

# PRE-LAW EDUCATION

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Law schools do not prefer or require any specific major. Yeshiva University endorses the view of the American Bar Association that no particular major or set of courses should be considered the 'best' preparation for law school. We suggest the pursuit of challenging, well-balanced courses which emphasize the acquisition of certain skills and bodies of knowledge, such as critical reading, writing, and analysis. The undergraduate experience should be a time to explore the University's varied academic offerings, to perfect skills and learning abilities, and to demonstrate expertise in an academic discipline. While some students choose to major in the traditional Pre-Law majors such as English, political science, history, and economics, other successful law school applicants have majored in subjects as diverse as music, biology, and mathematics.

Admissions committees will consider the difficulty of the major and look for applicants who challenge themselves academically while enrolling in a broad-based course of study. Students who choose a heavily technical or quantitative major (i.e. hard sciences, computer science or math) would be well-advised to balance out their studies with a number of writing intensive humanities classes to demonstrate their ability to read critically and communicate effectively.

## **Knowledge Areas**

The American Bar Association has identified seven areas of knowledge that serve as the best foundation for legal studies:

- History, particularly American, and an understanding of the political, cultural, and economic factors that led to the development of our society in the United States
- Political thought and theory, and the American political system
- Ethical theory and theories of justice
- Economics, especially microeconomic theory
- Basic mathematical and financial skills, including pre-calculus mathematics and the ability to analyze financial data
- An understanding of human behavior and social interaction
- An appreciation of the diversity of cultures within and beyond the United States, international institutions, and increasing global interdependence

## Specific Skills

The core skills necessary to succeed in law school are:

- analytic/problem-solving skills;
- critical reading;
- writing;
- oral communication;
- listening abilities;
- research skills,
- time-management and organization.

These skills will provide a solid foundation for a legal education. Law school will further refine these skills, but students should enter with reasonably well-developed abilities in these areas.

Students should take a number of courses that require extensive reading, research, writing, and oral presentations, especially advanced level and honors seminars, English composition, literature and public speaking courses. The importance of oral and written communication skills cannot be overstated. Additionally, mathematics, computer science (COM 1300), economics (ECO 1031, ECO 1041), logic (PHI 1100), and the natural sciences will aid in the development of analytical and quantitative skills. Finally, students considering international law or law in a bilingual community should take advantage of opportunities to learn languages and to study abroad through one of Yeshiva University's programs.

Some students find it difficult to determine whether law will be a suitable career choice. They may want to explore the law school option by enrolling in one or two law-oriented courses to gauge their interest in this area. Some suggestions below:

**BUSINESS:** 1001H Business in a Global Environment; Business and Jewish Law BLW 2500

**COMPUTER SCIENCE:** COM 1001 Programming for Non-CS Majors; COM 1300 Intro to Computer Programming;

**ECONOMICS:** 1031 Intro to Economics (Micro); 1041 Intro to Economics II (Macro); 1101 Intermediate Microeconomics, 1701 International Economics

**ENGLISH:** 2010 Interpreting Texts

**POLITICS:** 1501 Fundamentals of Political Science; 2315 Int'l Law and Organization; 2135 Voting and Elections

HISTORY: 2607 International Crimes; 1202 Survey of U.S. History II; 2210 US: 1941-Present

PHILOSOPHY: 1101 Logic, 1600 Ethics, 2500H Law: Jewish and Western Perspectives

PSYCHOLOGY: 3840 Psychology and the Law

SOCIOLOGY: 1413H Social Inequality

Students should be aware that most law schools actively discourage pre-law students from taking too many law-related courses, as they prefer that students concentrate on acquiring a broad field of general knowledge and skills as a sound foundation for legal studies.

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