

Pre-Law

PROGRAM OVERVIEW To prepare for the study and practice of law, students must develop two kinds of knowledge. First, they must learn to think analytically and critically, read widely and well, and communicate effectively. Second, students must develop an understanding of social institutions and practices. In both areas of knowledge, pre-law students benefit most from a challenging curriculum comprised of rigorous courses that demand strong critical reasoning skills and a lot of reading and writing, and engages different kinds of texts, skills, concepts and theories.

While the grade-point average is important in law school admission review, even more important are indicators that the student has engaged in rigorous undergraduate study. According to one top law school, "If we were to sum up our advice in a phrase, it would be, 'Study something interesting and hard.'" Law school admission committees are more impressed by a lower GPA achieved in difficult and demanding courses than by a higher GPA in less rigorous courses.

RECOMMENDED CURRICULUM The recommended pre-law curriculum provides guidance and support for students who seek such preparation at Drake University. In sum:

- Although no one major is required or needed it is important to select an academic major that is of interest to you. Any academic major can provide appropriate preparation for the study of law.
- Enrich your education with a curriculum that emphasizes written and oral communication, critical reasoning, quantitative literacy and foreign languages.
- Take courses that provide a solid educational grounding such as literature, philosophy, history, rhetoric, the fine arts and the physical sciences.
- Take courses that focus on social institutions and practices include anthropology, economics, history, political science, psychology and sociology.
- Analytical and critical thinking can be enhanced by courses in many areas. Particularly helpful may be courses in science, mathematics, English, philosophy and rhetoric.
- Also important are courses that provide topical focus such as social philosophies, social critiques, political institutions, international studies and specifically law-related courses. Small, discussion-oriented courses such as First Year Seminars and Honors courses are likely to be particularly helpful.

Pre-law students may be interested in the 3 + 3 Program

OPPORTUNITIES Pre-law students are encouraged to take advantage of several learning opportunities offered by the Drake Law School:

The Dwight D. Opperman Lecture in Constitutional Law brings U.S. Supreme Court justices and other nationally prominent speakers to campus each year to discuss significant constitutional issues.

The Constitutional Law Center, one of four such centers in the nation to be endowed by Congress, is a valuable resource for students, scholars and legal professionals. Drake's center sponsors an annual national symposium that explores constitutional issues, community law forums and the Constitutional Law Speaker Series.

Intercollegiate Mock Trial teaches students about the legal process as they develop important critical thinking and public speaking skills. The Law School hosts the annual National Intercollegiate Mock Trial Tournament, which attracts teams from more than 100 colleges and universities.

HOW TO REACH US

WRITE

Office of Undergraduate Admission
Drake University
2507 University Ave.
Des Moines, IA 50311-4505

CALL

1-800-44-DRAKE, x3181

LOCAL OR OUTSIDE U.S.

515-271-3181

E-MAIL

admission@drake.edu

INTERNATIONAL E-MAIL

international@drake.edu

SURF

www.choose.drake.edu

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