaluations are sent once to LSAC. LSAC then distributes these documents to the individual schools that request them as part of the admission and selection process.

HOW LAW SCHOOLS ARE CATEGORIZED: ABA APPROVED LAW SCHOOLS VS. NON-ABA-APPROVED LAW SCHOOLS

Graduates from ABA-approved law schools may take the bar exam in any state. Graduates of non-ABA approved schools usually can only take the bar exam in the state in which the school is accredited unless they have practiced law for a significant period of time, five years for most states. Refer to http://www.americanbar.org/aba.html for specifics.

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Median income from Occupational Outlook Handbook, http://www.bls.gov/ooh
GPA and LSAT information obtained from respective schools Entering Class Profile for Fall 2015

Non-ABA schools are generally less competitive for admission, and may not require completion of a bachelor's degree. They are typically less expensive than their ABA counterparts. However, bar passage rates tend to be lower, and career options may be more limited. Correspondence law school graduates are not eligible to take the bar exam in any state except California, and then only under special conditions.

RANKED BY TIERS
Although the ABA officially discounts ranking systems, other sources rank law schools into four Tiers. The First Tier is the most highly selective, the most competitive, and difficult to enter, while the Fourth Tier is the least selective. Hierarchy is based on reputation, job placement success, strength of faculty, and prestige of institution.

Law School Application Process
1. Meet minimum Requirements: Bachelor's degree for most all applicants, LSAT scores (within 3 years of application).
2. Apply to universities (LSAT scores included) with letters of recommendation, personal statement, resume, and other requested documents.
3. Be invited to interview with selected university committee.
4. Get a letter of "Acceptance", "Denial", or "Waitlist".
5. Matriculate to the university of choice where final acceptance was granted.

Law Schools:
A total of 205 institutions are ABA-approved. There are 21 ABA Approved law schools in California.

School	Median GPA / LSAT
UC, Berkeley Boalt School of Law: http://www.law.berkeley.edu/	(Median GPA 3.75 / LSAT 166)
UC Davis, King School of Law: http://www.law.ucdavis.edu/	(Median GPA 3.51 / LSAT 163)
UC Hastings School of Law: http://www.uchastings.edu/	(Median GPA 3.50 / LSAT 159)
UC Irvine School of Law: http://www.law.uci.edu/	(Median GPA 3.56 / LSAT 162)
UCLA School of Law: http://www.law.ucla.edu/	(Median GPA 3.74 / LSAT 167)
California Western School of Law: https://www.cwsl.edu/	(Median GPA 3.15 / LSAT 150)
Chapman University Fowler School of Law: http://www.chapman.edu/law	(Median GPA 3.33 / LSAT 156)
Golden Gate University School of Law: http://www.law.ggu.edu/	(Median GPA 2.97 / LSAT 148)
Loyola Law School, Loyola Marymount University: http://www.lls.edu/	(Median GPA 3.52 / LSAT 159)
Pepperdine University: http://law.pepperdine.edu/	(Median GPA 3.60 / LSAT 159)
Santa Clara University: http://law.scu.edu/	(Median GPA 3.17 / LSAT 154)
Southwestern Law School: http://www.swlaw.edu/	(Median GPA 3.20 / LSAT 152)
Stanford University: http://www.law.stanford.edu/	
Thomas Jefferson School of Law: http://www.tjsl.edu/	
University of La Verne College of Law: http://law.laverne.edu/	
University of the Pacific McGeorge School of Law: http://www.mcgeorge.edu/	(Median GPA 3.14 / LSAT 151)
University of San Diego: http://www.sandiego.edu/law/	(Median GPA 3.51 / LSAT 158)
University of San Francisco: http://www.usfca.edu/law	(Median GPA 3.32 / LSAT 154)
University of Southern California (USC) Gould School of Law: http://lawweb.usc.edu/	(Median GPA 3.76 / LSAT 165)
Western State University College of Law: http://www.wsulaw.edu/	
Whittier Law School: http://www.law.whittier.edu/	(Median GPA 2.85 / LSAT 148)

Degrees Offered: Juris Doctorate (JD). Three years of full-time study is generally required to earn the Juris Doctor (J.D.) degree. Students then take the bar exam in the state in which they wish to build their legal practice. California's exam is considered among the most difficult, with approximately a 66% pass rate.
Dual Degrees: Some campuses will offer joint degrees along with the JD, including a research Ph.D./ J.S.D.; Masters in Business Administration (MBA); and other Master's level degrees.
Average GPA for California Law Schools: 2.71 – 3.93, with most UC schools at a 3.6 GPA.
Residency Status: US citizen or permanent resident (permanent residents must be in possession of their resident alien card at time of application)
Median Income: $115,820. Wages higher in specialty areas.

Additional Resources:
California Law Schools: http://admissions.calbar.ca.gov/Education/LegalEducation/LawSchools.aspx
American Bar Association: http://www.americanbar.org/aba.html
Law School Admission Service, School Guide: https://officialguide.lsac.org/release/OfficialGuide_Default.aspx
LSAT: http://www.lsac.org/jd/lsat/about-the-lsat.asp