

Prelaw Information

Overview

There is no undergraduate prelaw degree program at UC Berkeley. However, Students who acquire certain skills before entering law school will be better prepared to manage the demands of their law school courses. Therefore, as an undergraduate, take challenging courses requiring extensive writing, reading, and critical analysis, regardless of whether these courses are in your field of study. Participating in extracurricular activities or research projects can also develop your critical thinking abilities.

Students planning to attend law school should develop the ability to:

Communicate. Law students must demonstrate a strong ability to read, write, speak, and listen. Often they must read large amounts of complex material and use the information to write persuasive documents; therefore, if you wish to succeed in law school, your ability to comprehend information and write about it is crucial. Law students must also present their arguments orally before peers and faculty members. Participation in group projects or leadership positions in student groups will help you develop critical communication skills, including the often overlooked skill of listening.

Think Critically and Analytically. As a law student, you will have to evaluate the arguments of your peers, so exposure to new ideas may help you understand and analyze different perspectives. By talking with advisors and faculty about possible courses, you can learn about and choose classes that stress critical and analytical analysis.

Research. Law students often must gather information from many sources, so learning to navigate the research channels at a library as an undergraduate will help you collect and analyze information at law school and beyond. Likewise, completing research papers can help you learn to uncover, maneuver through, manage, synthesize, and analyze large amounts of material.

Organize and manage. Lawyers frequently must prepare for court cases quickly, so acquiring the ability to rapidly analyze and organize large amounts of complex material will be beneficial to you. By taking challenging courses and completing thought-provoking assignments, you can learn techniques for organizing relevant data, while managing assignment deadlines.

For information about how to prepare for law school as a Berkeley undergraduate, please visit Berkeley's Career Center website: Law School (<https://career.berkeley.edu/Law/Law/>).