LAW SCHOOL APPLICATION: FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Pre-Law Advising Contacts in CPD

Leslie Kingsley, Associate Director for Advising; Pre-Law Coordinator
The Prelaw Advisor provides law school advising for undergraduates and alumni. She assists students with career exploration, identifying where to apply, personal statements, choosing schools, and various other aspects of the admission process. Alums call 603-646-2215 to make an appointment and undergrads may book appointments through their DartBoard accounts. Email: Leslie.A.Kingsley@Dartmouth.edu

Bonnie Holbrook, Administrative Coordinator
Bonnie can provide assistance to questions on application procedures such as transcripts, letters of recommendations and Dean’s Certification. Phone: 603-646-2603; Email: Bonnie.Holbrook@Dartmouth.edu

Q & A

Q: When should I submit my applications to law school?
A: Most law schools utilize rolling admissions, which means they admit students as they review applications. It is to your advantage to submit your application early in the process. We recommend you submit your applications by December 1st.

Q: When should I take the LSAT?
A: The LSAT is offered four times per year (February, June, October and December). You should take the test no later than October in the year you are applying. Think about your D-Plan, course load, and extracurricular activity commitments when deciding when to prepare for and take the LSAT. It is highly recommended to study and prepare for the LSAT for a minimum of three months. The LSAT fees are listed on the lsac.org website.

Q: How do I choose law schools??
A: When selecting law school, you should consider the following in order of importance to you: admissibility, school and faculty reputation, location, class size, breadth of academic activities and programs, career placement of graduates, bar passage rate, cost, facilities and resources, student life, and scholarship opportunities. The competitiveness of the admissions process varies among schools. Dartmouth applicants generally apply to 8-12 law schools. Please apply to a range of safety, target and reach schools.

Numerical Indicators: Your GPA and LSAT score(s) are two important factors. Each of these numbers should be compared to the median at individual schools and to the grids in The Official Guide to ABA Approved Law Schools at (http://officialguide.lsac.org/) and the Boston College Online Law School Locator at http://www.bc.edu/offices/careers/gradschool/law/research/lawlocator.html. Dartmouth College admissions statistics for the previous three years are available in the Center for Professional Development. You must meet with the Pre-Law Coordinator to access this information.

Academic Program: Many schools offer a wide variety of options for specialization and dual degree programs. The annual NAPLA/SAPLA Book of Law School Lists (available in the Center for Professional Development) contains more information on special programs.

The Law School Environment: Determine what you are looking for in a law school. Participate in the Law School Visit Program and the Graduate & Professional School Fair at Dartmouth in the fall. Visit law schools, if possible, and make an appointment to sit in on a class. Discussions with law students and professors can help you assess the school. Most schools’ websites and catalogs contain profiles detailing percentages of graduates entering major law firms, corporations, law-related positions, the judiciary, federal and state government, and private practice. When you speak with current law students, ask about placement opportunities, including summer jobs available to first-year students.
**Q:** What is the LSAC Credential Assembly Service (CAS) and Law School Report?

**A:** Law schools require applicants to subscribe to the Credential Assembly Service (CAS). Register for the Credential Assembly Service online through the Law School Admission Council (www.lsac.org). The Credential Assembly Service prepares and provides a Law School Report for each law school to which you apply. Fees and services are explained online. The report contains information that schools use, along with your application, personal essay, and letters of recommendation to make a decision on your application. Information contained in the report includes an undergraduate academic summary, including copies of all undergraduate and graduate school transcript(s), LSAT score(s), writing sample(s), and letters of recommendation, if applicable. Please note that nearly all schools require you to use the LSAC Letter of Recommendation (LOR) service. Credential Assembly Service subscriptions are valid for five years.

**Q:** How do I use the LSAC Letter of Recommendation (LOR) service?

**A:** Nearly all schools require you to use the LSAC Credential Assembly Service. Be sure to check the letter of recommendation requirements for each law school. We recommend that you use your LSAC Credential Assembly Service for your Letters of Recommendation.

1. Go to your LSAC online account. Choose Apply – Credentials – Letters of Recommendation
2. Under the My LORs and Recommenders section, click on the Add Recommender button.
3. Under Recommender Information enter the name of your recommender.
4. Enter the Recommender’s Contact Information.
5. Repeat this step for each of your letter writers.
6. Under My LORs and Recommenders click on each letter in the Letter ID/Description column to print the forms.
7. Print the Letter of Recommendation forms for each letter writer and mail them or drop them off to your recommender.
8. When LSAC receives and processes your letters the “Date Received” will be listed under My LORs and Recommenders.
9. **IMPORTANT:** You must assign your letters to each law school to which you are applying in order for them to be sent with your Law School Report. You may assign the letters before or after LSAC receives the actual letter. To Assign Letters: Under My Law Schools, click on the Add School/Term button.
10. Choose your schools and review the letter of recommendation requirements.
11. From the Letters of Recommendation main page, go to the My Schools section and click on the Assign Letters button next to each school.
12. Choose your letters and click Submit.
13. When you submit your electronic applications through the LSAC website, LSAC will send the assigned letters to your designated schools.

It takes LSAC approximately two weeks to process a letter of recommendation from the time it is received. After your letters are on file with LSAC, you must go into your account and assign each letter to be sent to specific schools. LSAC will then forward the letters to those schools as part of your Law School Report. You must assign the letters to law schools or they will not be sent. Remember that you can have letters sent to LSAC before you decide on the law schools to which you apply.

**Q:** How do I obtain my transcript?

**A:** Complete the Transcript Request Form available from your LSAC online account. Log into your account and go to Apply/Credentials/Transcripts, and click on Transcript Request Form. Also complete the Dartmouth College Registrar Transcript Request Form available online at (http://www.dartmouth.edu/~reg/transcript/transcripts_about.html). Submit both forms to the Registrar in person (105 McNutt Hall), by fax (603-646-2247), or mail (6014 McNutt Hall, Room 105, Hanover, NH 03755). Questions regarding transcripts should be directed to the Registrar's Office (603-646-2246). Transcripts must be ordered at least one week in advance of the required mailing date. Undergraduates usually send transcripts during the summer before senior fall unless they are taking courses in the summer. Dartmouth does not charge for transcripts. You must order transcripts from every academic institution in which you have been enrolled. Although credit for coursework completed elsewhere is recorded on your Dartmouth transcript, grades are not; consequently, transcripts from all institutions you attended must be sent to CAS. It takes LSAC approximately two weeks to process a transcript from the time it is received.
Q: **What is a Dean's Certification?**
A: The primary purpose of a Dean's Certification is to obtain information about academic and disciplinary misconduct (or lack thereof). The Dean's Certification includes your dates of attendance at Dartmouth, major, minor, graduation date, SAT score, and current or final GPA. It will include any major disciplinary sanctions (i.e. **Conduct**: Suspension or Separation; **Academic**: Probation, Suspension, or Separation). It is not College policy to report the specifics of the proceedings. If you have experienced a major disciplinary sanction please make an appointment with the Pre-Law Advisor.

Q: **How do I obtain a Dean's Certification?**
A: At Dartmouth, one of the deans in the Undergraduate Deans Office attests to the applicant's academic and personal record as part of the Dean's Certification. To obtain a Dean's Certification you must print and complete the Dean’s Certification request form from the law school website and submit the form to Colleen Murphy in the Undergraduate Deans Office in person (224 Baker), by fax (603-646-6166), or mail (6064 Baker Library, Suite 224, Hanover, NH 03755). The Dean’s Office will send your Dean’s Certification to the law school. LSAC does not process dean’s certifications. If you have any questions regarding who signed your Dean’s Certification please contact Colleen Murphy.

_Because of the high volume of requests the Class Dean's office receives, expect 2-3 weeks for your Dean's Certification to be processed._

Q: **How do I send citations to law schools?**
A: LSAC’s Credential Assembly Service (CAS) forwards citations to law schools with your Dartmouth transcript. Please contact the Registrar’s Office with any questions about citations. (603-646-2246; [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~reg/transcript/transcripts_about.html](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~reg/transcript/transcripts_about.html)).

Q: **How do I make an appointment with the pre-law coordinator?**
A: For undergraduates, log into your DartBoard account and schedule an appointment. For alums, call Center for Professional Development at 603-646-2215 to make an appointment.

Q: **Where can I find more information on applying to law school?**