



INTERESTED IN LAW SCHOOL?

Getting into a good law school is an increasingly competitive process. Because Hampden-Sydney does not have a formal pre-law major, it is often difficult to identify interested students and connect them to appropriate campus resources. If you are thinking about law school—even if you're not yet certain—please contact the Pre-Law Society (PLS) or the Pre-Law Advisors (currently David Marion and Celia Carroll Jones) for more information.

SUGGESTED COURSES

Hampden-Sydney offers several courses that are beneficial to students who intend to pursue a law degree. These courses emphasize reading, writing, and critical reasoning skills essential to success on the LSAT and in law school. Courses that introduce students to the “case method” and to subjects that are particularly germane to the study of law should also be considered.

Courses without Prerequisites:

- (GVFA 233) Common Law: Introduces students to the nature and practice of law in the United States. It looks at the origins of American common law. It examines how a common law system differs from other legal systems such as continental or code systems.
- (GVFA 310) Classical Political Philosophy: An examination of the works of the greatest minds of antiquity: Plato and Aristotle. Emphasis is placed on close reading and critical interpretation of selected primary texts.
- (PHIL 201) Logic: A traditional introduction to propositional logic and proof methods, accompanied periodically by an introduction to categorical and/or predicate logic, all with an emphasis on critical thinking and sound reasoning. *Students preparing for the LSAT should take this course no later than the fall semester of junior year.*
- (RHET 210) Public Speaking: Students enrolled in this course study the art of speaking in public. Students develop their abilities in the following areas: invention, arrangement, style, memory, and delivery. Emphasis is placed on learning the skills involved in speaking intelligibly, forcefully, and persuasively to an audience.

Courses with Prerequisites

- (ECON 213) Economics and the Law: Prerequisite: ECON 101

- (ENGL 380)Literary Theory and Criticism: A study of critical theories, especially of modern trends in criticism, and an introduction to the practice of critical techniques. Prerequisite: Any 100- or 200-level literature course or consent of instructor.
- (GVFA 430)American Constitutional Law, Powers: Prerequisite: GVFA 101
- (GVFA 432, 433) American Constitutional Law, First Amendment and Fourteenth Amendment: Prerequisite: GVFA101
- (GVFA 440) International Law: Prerequisite GVFA 140 or consent of instructor
- (PHIL 314) Ethics: Prerequisite: One philosophy class or consent of instructor
- (PSYC 319) The Psychology of Law: Prerequisite PSYC 101 or PSYC 102
- (RHET 301) Creative Nonfiction: Prerequisite: RHET 102
- (RHET 310) Advanced Public Speaking: Prerequisite RHET 210
- (RHET 410) Topics in Rhetorical Theory and Practice: Prerequisite 102

Core Curriculum

Rigorous study in any major can prepare students for law school. Core curriculum classes also provide an excellent foundation for future legal study. For example:

- Classics, philosophy, mathematics and science are extremely useful for honing critical reasoning skills.
- History, government and economics courses provide insight into the development of American law over time and its effects upon the public and private sectors.
- Social sciences and the humanities dig into questions of justice, virtue, and the human condition—all issues essential to the study of law.
- Rhetoric courses will increase your proficiency in writing and public speaking.

Students should therefore view these courses not only as opportunities to improve areas of academic weakness but as occasions to develop a deeper understanding of the central place of law in human society.

LSAT PREPARATION AND LAW SCHOOL APPLICATIONS:

LSAT scores are the **single most important piece of data** reviewed by law schools when enrolling students. It is therefore important that students prepare *early* in their college careers for that exam.

- We strongly recommend students take at least one practice LSAT exam each semester to gauge their interest in legal studies, identify areas of weakness, and gauge progress.

Every semester, H-SC faculty, working with PLS, offer inexpensive LSAT preparation for our students. These workshops review important skills such as critical reading, logic, and test-taking strategies.

- LSAT prep sessions are intended to supplement regular courses not to replace them. So, for example, the prep sessions on logic should *not* be taken instead of Logic (PHIL 201).

Career Development offers practice LSAT tests and help with résumé preparation.

- Students with severe test-taking anxieties or other testing challenges should consider specialized off-campus assistance. The Office for Academic Success can provide additional information.

Elizabeth Deis, Lowell Frye, and Lizabeth Rand--the directors of the Writing Center--have worked closely with many H-SC students to hone personal statements and other application materials for graduate & professional programs. Dr. Frye does similar work as director of the Office of Fellowship Advising.