Recommendations and Tips for Prelaw Students
Center for Student Advising Office of Preprofessional Advising

● Select a major or concentration that interests you. Students tend to do better academically if they like what they are studying. Double programs of study are not required.
● Do your very best academically. Grades matter!
● Take a normal to heavy course-load each semester and take only one or two classes pass/fail during your undergraduate career. Know your limits! Don't jeopardize taking too many credits in a semester but challenge yourself. In junior and senior years balance upper-level courses with 1000/2000 level courses.
● Consider courses that sharpen your analytic test-taking skills: economics, logic, and math.
● Demonstrate that you are motivated learner (i.e. enroll in more than the minimum 12 pts. each term, write a thesis if that interests you and is offered by your major department, and take upper-level courses and seminars in your junior and senior years.
● SEAS students and Columbia College science and Economics majors should consider asking for a letter of recommendation from a faculty member for whom they had to critique and analyze texts and write papers.
● Get to know faculty members and find a mentor. Law schools typically require two faculty recommendations.
● Subscribe to the prelaw listserv.
● Read the prelaw section of this website.
● Get involved in co-curricular activities of interest to you. Schools look at depth of involvement and leadership roles versus number of activities. Co-curricular activities are an excellent avenue for you to distinguish yourself. Work is also considered a co-curricular activity. Warning. Activities will not compensate for poor grades.
● If you want to join law related campus organizations that's great too, but not required.
● Become involved in community service. There are plenty of opportunities in New York City through Community Impact and organizations outside of Columbia.
● If you are interested in public interest law, become fluent in another language(s).
● Read and bookmark www.lsac.org.
● Subscribe to LSAC’s LawHub. Enroll in their free “Admissions Unmasked” series that
● Subscribe to AccessLex’s Ask Edna! AccessLex provides information and resources for financing law school.
● Maintain a clean disciplinary and criminal record.
● Establish a credit history and use credit responsibly as many law students rely on federal and sometimes, private loans to finance their legal education. Live like a student and don’t rack-up credit card debt!
● Begin researching law schools by looking at the Official Guide to ABA-Approved Law Schools and law school websites.
- Become familiar with the LSAT and GRE. To learn more about the LSAT visit www.lsac.org. View the recorded session and handout about preparing for the LSAT and GRE. Email cfc5@columbia.edu if you need the link to the recording.

**Assess Whether Law School and the Legal Profession is Right for You**

- Learn about the law school experience and the legal profession through conversations, reading on-line profiles of attorneys, law school websites, articles, podcasts, Instagram, TikTok, and books.
- Shadow and discuss legal careers with family members, friends, and acquaintances who are attorneys. Attend classes at Columbia Law and talk with current law students.
- Conduct informational interviews with attorneys. CCE has sample questions on their website. Join Columbia College’s Mentoring Program and meet with Columbia College alumni/ae who have law degrees.
- Attempt to secure an internship that gives you exposure to the legal profession (non-profit organization, government agency, or law firm).
- Make an appointment with a career counselor in the Center for Career Education to discuss internship possibilities and take a career assessment.
- Talk with staff members in the Office of Preprofessional Advising.
- Attend programs sponsored by the Office of Preprofessional Advising, Center for Career Education, and the Columbia College Odyssey Mentoring Program.
- Listen to “Law School Podcast” #74 to help determine if going to law school is the right path for you.