

LAW

A broad liberal arts education is the fundamental preparation for the study of law. Lawrence has an excellent faculty, extensive course offerings, special programs, and off-campus study opportunities for the pre-law student. On average, about seven percent of each graduating class goes on to law school. They matriculate at the finest law schools in the country, among them Columbia, Duke, Harvard, Cornell, New York University, the University of Chicago, Northwestern, Stanford, Washington University, and the Universities of Wisconsin, Michigan, and Minnesota.

No single curriculum is the best preparation for law school, or promises the best chance for admission. What law schools want – and what makes the best lawyers – is a combination of skills: analytical ability; skill in written and verbal communication; the ability to develop, organize, and defend compelling arguments, flexibility and adaptability; and knowledge of the world.

No one major provides the best preparation for a career in law, but law schools demand academic excellence. In recent graduating classes, for example, the majors earned by Lawrentians who entered law school included anthropology, art history, biology, chemistry, East Asian languages, economics, English, French, German, government, history, philosophy, psychology, music, and religious studies.

Pre-law students at Lawrence are free to explore any discipline, or to design curricula, that meet their individual interests and needs.

PREPARATION FOR LAW SCHOOL

Requirements for admission to law school are very broad – most schools look for a strong and rigorous academic background rather than completion of a particular sequence of courses. For example, the University of Chicago Law School admission guidelines state, “The Law School does not require that applicants for admission present college credits in any specific subjects. An excellent general education is thought more important for the study of law than specialized study in fields closely related to the law. Ideally, such an education should include some study of history and of the social sciences, while not neglecting literature, philosophy, or other humanistic fields. It should serve to develop the capacity for logical precision. Increasingly, a mastery of some foreign language is useful in the study of law. Perhaps of

greatest importance is that the student should have acquired habits of precision, fluency, and economy in speaking and writing.” A Lawrence education will give you this preparation, because all academic departments emphasize clear writing, articulate speech, and logical analysis. Our history department provides a strong foundation in the humanities, emphasizing critical examination of events and people. Philosophy teaches logical analysis and introduces students to modern society’s most challenging moral dilemmas.

Government courses show students how to understand and evaluate political institutions and policies. Economics applies theoretical, historical, institutional, and quantitative approaches to the crucial problem of how people use limited resources.

Lawrence offers instruction from beginning to advanced levels in Mandarin Chinese, French, German, Greek, Latin, Russian,

and Spanish. You can study Italian or Portuguese as part of a tutorial. Common examples of courses taken by students intending to go to law school include *Philosophy of Law*; *International Law*; *Introduction to Constitutional Law*; *Politics and Human Nature*; *Founding the Just Regime*; *Biomedical Ethics*; *Health Policy*; *Government Regulation of Business*; and *Civil Liberties and the Supreme Court*. Courses in any department, however, will prepare you well for future study in law.

INTERDISCIPLINARY AREAS

Depending on your personal interests and career goals, you may want to participate in one of several interdisciplinary areas. These are not majors; rather, they are unique programs that bring together professors and students from a variety of departments to explore some broad, shared interest. By employing different methodologies, analytic tools, and viewpoints in a cross-disciplinary approach, they often reach surprising new insights.

In International Studies, scholars from the departments of anthropology, economics, foreign languages, government, and history focus on the dynamic relationships between different cultures and nations. If you are thinking about a career in international law, you may wish to study international studies, with themes such as international politics, international economics, or comparative institutional development.

If you are interested in the environment and environmental law, you may wish to participate in the Environmental Studies interdisciplinary area, where you can evaluate the scientific, economic, political, and social aspects of environmental problems.

The Biomedical Ethics interdisciplinary area offers you the opportunity to explore moral issues pertaining to medical research. You will examine topics such as cloning, genetic engineering, and reproductive rights.

PRE-LAW ADVISOR

Steve Wulf, assistant professor of government
Cornell University, B.A.; Yale University, M.A. and Ph.D.
Interests: Political philosophy, American politics