

Pre-Law E-Newsletter

Vol 1, No. 11

Monday, December 10, 2007 - Sunday, December 16, 2007

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1. MESSAGE FROM THE ADVISOR

Current Applicants: If you receive any deferrals or are waitlisted at any law schools to which you applied, be sure to make an appointment with me to discuss and execute next step strategies.

Also, try not to panic if you have not heard from any schools yet. You will hear in time.

To everyone: Good luck studying for final exams and, generally, wrapping up the semester.

Ana L. Droskoski, Esq.

2. FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS: ABOUT MINORITY STATUS (see www.lsac.org)

Why are law schools interested in recruiting minority students?

Historically, minority group members have been underrepresented in the legal profession. The law school population (as well as the legal profession) does not reflect accurately the vibrant and expanding minority population in our society. To promote diversity, law schools actively seek qualified African American, Latino, Asian, and Native American students, as well as other students of color. Law schools increasingly find that diversity within the classroom enriches the learning process for all students. This diversity might include contrasting economic, educational, and geographical backgrounds; different sexual orientations; varied familial or other personal experiences; or unusual careers.

Why am I considered a minority applicant?

Law schools consider your ethnic or racial status to be whatever you indicate on your LSAT registration forms. Your minority status alone is not a guarantee of admission, but it helps admission committees form a more complete picture of who you are. They are interested in how your minority status has affected your life, including whatever disadvantages you may have overcome.

Is the LSAT biased against minorities?

The passages and questions on the LSAT go through a rigorous screening and pretesting process to make sure that the individual items are not biased. The primary reason that minority test takers perform less well on the LSAT is lack of preparation. In addition, research indicates that minority group members, particularly African Americans, are more vulnerable to test anxiety than other test takers. The best way to avoid test anxiety is to prepare thoroughly for the LSAT by familiarizing yourself with the types of questions on the test and by taking disclosed (previously administered) tests. Take the entire test—not just a few sections at a time—under actual timed conditions.

Do law schools apply different admission criteria to minorities?

Most law schools that legally can practice affirmative action do so. This means that they may take your race or ethnicity into account as one of many factors in a whole-file review. Each applicant may potentially offer something distinctive to a class—diversity being one factor among many. While LSAT scores and undergraduate GPAs are important factors in admission decisions, they are not the only factors. Others may include a strong letter of recommendation or personal statement, work experience, or community service that demonstrates a special interest or strength of character, diversity status that may contribute to a robust exchange of ideas in the classroom and the law school community, graduate work or other specialized studies, and so on. All of these are factors that a law school may consider in determining if an applicant is a good fit for their law school. Law schools select from among the applicants who fall somewhere on a flexible continuum of their particular academic parameters.

What part should ethnicity play in my personal statement?

Many law school applicants mistakenly assume that the school to which they are applying only cares about ethnicity as a way of fulfilling an unofficial quota of ethnic minorities. This is not the case: Most law schools are genuinely interested in the overall diversity of their student body—but you must show how your ethnicity will make you a better law student and ultimately a better attorney. It is not enough to simply state your ethnicity or even to describe your personal history as it has been affected by your ethnicity. A key strategy is to do thorough research on every law school to which you are applying and determine the diversity goals of each school. Structure your personal statement with a purpose and with these goals in mind.

Remember that diversity is broader than ethnicity, and ethnicity is not synonymous with adversity. Do not assume that your ethnicity is the only way in which you can add to the diversity of the student body; consider your entire life experience. Also, do not assume that ethnicity must be broached in stories of hardships and misfortune. However you convey it, you are well-advised to be sincere in relaying your authentic story. Anything less will come across as contrived to the reader and will not be to your benefit.

3. ABA LEGAL OPPORTUNITY SCHOLARSHIP FUND

The ABA Legal Opportunity Scholarship Fund intends to encourage racial and ethnic minority students to apply to law school and to provide financial assistance to the scholarship recipients.

The Scholarship Fund is an annual financial assistance award of \$5,000 to each scholarship recipient attending an ABA-accredited law school. If an award is made to an entering first-year student, it may be renewable for an additional two years, for a potential law school tenure award of \$15,000.

Recipients will be selected based on their qualifications for the scholarship, not on the law school they plan to attend.

To learn more about the Scholarship Fund, and to apply, visit: <http://www.abanet.org/fje/losfpage.html>

4. UPCOMING PRE-LAW MEETINGS AND PROGRAM ANNOUNCEMENTS

Spring Programming - coming soon!

LSAT Administration for 2008

Location: On campus, Hodson 110 - check with LSDAS for additional testing locations

Dates: Saturday, February 2, 2008

Time: Registration begins at 8:30am - consult with LSDAS for all controlling details

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

Ana L. Droscoski, Esq., who advises Pre-Law students:  
Pre-Law Walkins: Mondays 10:00am to 11:30am  
Pre-Law Appts: Mondays/Thursdays 2:00pm to 4:00pm  
Wednesdays 10:00am to 11:30am & 2pm to 3pm

David Verrier, Ph.D., Director, who advises Pre-Health students:  
Walkins: Friday 10:00 am to 12:00 pm  
Appts: Mondays/Tuesdays/Wednesdays/Thursdays 1:00 pm to 4:30 pm

The Administrative Coordinators are available to answer questions and schedule appointments:  
Lena Harding, Administrative Secretary, lhardin7@jhu.edu 410-516-6743  
For students whose last name begins with A-G, contact Ms. Harding.

Carolyn Mae Krause, Administrative Coordinator, ckrause@jhu.edu 410-516-6744  
For students whose your last name begins with H-O, contact Mrs. Krause.

LaTonia Sanders, Administrative Coordinator, ladytee@jhu.edu 410-516-4140  
For students whose last name begins with P-Z, contact Mrs. Sanders.

Angie Decker, Office Manager and Staff Supervisor, decker@jhu.edu

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

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