

Applying to Law School

Answers to your questions
about pursuing law as a career

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Today's Workshop Overview

- Law as a career
- Your path to becoming a lawyer
- Choosing the right law school
- Application procedures
- Laurier Career Centre

Reasons for Choosing Law

- Intellectual curiosity
- Passion for social issues
- Increased pay and job opportunities
- Skill development
- Love for research and writing

Law-Related Career Opportunities

- Large range of career opportunities:
 - Large Law Firms
 - Small Law Firms/Private Practice
 - Government
 - Business
 - NGO
- Talk with professionals in the field:
Alumni Sharing Knowledge Program
(ASK)

Law-Related Career Opportunities

- Research the career:
 - www.workingincanada.gc.ca
 - Law Society – www.lsuc.on.ca
 - Career Resource Centre
- Employment prospects

Your Path to Becoming a
Lawyer

Requirements to Become a Lawyer in Canada

- Undergraduate study at a recognized university program
- JD (Juris Doctor) or LL.B. (Bachelor of Laws)
- Admission to the Bar:
 - Must successfully complete a Bar admission course, administered by a provincial law society
 - Must serve a period of apprenticeship as an articling clerk

Your Undergraduate Courses

- No “right” major
- Courses that will improve your analytical reasoning and writing skills
- Diversity of courses that will challenge you and expand your mind
- Choose courses that you enjoy; you will likely have higher grades

Life as a Law Student

First Year: Students take a wide variety of required courses

- Teaching style is active: Professors will pose questions based on cases and court decisions, which places much of the burden of learning on the students
- Value is based on logic and your ability to analyze the cases

Second & Third Years: Students take electives and fulfill requirements for bar courses.

- Possibility to obtain experience

Elective Courses

Sample electives include:

- International law
- Environmental law
- Labour law
- Criminal procedure
- Legal history

Admission to the Bar in Canada

- Each province is regulated by its own Law Society (Ontario – Law Society of Upper Canada – www.lsuc.on.ca)
- For more information about provincial requirements, visit the Federation of Law Societies in Canada website, www.flsc.ca

Choosing the Right Law School

Choosing the Right Law School

Research Programs/Schools:

- Talk to alumni who have recently graduated
- Use books and websites to find out more about particular schools
- Contact the admissions departments at schools of interest
- If possible, visit the schools and tour the departments

Choosing the Right Law School

- What are the quality, strengths and interests of the faculty?
- How does the curriculum compare with other schools (especially in the upper years)?
- What experience is available?
- Does the school offer any specialized courses that are of interest to you?
- Is there a joint program that interests you? Is the program recognized by the Law Society in the province where you want to live?
- Law school profile – www.lsac.org

Application Procedures

Components of the Application Package

- GPA and Transcripts
- Law School Admission Test (LSAT)
- Application Forms
- Autobiographical Sketch
- Personal Statement
- Letters of Recommendation

If you are applying to a joint program, you need to complete an application to both the Law School and the other program.

GPA

- Review GPA requirements for each school
- Some calculate your GPA based on your last two years, some look at cumulative GPA
- Most successful applicants are high B+/A- and higher

Transcripts

- Ontario applications – you can request Ontario transcripts online as a part of the application process
- If you are applying outside of Ontario, you will need to ask the Registrar to send enough copies directly to the schools

Law School Admission Test (LSAT)

- A standard measure of reading and verbal reasoning skills
- Five 35-minute sections of multiple choice questions and a 30-minute writing sample
- The writing sample is sent to the law schools to which you are applying

LSAT

- www.lsac.org
- Test dates - February, June, October or December
- Register well in advance for choice of location
- Should I write it more than once?

Preparation Strategies

- Practice Tests
- Self study
- Prep courses

Application Forms

- Ontario law schools:
 - www.ouac.on.ca/olsas
 - Application deadline is November 1
- Canadian law schools:
 - Apply directly to the specific school
- American law schools:
 - Apply through the LSDAS at www.lsac.org

Autobiographical Sketch

- Account of all activities since you finished high school
- Categories:
 - Full-Time Employment
 - Part-Time Employment
 - Volunteer Activities
 - Extra-Curricular Activities
 - Academic Honours and Achievements
 - Research/Publications
 - Other
- You need a Verifier for each activity

Personal Statement

- A summary statement indicating your interest in the program/school/career
- Why the program, field and profession is right for you
- How you know it is right for you
- How you've prepared yourself for this next step
- Accomplishments & experiences that demonstrate your ability to succeed in law
- How this school and program fit with your long term goals
- Any deficiencies in your application
- Summary and closing statements

Letters of Recommendation

- A detailed letter from faculty members or an employer, of the personal qualities, accomplishments and experiences that make you a good candidate for law school
- Usually 2 or 3 per law school (at least one academic)
- Need to arrive at OLSAS by November 1

How Can the Career Centre
Help You Prepare for
Applying to Law School?

Career Planning

- If you are unsure whether or not law is for you, book a Career Planning Introduction appointment and/or attend the Career Planning workshop
- Career Consultants can also help you explore your career options based on your undergraduate program, interests, etc.

Applying to Law School

- Learn more about potential programs by using the resources in the centre
- Study for the LSAT using our test resources (including practice tests)
- Get to know your professors and stay in touch with references
- Book an appointment to review your autobiographical sketch and/or personal statements

Upcoming Law School Events

- Law School Bound with John Richardson
 - Thursday, October 13, 4 – 5 p.m.
 - Thursday, November 17, 4 – 5 p.m.
 - Career Centre, CC-101
- **Graduate and Professional Education Fair**
 - **Wednesday, October 19, 3 – 6 p.m.**
- Legal Resources
 - Law School Trips
 - Mock LSAT

For more assistance:

Career Development Centre
192 King Street North

To book an individual appointment, call:
519.884.0710 ext. 4495

Drop-In Hours: Tuesday-Thursday, 1 – 3 p.m.

For help via email:

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