

## ▶ BEGINNING TO THINK ABOUT LAW SCHOOL

### **1. I haven't even selected my major yet. Isn't it a little early to think about law school?**

It's never too early to start thinking about law school and the many career options available to you when you obtain a law degree. Although there is no standard set of required prelaw courses, you can begin preparing now by taking challenging undergraduate courses that will strengthen your thinking, reading, and writing skills. Getting into law school isn't easy, but if you're willing to work hard and prepare yourself, you can do it.

### **2. What is law school like?**

The best way to find out what law school is like is speak with people who are in law school, who have recently graduated, or who are practicing law. Many law school websites have multimedia tours and presentations that are the next best thing to visiting the campus.

### **3. How long does it take to get a law degree?**

It takes three years of full-time study to obtain a JD (law) degree. JD stands for Juris Doctor — a law degree is a graduate degree. A few law schools are experimenting with shortening the traditional three-year program. There are many law schools that have part-time and evening programs that take up to four years to complete. Earning your law degree is worth the time and effort. Check the *ABA-LSAC Official Guide to ABA-Approved Law Schools* for more information about specific programs at individual schools.

### **4. What factors are most important for success in law school?**

Law schools admit students who are likely to succeed. Just like undergraduate school, your success in law school depends on your willingness to work hard and apply yourself both individually and in study groups..

### **5. In law school, do students focus on certain areas of law—similar to having a major in undergraduate school?**

Most law schools have a standard first-year curriculum with a choice of electives, in addition to some required courses in the second and third years. While there are some specialty focus areas such as patent law and taxation that students can choose, most law students choose to take a wide variety of courses to maximize their career options after law school. However, if you know that you want to specialize in a specific area of law after graduation, you should choose a law school that offers electives in that specialty. A number of law schools have dual-degree programs that can enhance your career opportunities even more.

### **6. How do I know which law school will be right for me?**

Just like choosing your undergraduate school, you should do your homework before starting your search for a law school. You'll want to decide what factors are most important to you (size of school, location, course offerings), assess your personal resources, think about family obligations, and talk to people you trust: college professors, prelaw advisors, law school admission professionals, law students, and others.

It's never too early to start thinking about law school. The decisions you make today will lead to more career choices down the road.