



# Shepherd

UNIVERSITY

## Pre-Law

### The Pre-Law Program

Administered through the Department of Political Science, the pre-law advisory program at Shepherd University serves students of all majors.

The pre-law program is flexible in terms of courses and majors because law schools do not demand a rigid pre-law curriculum or particular coursework but focus largely on qualities and skills, which the pre-law program is designed to impart and develop.

Your decision to go to law school and obtain a law degree is one of the most important decisions you will make in your career—one that will have a long-term impact on your life.

While a law degree is one of the most prestigious and versatile professional degrees, it is not necessarily a ticket to wealth and happiness as often portrayed in film and fiction. The first step toward success in law school and fulfillment in a legal career is to make sure that you have sound and solid reasons for starting down that road. Your initial enthusiasm may get you into law school but will not produce the fortitude and resilience that will carry you through the rigors of legal education and the stresses of the legal profession, unless you have a firm basis for pursuing a career in law.

### Steps to Success

1. Take one or more law courses to test your desire and commitment to study and practice law. While undergraduate law courses are not required for admission to law school, they will nonetheless help you solidify your career plans and gauge your potential for future success in law as a field of study and a line of work.
2. Once you have set your mind on law school, you will need to start preparing yourself academically, intellectually, and linguistically as early as possible in your

academic career. Indicate your interest in law school to the pre-law advisor who will help you make appropriate decisions to gain entrance into law school. Please contact the pre-law advisor, Dr. Max Guirguis, to set up an appointment.

3. Many law schools recommend that undergraduate preparation for law school should include at least one constitutional law course, a basic economics course, a critical writing course, and a course emphasizing logic (e.g., philosophy or quantitative analysis). For students interested in property, corporate, or business law, a basic course in accounting is strongly recommended.
4. Work on recommended pre-law courses (see above and consult with the pre-law advisor). Take challenging electives that entail heavy reading and writing, and nurture your capacity to think critically and analyze complex issues.
5. Keep your grade point average high from the first semester to establish a consistent record of academic excellence. There is nothing you can do to raise your GPA after you graduate. A GPA below 3.0 will severely undermine your chances of getting into law school.
6. Develop a disciplined work ethic and apply yourself to cultivate the skills and attitudes you need to be accepted and succeed in law school, such as critical inquiry, logical analysis, effective written and oral communication, and multicultural sensitivity.
7. Participate in extra-curricular activities and take advantage of internship opportunities to balance your education. Law schools look at well-rounded applicants more favorably.

8. Maintain a cordial professional relationship with all faculty members, especially professors in your major area. The importance of strong recommendation letters from advisors and former professors cannot be overemphasized.

9. Familiarize yourself with the law schools that interest you and, if possible, visit them. Consider whether you want to go to a law school that emphasizes West Virginia law and practices or a law school that takes a broader perspective. The Law School Admission Council Web site [www.lsat.org](http://www.lsat.org) contains a wealth of information that will assist you in the selection process.

10. Obtain an LSAT/LSDAS Information Book (downloadable at no charge in pdf format from [www.lsat.org](http://www.lsat.org)), and prepare for the law school application process. Plan to take the LSAT (Law School Admission Test) ahead of time in case something goes wrong before the last exam. Study hard to master the logical concepts and testing techniques of the LSAT. It is essential that you do well the first time because, unlike other aptitude tests, LSAT scores are averaged if the test is taken more than once. If at all possible, take a pre-law preparation course such as the one offered by Kaplan or Princeton Review.

## About Shepherd University

Located in historic Shepherdstown, West Virginia, Shepherd University is a state-supported university established in 1871 which has a strong liberal arts emphasis in the curriculum.

Shepherd offers its 3,900 students more than 70 programs of study, including master's and bachelor's degree programs. Educational opportunities outside of the classroom, such as internships, cooperative education assignments, and student teaching positions, are also available at Shepherd.

The University's close proximity to the Washington-Baltimore area allows students, through Shepherd University's Washington Gateway Program and internships, to combine educational opportunities with cultural and social resources. For those interested in history, Shepherd is located near Harpers Ferry National Park and Antietam National Battlefield.

There are more than 60 organizations on campus including the student government association, campus radio station and newspaper, musical and theater groups, sororities, fraternities, and professional and honorary organizations.

Shepherd offers 11 NCAA Division II sports including football, men's basketball, women's basketball, baseball, softball, women's volleyball, men's soccer, women's soccer, men's tennis, women's tennis, and golf.



For more information about the pre-law advisory program, contact:

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