



The Pre-Law e-Newsletter from Pre-Professional Programs & Advising

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Friday, September 28, 2012 – Thursday, October 11, 2012

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1. MESSAGE FROM ANA L. DROSCOSKI, ESQ.

Please be reminded that the JHU 2012 Law School Fair is on Monday, October 8, from 2.30 to 5.30p in Charles Commons' Banquet Room.

Here is a link to the list of schools that have registered for the fair:

<https://jhu-csm.symplicity.com/events/index.php> (once within the site, click on the "Participants" link for **Johns Hopkins University 2012 Law School Fair**)

Be sure to attend and learn more about the law school application process and law schools of interest, directly from law school admissions representatives.

Best of luck to those taking the October 6 LSAT!

2. THE LSAT: WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

What is the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT)?

"The Law School Admission Test (LSAT) is a half-day, standardized test administered [four times each year](#) (in June, October, December and February) at designated [testing centers throughout the world](#). The test is an integral part of the law school admission process in the United States, Canada, and a growing number of other countries." (See <http://www.lsac.org/jd/lsat/about-the-lsat.asp>) *Your LSAT score can play a very heavy (arguably the heaviest) role in determining what law schools you will be competitive for and whether you will receive financial aid or scholarships. All scores, of every test taken, will be of record. Prepare for it well, and do not take it if you do not feel ready.*

What is the format of the LSAT?

"The test consists of five 35-minute sections of multiple-choice questions. Four of the five sections contribute to the test taker's score. The unscored section, commonly referred to as the variable section, typically is used to pretest new test questions or to preequate new test forms. The placement of this section will vary. A 35-minute writing sample is administered at the end of the test. The Law School Admissions Council (LSAC) does not score the writing sample, but copies of the writing sample are sent to all law schools to which you apply." (See <http://www.lsac.org/jd/lsat/about-the-lsat.asp>) *Although not a part of your LSAT score, your completed writing sample is viewable by law schools. Some admissions*

representatives have stated that the writing sample is the first thing they review in an application, as it has not been edited by anyone and was written in a short period of time. Be sure to take this section of the LSAT seriously.

What are the LSAT multiple-choice question types?

“There are three multiple-choice question types: Reading Comprehension Questions, Analytical Reasoning Questions, and Logical Reasoning Questions.

Reading Comprehension Questions measure the ability to read, with understanding and insight, examples of lengthy and complex materials similar to those commonly encountered in law school. The Reading Comprehension section contains four sets of reading questions, each consisting of a selection of reading material, followed by five to eight questions that test reading and reasoning abilities.

Analytical Reasoning Questions measure the ability to understand a structure of relationships and to draw logical conclusions about that structure. You are asked to reason deductively from a set of statements and rules or principles that describe relationships among persons, things, or events. Analytical Reasoning questions reflect the kinds of complex analyses that a law student performs in the course of legal problem solving.

Logical Reasoning Questions assess the ability to analyze, critically evaluate, and complete arguments as they occur in ordinary language. Each Logical Reasoning question requires the test taker to read and comprehend a short passage, then answer a question about it. The questions are designed to assess a wide range of skills involved in thinking critically, with an emphasis on skills that are central to legal reasoning. These skills include drawing well-supported conclusions, reasoning by analogy, determining how additional evidence affects an argument, applying principles or rules, and identifying argument flaws. (See <http://www.lsac.org/jd/lsat/about-the-lsat.asp>)

How much does it cost to take the LSAT?

The 2012-2013 fee for the LSAT is \$160. There are also various auxiliary fees for items such as test date or center changes, late registration, etc. For further expense information, visit: <http://www.lsac.org/jd/lsat/lsat-fees.asp>

Are there limits to how many times I can take the LSAT?

You may not take the LSAT more than three times in any two-year period. Aim to take the LSAT only once, and, if necessary, no more than twice.

When will I receive my score?

You will receive your score within 3 weeks electronically or within 4 weeks by first-class mail.

What is a “good” LSAT score?

The LSAT is out of 180 (scaled score) and is based on the number of questions answered correctly (your raw score). There is no deduction for wrong answers (i.e., do not leave any answers blank!) and all questions are weighted equally. (See <http://www.lsac.org/jd/lsat/lsat-score.asp>) *Generally, a score of 160 lands you in the 80th percentile, and a 170 in the 97th percentile. US News & World Report top 15 law school LSAT medians tend to range from 167 to 173. However, with over 200 law schools in the country, law school LSAT medians vary greatly. According to LSAC’s most current application year summaries, from 2010 – 2011, the national average highest LSAT score was 153.9; it was 161.7 for JHU test takers.*

When should I take the LSAT, and how long is the score good for?

"In the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, and some other countries, the LSAT is administered on a Saturday, except in June, when it is generally administered on a Monday. For Saturday Sabbath observers, the test is also administered on a weekday following Saturday administrations. Many law schools require that the LSAT be taken by December for admission the following fall." (See <http://www.lsac.org/jd/lsat/about-the-lsat.asp>) *An LSAT score is good for 5 years, but some law schools prefer to see a score within the past 4 years of your application. Ideally, the latest you would take the LSAT is the June prior to the fall that you intend to apply. That way you can build your list of law schools while considering your LSAT score, allowing you to gauge your chance of admission to specific schools more accurately. It also creates the opportunity to retake the test in October, if need be. Remember, all scores are reportable. Although there are many law schools that will defer to your highest LSAT score when rendering an admission decision, some schools average all LSAT scores of record.*

How do I best prepare for the LSAT?

"Most law school applicants familiarize themselves with test directions and question types, practice on sample tests, and study the information available on test-taking techniques and strategies. You should be so familiar with the instructions and question types that nothing you see on the test can delay or distract you from thinking about how to answer a question. At a minimum, you should review the [descriptions of the question types](#) and simulate the day of the test by taking a practice test that includes a writing sample under actual time constraints. Taking a practice test under timed conditions helps you to estimate the amount of time you can afford to spend on each question in a section and to determine the question types for which you may need additional practice." (See <http://www.lsac.org/jd/lsat/lsat-score.asp>) *The American Bar Association (ABA) recommends studying for 2 hours a day, 3 months in advance of your test date. If you require external structure, there are numerous commercial prep courses available. Note that many people have studied on their own and scored extremely high. Take as many practice tests -- and as many multiple-choice sections in a row -- as you can, to score as high as possible on the LSAT.*

Where and how can I obtain test materials?

LSAC publishes a variety of [free materials](#) to help you prepare for the LSAT. The Official LSAT Prep Tests 62 and 63 are now available for \$5.99 each in the Kindle store on Amazon and will soon be available for the Nook: http://www.amazon.com/s/ref=a9_sc_1?rh=i%3Aaps%2Ck%3Athe+official+lsat+preptests+62+and+63&keywords=the+official+lsat+preptests+62+and+63&ie=UTF8&qid=1348855102 *Additionally, the Office of Pre-professional Programs & Advising has hardcopies of previously administered, official LSATs. You can stop by at any time to pick up as many as you would like (but note that the current format of the test became effective in June 2007).*

3. UNIVERSITY OF BALTIMORE SCHOOL OF LAW'S 2012 MABLSA PRE-LAW CAMP

The University of Baltimore School of Law's Mid-Atlantic Black Law Students Association & Black Law Students Association present the 2012 Pre-Law Camp.

Attendees will receive useful admission and financial aid information from law schools within their respective regions. The Pre-Law Camp will include mock classes with real law school professors, LSAT prep information and materials, and a distinguished panel of current law students and practicing attorneys.

When: Saturday, October 20, 2012 from 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Where: University of Baltimore, Law Center
1415 Maryland Avenue
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Attire: Business Casual

Attendance is FREE, and breakfast and lunch will be provided.

To RSVP, click [here](#).

4. INTERVIEW: ANDREW SOLINGER '09, Vanderbilt Law School 2L

Andrew Solinger grew up in southern California before moving east for college. He graduated from Johns Hopkins University in 2009 with a degree with Political Science and a minor in Entrepreneurship & Management. While at Hopkins, Andrew was a member of the Alpha Epsilon Pi Fraternity, was on staff of the MSE Symposium his senior year, and was active in the Undergraduate Admissions Office. He served on the board of the Blue Key Society and was an Admissions Representative during his time at Hopkins. Andrew was also the Co-Chair for the Class of 2009 Senior Class Gift Committee. During the fall of his junior year Andrew took part in the Aitchison Fellowship in Public Service, spending the semester in Washington, DC working as an intern and taking classes at the JHU campus near Dupont Circle. He had a fantastic four years at Hopkins.

Following graduation, Andrew moved to Washington, DC to take a job as a litigation paralegal at Covington & Burling, a large international corporate law firm in downtown DC. During his time as a paralegal, Andrew was able to attend many hearings and three trials. He worked on a variety of cases, including international commercial arbitration, insurance litigation, antitrust litigation, political investigation, white-collar defense, and several very interesting pro bono cases. His final six months in DC were spent in a pro bono program at the Children's Law Center working with abused and neglected children in the child neglect system in Washington, DC.

Andrew took the LSAT during his senior year in preparation for applying to law school, but decided to wait until he had work experience before applying. He took the LSAT a second time in the summer after his first full year as a paralegal. He applied to a multitude of law schools and ultimately settled on Vanderbilt University in Nashville, TN. He has had a wonderful first year and is now about a month in to his 2L year.

This past summer he took part in Vanderbilt's summer school program in Venice, Italy where he took two classes before spending the remainder of his summer as an intern in Chambers at the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, located in Arusha, Tanzania. Andrew is now in the process of interviewing for 2L summer association positions.

1) Describe a typical day as a law student. How has first year differed from your second?

I have had class quite early during these past two years. In the fall of my 1L year I had Contracts at 8:00 AM, three days per week. This semester I am taking Criminal Procedure, which also starts at 8:00 AM two days per week. Even when I don't have early class I usually try to get to school by 8:30 so I can get some work done before my first class. The good thing about having early class, though, is that I am done with all of my classes before 12:00 each day. I usually grab lunch with my friends and then go back to school to spend some time in the library reading for my classes the next day or getting work done for my other various activities. Depending on the class, it may take anywhere from 1-3 hours to do the reading, and I usually only have two classes per day. I also will spend some time working on upcoming law journal deadlines or grading papers for the 1L legal writing class that I am a teacher's assistant for. My 1L year I definitely had no way to decide my class schedule, as it is at most schools, so 1Ls usually have schedules with weird breaks between classes. This year, I scheduled all of my classes in the morning and have much more ability to manage my time commitments.

2) To date, what has been your favorite law school class, and why? How have you been choosing classes after your first year of law school?

The 1L class that I enjoyed the most was probably Regulatory State. It is a unique class that they began teaching here a few years ago and is a combination of an introduction to judicial reasoning with administrative law. As a political science major, and someone who would like to return to Washington,

DC to work, this class was really interesting and very applicable to much of the work being done in DC. I also really enjoyed my Property and Criminal Law classes, much to my surprise. The professor can really make a class enjoyable.

So far, my favorite 2L class is probably the Intellectual Property Survey that I am in. The class touches on all of the IP issues, including copyright, trademark, and patents. It is incredibly pertinent and many of the issues are ripped straight from the headlines (i.e. Apple v. Samsung \$1 billion lawsuit). The professor is also really interesting and is always finding ways to make the material more comprehensible. For instance, a few weeks ago he brought in a local songwriter who wrote "Hit Me with Your Best Shot" for Pat Benetar. He spoke to us about copyright and songwriters rights, something very pertinent here in Nashville.

3) What made you choose Vanderbilt Law School? What do you see as the primary pros and cons of law school?

I chose to come to Vanderbilt because it was a smaller school that sends its graduates all over the US. Growing up in California, going to school in the Mid-Atlantic, and spending time in the Northeast, I was unclear where I saw myself ending up after graduation. Vanderbilt is a great school that has alumni all over the US and has a presence in each of the areas in which I was interested. Also, the law school has a reputation for being much more laid back and collegial. Everyone says that about their school, but it is the truth here. I think that because students go all over the US (and the world), that we are less competitive with one another because we are not all competing for the same jobs. I am in the midst of interviewing for 2L summer associate positions and none of my friends are interviewing at the same firms as me and I know people going to nearly every part of the country for their second summer.

Perhaps one of the cons of Vanderbilt is, for students who know they want to be in a given city, that Vanderbilt may not have a large of a presence there as some other schools.

4) What types of undergraduate opportunities did you pursue that led to your decision to apply to law school? Were there any experiences that you felt were particularly helpful in strengthening your application to law school?

I took a number of the law classes as part of the E&M minor, including Business Law and Internet Law. Those classes gave me a very rudimentary overview of certain aspects of the practice of law, which was a great place to start. For me, I think that writing papers, conducting research for papers and projects, and ultimately writing my Honors Paper for my Departmental Honors, were a huge help in preparing me for law school. A large part of how I spent my summer internship was conducting research and writing memos for judges and attorneys.

I also interned during the summer before my senior year of college and during the fall semester of my senior year at a small law firm in Baltimore. That really helped to give me some sense of what the practice of law is like, as well. Also, any activity that involves teamwork and serious time management will be a huge help in law school and beyond.

5) What did you pursue during your interim year(s)/before beginning law school, while in law school and during your law school summer(s)? How did you go about researching these opportunities?

I spent my two years after college working as a litigation paralegal in Washington, DC. I worked at Covington & Burling in their headquarters in DC. It was an incredible experience and really solidified my desire to go to law school. Being a paralegal is not easy work and is very far from glamorous. But, if you want a no-holds-barred view from the inside of what it is like to practice at a firm, there is nothing better than working as a paralegal. I learned legal research, writing, and citation skills that were instrumental in my 1L year and certainly during my 1L summer internship at the UNICTR.

This past summer I worked in Arusha, Tanzania as an intern in Chambers for the United Nations International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda. I spent the first part of my time working on a case assisting with the drafting of the final judgment in the case of an accused genocidaire. I then spent the remainder of my time working for the Chief of Chambers and President of the Tribunal on various matters, which included the drafting of two decisions for the President along with several letters and memos.

Most law schools have a good career center that students can utilize to help find these jobs, but it all must be supplemented by good research on your own. I knew I wanted to work for a judge, was interested in working abroad this summer, and had been to Tanzania and seen the ICTR compound before. I went on their website, saw they had an opening for an intern in Chambers, spoke with a professor here who had sent interns to the ICTR in the past and knew some of the judicial officers, and then applied for the internship. It was a lengthy process that included letters of recommendation, an essay, and an application. My biggest advice, don't wait to apply. I spent much of my Winter break after finals getting applications ready; that is not too early to start.

6) How would you compare the reality of law school and the ensuing job search to the picture you had of it while an undergraduate?

I knew what I was getting myself in to. The job market is tough, but certainly shows signs of getting better. I am in the process of interviewing for 2L summer associate positions now and have found the process stressful, but no more so than I would have expected. The On Campus Interview (OCI) process is where many people get their first round of interviews with firms and other organizations for their 2L summer. As the economy has improved, firms have started sending more people to OCI events and we had over 90 different law firms on campus interviewing students at the beginning of the semester. Clearly, the job prospects are somewhat location-specific and some markets are harder than others. I am applying mostly in New York and DC and those are two of the harder markets so I knew not to be intimidated by the prospects. But from my perspective, things look to be getting better. That, at least, is the message we are getting.

7) Do you have any advice for an undergraduate interested in pursuing law school and a career in law given your experience in today's legal market and now as a current law student?

My biggest piece of advice is to be certain that you want to go to law school before you put down a deposit. Law School should not just be an alternative because you cannot figure out what to do, or you can't find a job, or you want to live in a fun city like Nashville for three years. It is a large investment of time and money, so be certain you want to go before you make that decision. Having said that, I have had a wonderful year-and-a-bit here at Vanderbilt and I highly recommend that if you are interested in law school that you visit. Do not choose your school before you visit, you can tell a lot about a school by speaking directly with students and faculty and walking through the building.

I don't think there are specific classes or activities in college that I would particularly recommend. Just take a variety of classes and be able to show the admissions committee that you really want to go to law school and that you can handle it. Law school has a big price, but the rewards are endless.

Contact Information:

If you would like to learn more about being a 2L/law student, Vanderbilt Law School, or if you have additional questions for Andrew Solinger, you may reach him by using the following contact information: andrewsolinger@gmail.com

5. UPCOMING PRE-LAW STUDENT MEETINGS & PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

Upcoming LSAT Administration

Location: Check with LSAC for testing locations (next on campus/JHU LSAT administration – Saturday, October 6, 2012).

Date: October 6, 2012/Saturday, December 1, 2012/Saturday, February 9, 2013/Saturday, June 10, 2013/Monday

Time: Registration begins at 8.30a for the October exam – consult with LSAC for all controlling details.

Johns Hopkins University 2012 Law School Fair

Location: Charles Common Banquet Room

Date: Monday, October 8, 2012

Time: 2:30pm to 5:30pm

Description: Admissions representatives of law schools from around the U.S. will be on hand to meet and speak with interested, potential applicants.

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**STAFF IN THE OFFICE OF PRE-PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS AND ADVISING**

Ana L. Droscoski, J.D., Associate Director, Pre-Law Advisor, Pre-Dental & Pre-Health Advisor

David Verrier, Ph.D., Director, Pre-Health Advisor

Ellen Snyderman, M.S., Assistant Director, Pre-Health Advisor

Katie Cruit, M.S., Assistant Director, Pre-Nursing & Pre-Health Advisor

The Administrative Coordinators are available to answer questions regarding your file:

Carolyn Mae Krause, Administrative Coordinator, [ckrause@jhu.edu](mailto:ckrause@jhu.edu) 410-516-6744

For students whose last name begins with A-L, contact Mrs. Krause.

LaTonia Sanders, Administrative Coordinator, [ladytee@jhu.edu](mailto:ladytee@jhu.edu) 410-516-4140

For students whose last name begins with M-Z, contact Mrs. Sanders.

Angie Decker, Office Manager, [decker@jhu.edu](mailto:decker@jhu.edu)

Please feel free to use the resource library between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. every day or visit our website <http://web.jhu.edu/prepro/> for additional information.

Ana L. Droscoski, Esq.

Associate Director

Office of Pre-Professional Programs & Advising

Johns Hopkins University

Garland Hall Suite 300

3400 North Charles Street

Baltimore, MD 21218

Tel: 410.516.4140

Fax: 410.516.4040

email: [adrosco1@jhu.edu](mailto:adrosco1@jhu.edu)

[web.jhu.edu/prepro](http://web.jhu.edu/prepro)