



College of Liberal Arts and Education

Pre-Law

The legal profession is extremely diverse —there is no “typical” lawyer. Still, all lawyers must be able to analyze and synthesize complex material, advocate the interests of their clients, and give sound advice on the law. They must be able to communicate clearly both orally and in writing, and negotiate effectively to reconcile divergent points of view. Some of the growing fields in the legal profession are environmental, intellectual, property, corporate, criminal, and family law. Nonlegal careers in teaching, business, politics, and law enforcement are also available to the person trained in law. Careers such as these can be extraordinarily challenging, demanding and rewarding.

In keeping with the recommendation of the American Bar Association, UW-Platteville does not offer pre-law as an academic major. Instead, we advise students to choose a major consistent with their own interests. We then guide them in the selection of challenging courses that will effectively prepare them for training in law and offer them a range of opportunities to develop the intellectual and interpersonal skills that will help them build the career they desire.

The Program at UW-Platteville

The goal of the pre-law program is to prepare students for law school. All who participate in the pre-law program are offered a broad liberal arts education which emphasizes appreciation of human values, an awareness of socio-political thought, and concern for the community and environment. The pre-law advisor helps students develop their semester schedule and guides them toward preparation for the Law School Admission Test (LSAT). The advisor also helps with the admission process to a suitable law school.

Our program provides the broad liberal arts background and demanding coursework that all agree lead to success in law school and beyond. But it also does more. For example:

- **Mock trial competition.** We compete annually along with 250 other outstanding colleges and universities in mock trial tournaments sponsored by the American Mock Trial Association. Since 1996, our teams have won eleven awards including national trophies, and 52 individual awards, including four All-Americans.
- **Mediation competition.** In 2000 we entered the first annual National Intercollegiate Mediation tournament and took Third Place. All four members of our team received All-American honors. Since then we’ve added four more

team trophies and seven individual awards, including two more All-Americans. In addition, we host intercollegiate competitions in both mediation and mock trial.

- **Active, Student-Run, Pre-Law Society.** The members of the Pre-Law Society maintain an office in Warner Hall, where they make available a wide range of information on law school admissions.
- **Travel.** The Pre-Law Society sponsors travel to Chicago for the annual Pre-Law Forum and to Madison for the Pre-Law Caravan. The Madison trip includes a tour of the UW Law School and an opportunity to sit in on a class.
- **One-to-One Advisement.** We work with each student individually to maximize his or her range of desirable career opportunities. Our alumni are currently attending or have recently graduated from law schools at UW-Madison, Marquette University, University of Iowa, Drake University, Hamline University, University of Dayton, Chicago-Kent College of Law, and several others.

Law School

Admission to a law school normally follows the completion of a baccalaureate degree and the fulfillment of other requirements of the law school which the student plans to attend. After that, an individual attends a law school for three years full time or four years part-time to earn a juris doctor (J.D.) degree. The successful completion of a state bar examination is usually required to practice law. (No state bar examination is required for UW-Madison Law School graduates if they intend to practice in Wisconsin.)

High School Preparation

In preparing to enter the pre-law program, the high school student should take academic courses, especially those that improve reading and writing skills. In addition, a good background in communication and social skills is also helpful. Participation in debate, student government and model United Nations programs is recommended.

The Pre-Law Society at UWP

UW-Platteville is very proud of its active Pre-Law Society which sponsors field trips, visiting speakers, and competitive teams that compete in regional and national tournaments. In addition, the society maintains a collection of up-to-date brochures, catalogs and fact sheets from numerous law schools as well as a useful array of books on legal education and the legal profession. Above all, the society provides its student-members the opportunity to meet students from a variety of majors who share similar career goals.

For More Information

For more information write to Dr. John R. Rink, Associate Professor and Pre-Law Advisor, Department of Social Sciences, University of Wisconsin-Platteville, 1 University Plaza, Platteville, Wisconsin 53818-3099, or call 608.342.1795, e-mail: rink@uwplatt.edu.

For general information on the university and its programs, contact the UWP Visitor Center, University of Wisconsin-Platteville, 1 University Plaza, Platteville, WI 53818-3099, or call toll-free 1.877.897.5288 or locally 608.342.1068.

Suggested Course of Study

As The Official Guide to U.S. Law

Schools advises, "there is no recommended set of pre-law courses." What is important in selecting undergraduate courses is "high academic standards" within a "broad liberal arts curriculum." Accordingly we have organized a flexible and challenging program for the first two years which could be adapted to a wide range of major programs.

Year One

Fall

1130	English Composition	3
1000	Algebra	3
1130	Political Science	3
1330	History	3
1130	Philosophy	3
1000	Wellness	1

Spring

1230	English Composition	3
1430	U.S. History	3
1230	American Government	3
2230 or 2430	Mathematics	3
2130 or 2230	Economics	3
1010	Speech	1

Year Two

Fall

	Political Science Elective	3
1040	Foreign Language	3
	Laboratory Science	3-5
1330	Introduction to Literature	3
1200	Introduction to Business	3

Spring

	Political Science Elective	3
1140	Foreign Language	3
2130 or 2230	Economics	3
	Computer Science	3
1230	Music Appreciation	3

The University of Wisconsin-Platteville does not discriminate on the basis of age, race, creed, color, handicap, sex, sexual orientation, developmental disability, national origin, ancestry, marital status, arrest record or conviction record.