Applying to Law School: A Timeline Guide

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What should I be doing now?
#1: Prepare for the LSAT

- June 8 test-takers only
- Register on www.lsac.org. Cost is $170...for now!
- Structure
  - Five 35-minute multiple choice sections (one experimental section)
  - 35-minute writing sample at the end of the exam
  - DO NOT waste time trying to guess which is the experimental section!!!
- Timing
  - June exam is ideal time to take the test.
  - October administration is also acceptable for finishing early, but may be difficult with other responsibilities
- Preparation
  - Self-study
  - Study groups
  - Commercial courses
  - Individual tutoring
#2: Check in with recommenders

- Touch base with those you plan to ask for letters
- Gauge their enthusiasm and consent for writing the letter
- Assess their schedule for writing the letter in the fall
- Ensure their presence at Emory in the fall
- If not returning to campus (you or them), collect the letter NOW!
  - Open your CAS account on LSAC.org now
  - Input recommender names
  - Either print the LSAC Letter Form or have LSAC email recommenders directly to submit the letter electronically.
#3: Start Researching Schools

- Self-assessment is key!
  - What’s important to you?
  - What’s not important to you?

- Define your criteria list
  - Deal-breakers
  - Important, but not critical
  - Not important

- Result should be a preliminary list of between 20-25 schools

- Resources
  - Book of Law School Lists – [www.prelawadvising.emory.edu](http://www.prelawadvising.emory.edu) (Click on “Programs & Events”, followed by “Application Workshops”)
SUMMER 2015

Maximize your summer months to minimize your fall stress!
#4: Finalize Your List

- **June test-takers only!**
  - June scores will be released on July 7 (by email)
  - October test-takers should create a “Plan A” and “Plan B”
    - Plan A – based on current GPA and average of practice test scores
    - Plan B – based on current GPA and score that is 5 points lower than average score

- **Consider your competitiveness**
  - Review GPA and LSAT score (25th – 75th percentile)
  - Balance is key!!! Range of schools: reach, target, safety

- **Compose your final list**
  - Between 10-12 schools is average (2-3 reach and safety, 4-5 target), but final list will depend upon your personal criteria
#5: Write Your Personal Statement

- Most statement prompts will be very open-ended to allow for a range of topics to be addressed by applicants. However…
- Always read the question to ensure that what you’ve written applies!
- Key context points:
  - Unique experiences or traits
  - Impact on you (strength, growth, maturity, perspective, etc.)
  - Connect to desire to go to law school (not necessarily “be a lawyer”)
- “No Whine Zone”
  - Use an addendum to discuss flaws/trouble spots
- Standard writing rules apply
  - PROOFREAD!
  - Spelling
  - Grammar
  - Organization
  - Conciseness (generally 2 pages, double-spaced)
#6: Revise Your Resume

- Formatting is similar to employment resume, but may be longer than one page, unless noted otherwise by the school.
- Should be a complete listing of all experience from first-year of college to present.
- Key traits to convey:
  - Professionalism
  - Service-orientation
  - Leadership
  - Educational experiences (i.e. study abroad, etc.)
- Types of experience to highlight:
  - Professional experience
  - Community service
  - Extracurricular activities
  - Honors & awards
#7: Register for the Credential Assembly Service (CAS)

- Register online at www.lsac.org. Cost is $165...again, for now!
- Will also have to pay $28/per school for law school reports.
- Sends your file to each law school that you apply to when the school requests it.
- Contents of law school report:
  - Copies of all transcripts
  - Undergraduate transcript summary
  - LSAT scores and writing sample
  - Letters of recommendation
- Be sure to register for the Candidate Referral Service (CRS) and to agree to release information to your pre-law advisor.
  - Allows Emory to compile acceptance statistics each year
FALL SEMESTER 2015

The heat is on!
#8: Request Your Transcripts

- Request transcripts from any college or university ever attended. Must be official transcripts sent directly from the school to LSAC.
- Be sure to use the LSAC *Transcript Request Form* with all transcript requests. Print these from inside your CAS account.
- Only need transcript from study abroad if you were abroad for more than a year.
- Oxford continuees do not require separate transcript.
- Registrar’s Office is located in B. Jones Building on first floor. They are familiar with the process.
**#9: Collect Letters of Recommendation**

- Should be a strong endorsement of your candidacy from those familiar with you and your work.
- Possible recommenders:
  - Professors
  - Employers
  - Other supervisors or advisors
- Provide them with an informational packet to help them write a stronger letter.
- MUST use the LSAC *Recommendation Letter Form*.
- Recommenders should send letters directly to the LSAC. Can send them by mail or online. Ask for their preference and select the correct option inside your CAS account! (“Print” vs. “Email”)
- Most schools require 2 letters, but may want to collect 3 just in case.
LSAC Evaluation Service

- Began in 2010-2011 cycle.
- No schools are requiring this service
- Recommenders vs. Evaluators
  - Recommenders write paper letters
  - Evaluators complete online assessments
- Online assessment of 30 individual attributes and skills in 6 categories:
- Evaluations are placed in the CAS file along with letters of recommendation.
- BOTTOM LINE ➔ Don’t bother unless a school requires one! (And they won’t…)
#10: Prepare and Submit Applications

- Most applications will open for submission at LSAC.org on September 1. Some may open after, as late as October 1, depending on the school.
- All ABA-approved law schools’ complete applications are on the website. No need to go to the school’s website to complete application.
- Cannot submit applications until registered/paid for CAS.
- Can submit all applications electronically. Will assign LORs and pay for Score Reports during submission process.
- Supplemental forms cannot be submitted electronically. Must be printed out, signed, and mailed to the school.
- Even though applications are down, aim to submit all applications by mid-November. Unless taking the December exam, no reason not to be done.
#11: Submit Dean’s Certifications, if needed

- Assessment of your standing with the University
- Most schools DO NOT require this form. Even if form is not required, it is best to disclose any issues in the Character & Fitness portion of the application.
- Most Dean’s Certifications are now done post-admission, so you may not see this form from the school until Spring semester.
- Should be submitted to the Career Center only!!!
- Certifications will be mailed directly to the law school
- Check your sanctions file if unsure:
  - Academic sanctions are held in the Dean’s Office in White Hall 300.
  - Disciplinary sanctions are monitored by the Office of Student Conduct.
- If a sanction is found, you will be notified first:
  - You must provide written authorization for release.
  - A letter explaining the details of the sanction will be prepared by the appropriate office and sent to the law school along with your certification form.
#12: Submit financial aid forms

- Submit financial aid paperwork on time, even if you haven’t received an admission notification.
- Applying earlier increases your chances of receiving scholarship monies.
- Complete the FAFSA after the New Year.
- Check your credit report!!!
- Pay off/down consumer debt before entering law school.
The Pre-Law Advising Office
200 B. Jones Center
Mon. – Fri., 8:30 to 5:00 p.m.
404-727-6211
www.career.emory.edu

Additional Pre-Law Services:
- Individual Advising Appointments
- Office Hours – Mon. & Thurs., 2-3:30
- Document Critique Service
- Pre-Law Registration (on CC website)