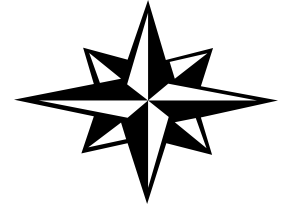


SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF PRE-LAW ADVISERS



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

What an incredible, transformational time at SAPLA! I am excited and honored to begin my role as your President. I first joined SAPLA in 2000 and have seen it grow into one of the premier APLA's in the country. The SAPLA leadership team is committed to adding value to your SAPLA membership by fostering greater member participation in our events, reaching out to SAPLA members in new and useful ways, and increasing our internet presence.

With each new term comes the perfect time for you to rejuvenate or renew your passion in pre-law advising and invest in it. We believe when a person invests in their passion(s) and are able to see the results it is an incredibly rewarding experience. We are all keenly aware there is a difference in wanting to become a lawyer and actively pursuing a legal career through education and proper preparation. As a pre-law advisor, you have a definite impact on sculpting the professional decisions and successes of your students. There is a clear advantage

in associating yourself with other pre-law advisors who are new to the field or hold veteran advisor status. I encourage you to utilize all your available advisor resources. Let's pool our resources and skills with the hopes of increasing our students' chances in being a successful law school applicant.

What is your passion? Do scholarships interest you? Is helping young people achieve their fullest potential where your interests lie? We all have needs and opportunities to help quality students every day. I am always amazed by the many creative and innovative ways we come up with to help our students reach their dream of going to law school. While our students may change the challenges and obstacles they face do not. That's why now more than ever we need to be a band of brothers and sisters and assist our students in reaching their fullest potential.

It is my hope we can help you find your passion as a pre-law advi-

sor in a way that creates excitement when you support the educational priorities of your students. This is our goal. As your President, I would also like your feedback on how we are doing as an APLA. Contact a board member today to let us know how we can best serve you. Finally, on behalf of the SAPLA leadership team, we thank you for your support and look forward to meeting you at one of our upcoming events.

Welcome to the possibilities you will uncover as you invest in your passion with SAPLA. Teamwork divides the effort and multiplies the effect.

Best wishes,

Tyra R. Mason
President
Southern Association of
Pre-Law Advisers

SAPLA

VOLUME XXV, ISSUE 4

SPRING/SUMMER 2011

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SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF PRE-LAW ADVISERS

REPORTING OF STUDY ABROAD GRADES



"To focus on technique is like cramming your way through school. You sometimes get by, perhaps even get good grades, but if you don't pay the price day in and day out, you'll never achieve true mastery of the subjects you study or develop an educated mind."

Stephen R. Covey

STUDY ABROAD SPONSORED BY YOUR HOME INSTITUTION:

If you enrolled in a study abroad program sponsored by your home institution, and the courses along with the grades and credits using your home institution's grading system are recorded on your official academic transcript or a separate or parallel transcript maintained by your home institution, then you do NOT need to send an additional transcript to Law School Admission Council (LSAC).

STUDY ABROAD PROGRAM SPONSORED BY ANOTHER US (INCLUDING US TERRITORIES) OR CANADIAN COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY:

If you enrolled in a study abroad program sponsored by another US (including US territories) or Canadian college or university then, in addition to your home institution's transcript, you must have the col-

lege or university sponsoring the study abroad program send a transcript directly to Law School Admission Council. When you register for the Credential Assembly Service (CAS), identify the US or Canadian institution sponsoring the study abroad program under "Other Institutions."

OTHER FACTORS INVOLVED IN THE PROCESS WHICH REQUIRE ADDITIONAL STEPS ON THE PART OF THE CANDIDATE:

(1) If you were directly enrolled in one or more international institutions, but the total amount of work is the equivalent of **one year or less**, do NOT list the international institution when you register for the Credential Assembly Service (CAS), and do not have a transcript forwarded to LSAC. International work that is the equivalent of one US or Canadian academic year or less is not required for Credential Assembly Service (CAS) purposes. You may, however, be required to list your attendance at such institutions on your application to law school.

OR

(2) If you are applying to a law school that requires the use of the authentication and evaluation feature of the Credential Assembly Service (CAS), *and* you were directly enrolled in one or more international institutions, *and* the total amount of work you completed at all international institutions is the equivalent of **more than one US or Canadian aca-**

ademic year, *then* in addition to your home institution's transcript, you must have a transcript forwarded to Law School Admission Council from the international institution(s). When you register for the Credential Assembly Service (CAS), identify the international institution(s) under "International Institutions." Note: A transcript from a non-degree granting agency reflecting work completed through direct enrollment is not acceptable for LSAC purposes; you must have a transcript forwarded from the institution itself.

(3) Please note that international transcripts meeting the "**more than one year**" criteria are required from all

- undergraduate and graduate schools;
- law/medical/professional schools; and schools attended even though a degree was never awarded.

All required international transcripts must be sent directly to LSAC by the issuing institution, and will be processed through the authentication and evaluation feature of the Credential Assembly Service (CAS) as described on LSAC's website, www.LSAC.org.

(Source: Gerald Wilson, Duke University; Heather Struck, Cornell University; Laura Pugliese, Law School Admission Council)

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2011-2012 FEE WAIVER PROGRAM

The Law School Admissions Council (LSAC) dedicates funds, through its Fee Waiver Program, to support law school access for all applicants regardless of their ability to pay for the LSAT and associated services. This program is an important component of the effort to enroll diverse law school student bodies.

The 2011-2012 LSAC Fee Waiver will cover the following LSAC services only:

- Two LSATs \$278.00
 - Credential Assembly Service (LSDAS) with four reports and the letter of recommendation service \$188.00
 - The Official LSAT Super Prep \$ 28.00
- Total** **\$494.00**

To be considered for a fee waiver a person must be a US citizen, US national, or permanent resident alien of the US with an Alien Registration Receipt Card. Fee waivers are intended for only the most needy applicants and this implies need in excess of that required for

routine financial assistance; only those with extreme need should apply. All waivers are for a combination of services listed above. **Whether granted by a law school or requested from LSAC, the fee waiver application form and supporting documentation must be submitted to LSAC. Applicants are no longer required to submit the paper LSAC Registration Form; they can now register for LSAC services online after they receive notification that their fee waiver application has been processed.** Items received separately at LSAC may be returned unprocessed.

Applicants with questions should call the regular Candidate Services number (215) 968-1001.

Application Procedure:

The quickest and most convenient way to apply for a fee waiver through LSAC is for an applicant to complete an online application. Applicants must first establish an online account with LSAC in order to apply for a fee waiver online. Applicants will know the decision of their fee waiver application immediately since the online application

will be conditionally approved or denied in "real" time. Conditionally approved applicants may then use their fee waiver to order services online. However, the applicant will have a 45 day deadline to submit applicable tax forms, which will be reviewed by LSAC for a final decision. Applicants who are denied can appeal online.

Paper fee waiver packets are available through law schools, your university pre-law advisor or LSAC. Applicants may also download the fee waiver packet from the LSAC website or apply online at www.LSAC.org. **Fee waiver forms must be completed in their entirety to be considered.**

2011-2012 LSAT

Test Dates

June 6, 2011
October 1, 2011
December 3, 2011
February 11, 2012



LSAC OFFICE OF DIVERSITY FORUM SUBSIDIES

As part of the LSAC's mission to increase the numbers of minorities in the legal profession, they offer subsidies to assist HACU, HBCU and Native American colleges with the cost of sending minority students and their pre-law advisors to the forums.

Subsidies are available to a select number of colleges and universities based upon their geographic location or historic enrollment of minority students from HACU, HBCU and Native American schools.

These subsidies are meant to encourage prospective students to obtain information about the law school admissions process and financial aid, to speak with representatives, and

to attend various workshops so they are better prepared as they consider law school.

Diversity information panels will be offered at each of the forums. Strongly encourage your students to attend one of these sessions. Admission representatives will be on hand to answer questions specific to minority students.

Eligible Expenses

The following expenses are eligible for reimbursement as forum expenses

- Travel assistance for students and prelaw advisors
- Food
- Lodging at a hotel *other* than the forum hotel

Guidelines

- The subsidy money can only be spent for the LSAC Law School Forum nearest your school
- Only one subsidy can be used during the 2011 season.
- Prelaw advisors must accompany their students to the forums.
- LSAC does not subsidize travel by air.
- Because the subsidies cover only a portion of travel expenses, it is expected that the students, prelaw advisors and their universities will contribute to the cost of attending forums.
- Sign in sheets are not accepted as a receipt for student meals. Receipts over

\$25 must accompany the final report, including receipts for meals eaten by students.

- LSAC does not pay for drivers of vans or buses unless the driver is from a professional rental or transportation company.

Each school is required to make formal application for subsidies. The prelaw advisor or responsible university official must sign the application, email or fax it to the LSAC Office of Diversity Initiatives by the application deadline.

If you have any questions regarding application deadlines for the subsidy please contact Yessenia Garcia-Lebrón at ygarcia@LSAC.org.

THOUGHTS FROM ONE CURRENT PART-TIME 1L



Thoughts from **ONE** current, part-time 1L (take these with that subjectivity in mind)

Differences between undergrad coursework and law school coursework

- **course load**—fulltime course load is similar to undergrad (15-16 hrs)
- **amount of reading**—similar to what I experienced as a humanities and social sciences double major; less than my master program
- **type of reading**—cases, cases, and more cases
- **importance of reading**—due to the teaching pedagogy, each student can be expected to be called on to discuss in depth the ins and outs of cases read for that day (known as “case briefing”); harder to get away with not doing the reading than in college. Additionally, the tests are timed and require an ability to quickly analyze fact patterns, a skill gained through reading all of those case
- **the business of law school study aides**—unlike undergraduates, law students have as many course textbook-specific study aids (outlines, practice test questions, flash cards, etc.) available to them as they can afford. Blessing is that these greatly aid in efficient test preparation and course review. Curse is that these are tempting ways to avoid doing the casebook

reading.

- **higher order thinking?**—not in the first year, at least. Memorization is the key to success, as far as I have been able to tell. While the law is not completely black and white, the law you’re tested on in the first year seems to be.

Undergraduate coursework that I found particularly helpful for the LSAT and for law school itself

- Anything requiring varied, complex readings (a law school text “casebook” contains myriad court opinions written in different styles—not a simple, consistent textbook author voice)
- Formal Logic or Symbolic Logic (philosophy department staples)—very valuable to my studying for the LSAT and success on certain sections of the LSAT
- The philosophy courses I took required very technical, accurate writing similar to what is required in law school. Leave your creativity and individual flare at the door to the law school.
- Though I never had any, I have heard from fellow law students that undergraduate courses in Business Law, Sports Law, Entertainment Law, and Communication Law are very similar to law school coursework in terms of teaching style, course readings, and testing.

Alternative paths to/through law school (e.g., part-time, rare assistantship opportunities, etc.)

- Part-time is available in select locations, though NC currently only offers one accredited part-time program
- At least one school (Cooley) even offers a weekend format (6 hours

every Sat. and 6 hours every Sunday for 4 years)

- Assistantships are much harder to come by than in graduate school programs. However, many schools offer 2L and 3L research assistantships. Additionally, I’ve known law students taking advantage of graduate assistantships in student affairs divisions (e.g., work as a hall director for room, board, and tuition, work 20 hours per week as GA in a career services office, etc.)
- Average student, though, will rack up a lot of debt in law school paying close to full tuition.

Being realistic about the market for lawyers and understanding how important school's reputation is for job placement

- Great discussion of this at: [http://online.wsj.com/public/article_print/SB119040786780835602.html](http://online.wsj.com/public/article_print/ SB119040786780835602.html)

The “pedagogy” still employed at many law schools (“Socratic Method”)

- Interesting BLAWG (legal blog) discussion of this at Brian Leiter’s site (Leiter’s a controversial Law Prof): http://leiterlawschool.typepad.com/leiter/2005/09/the_socratic_me.html

“Don't lower your expectations to meet your performance. Raise your level of performance to meet your expectations. Expect the best of yourself, and then do what is necessary to make it a reality.”

Ralph Marston

AN APPROACH TO WRITING A PERSONAL STATEMENT

When I advise students about how to approach writing a personal statement for their law school application, I begin by posing the following question:

Suppose that the law school admissions committee were to invite you for an interview. You walk in and take a seat before the full admissions committee. The chairperson says, "We have studied all of your application materials - your letters of recommendation, your transcripts, and your resume - and we feel that we have a clear sense of the 'paper you'. However, before we make our final decision, we'd like to get to know the 'human you'. Given that we are somewhat short of time, in the next five minutes, please tell us about the 'real' you that we could not appreciate from your other application materials."

What would you say?

Now, suppose that you had several days to compose your response and that you will be allowed to read your response to the committee. What would you include? How would you organize it?

Once this framing question is in place, I encourage my students to proceed in the following way:

1. Think back across your entire life. As you do this you will come across a set of 10-20 episodes, vignettes, or stories that you commonly use to tell others about your life. Sort through them and select four or five that:

- a. represent "who you are as a person,"
- b. that exemplify a core trait about which you are somewhat proud, or
- c. that reveal something deep about yourself.

2. Next, imagine that your life is a novel. You are both the main character and the author of this novel. Episodes from your "life story" are among the things that shape and reveal your character. You have made many choices and those also reveal something about you. Most importantly, if you are actually living your life - rather than just letting it happen to you - there will be motifs, patterns, tendencies, and a direction in your life story.

3. Your application is a signal to the admissions committee that *you* believe that three years of law school, passing the bar exam, and taking a job in the legal profession is a *natural* extension of your life's story. But *WHY* is it a "natural" extension of your life's story? The central task of a personal statement is to persuade the admissions committee that this is true about your life.

4. [This is where you start your personal statement] You need to select and *very* briefly recount three episodes from your life. Each story should *both* reveal *and* provide substantive evidence for your claim to have a particular set of character traits. IN ADDITION,

when taken together, these three stories should make it *evident* that you're your life story contains a "must go to law school" motif. That is, from reading these three stories, it should be clear that attending law school is the next logical chapter in your life story. [By the way, if you discover—in all honesty—that your life story does not include a "must go to law school motif," then you ought to schedule a conversation with your prelaw advisor just to verify that applying to law school is your best move. Of course, it might be; but it is worth the conversation.]

5. The conclusion "therefore, you should admit me to your law school" should remain implicit. However, if you have chosen well, it should be an obvious implication of your essay.

I remind students that this essay needs to be the best writing that they have ever produced. They should expect to go through at least five or six drafts. I also remind them that they should read their early drafts aloud and that their later drafts should be read and critiqued by at least four or five very bright people.

I find it efficient to preempt difficulties by describing a few of the most common mistakes that applicants make in their essays.

- Applicants often devote too much space describing an event or activity and not enough space talking about their own character. It is like what interior decorators say, "Your frames should accentuate your paintings, not dominate them." Analogously, I



AN APPROACH TO WRITING A PERSONAL STATEMENT (continued)

press my students to remember to make themselves the centerpiece of their essay. Thus, for example, I often end up saying something like, "No! You've written an essay that tells the committee more about our university or more about your parents than it does about you."

- The mere fact THAT you did something is far less interesting than what it meant to you or how you integrated it into your life. Don't merely tell the committee THAT something happened to you; tell them how you reacted to that event or about how it shaped and influenced you. The more you can describe your inner thoughts, dispositions and values the better.
- However, it is not enough merely to SAY that you have a particular virtue. For example, you can't simply say, "I'm a very caring person." You need to provide evidence for such claims and you do that with your vignettes. So, for

example, you might say, "When I was a kid, my teachers gave me an award because I would play with the handicapped kids when others chose to ostracize them. Ever since then, I am amazed by how often people comment on my sensitivity to the plight of those who are struggling in life."

Once students see these points, they get what they need to do.

I conclude my advising session with two reminders:

1. I tell them that most people report that faithfully carrying out my recommended process is a genuinely difficult soul-searching exercise. It can be psychologically challenging and frequently results in a few tears. If it feels a little bit like you are exposing your personal diary to the world, then you are probably doing the task well.
2. Finally, I remind them that they are NOT in an oppositional rela-

tionship with the admissions committee. Applicants and admissions committees are collaborating in an effort to discover whether they are a "fit" with one another. It is your job to tell them who you really are. Then, since they know themselves far better than you know them, it is their task to render a judgment about whether you are a fit for their program. If you try to play that silly game where you attempt to say what you think they want to hear, you will thwart this process. So, be honest and be yourself.

Of course, I don't suggest that this is the only way to go at this task. However, after years of advising, this captures what I've settled in on saying to my students.

By Nim Batchelor
Elon University
Fall 2010

INTERESTING LAW SCHOOL ARTICLES TO READ

Law Students Lose the Grant Game as Schools Win: http://www.nytimes.com/2011/05/01/business/law-school-grants.html?_r=1

Is Law School a Losing Game: http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/09/business/09law.html?pagewanted=1&_r=1&ref=business

Even if You Told Prospective Law School Students the Truth Would They Care?: <http://abovethelaw.com/2010/11/even-if-you-told-law-prospective-students-the-truth-would-they-care/>

Law School Loses Its Allure as Jobs at Firms Are Scarce: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748704396504576204692878631986.html>

Best Defense? Seeking a Haven in Law School: <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB123741745678277765.html>

Law schools may be forced to disclose scholarship retention rates: http://www.law.com/jsp/nlj/PubArticleNLJ.jsp?id=1202492669341&Law_schools_may_be_forced_to_disclose_scholarship_retention_rates

Recent graduates report satisfaction with 'real world' training in law school: http://www.law.com/jsp/nlj/PubArticleNLJ.jsp?id=1202490652136&Recent_graduates_report_satisfaction_with_real_world_training_in_law_school

A 45% employment rate? How law school employment numbers are inflated: <http://www.nationaljurist.com/>

[content/45-employment-rate-how-law-school-employment-numbers-are-inflated](http://www.nationaljurist.com/content/critical-issues/ranking-rankings-best-school-you)

Ranking the rankings: The best school for you: <http://www.nationaljurist.com/content/critical-issues/ranking-rankings-best-school-you>

Is law school worth it? A dean looks behind the numbers: <http://www.nationaljurist.com/content/critical-issues/law-school-worth-it-dean-looks-behind-numbers>



SAPLA

Southern Association of Pre Law Advisers

Membership Form
Membership Dues 2011

Name: _____

Position: _____

Title: _____

Institution: _____

Law School Representative

Primary Pre-Law Adviser at your institution:

- If yes, is your contact information currently available and up-to-date with Law Services? If no, please contact: Tracy Beck, tbeck@lsac.org

Secondary Pre-Law Adviser at your institution:

- Those who serve in this role at an institution are not listed in the Official Pre Law Directory. We would like to have our membership lists, as current and complete, as possible, so please complete this form and send to the Registrar.

Address: _____

Area code and Phone Number _____

Email: _____

Dues: Please check the appropriate category:

\$25.00 Pre Law Adviser/Advisers

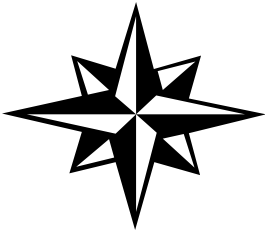
\$25.00 Law School &/or Associate Membership

Receive from SAPLA the NAPLA/SAPLA Book of Law School Lists, the SAPLA Pre-Law Advisers Handbook and the SAPLA Newsletter.

Make Checks payable to SAPLA

Federal Tax ID Number: SAPLA Federal Tax I.D. # 54-0505-965

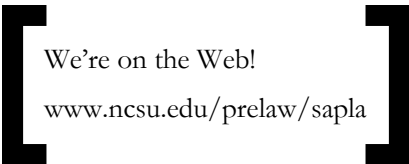
Complete the form, make checks payable to SAPLA & mail or fax form to:
Registrar- Michelle Rahman, SAPLA Registrar- mrahman@richmond.edu
University of Richmond, School of Law
Richmond, Virginia 23173
Phone: 804.289.8189/Fax: 804.287.6516



Pre Professional Law Program
Florida A&M University
112 Tucker Hall
515 Orr Drive
Tallahassee, FL 32303

SAPLA

Mailing Address Line 1
Mailing Address Line 2
Mailing Address Line 3
Mailing Address Line 4
Mailing Address Line 5



SAPLA IMPORTANT DATES & INFO



- June 6, 2011 - LSAT
- October 1, 2011 - LSAT
- October 2011 - PLANC Board Meeting
- LSAC 2011 Recruitment Forum - Saturday, October 22 - Miami, FL (Volunteers are needed to assist with advising forum attendees. If you are interested, please contact Tyra Mason at tyra.mason@fam.u.edu or (850) 599-3664 with your availability.)
- LSAC 2011 Recruitment Forum - Saturday, November 5 - Atlanta, GA (Volunteers are needed to assist with advising forum attendees. If you are interested, please contact Wendy Vonnegut wendy@methodist.edu with your availability.)
- December 3, 2011 - LSAT
- February 11, 2012
- **2012 National Conference, June 13 - 16, 2012 in Washington, DC:** plans are underway for the quadrennial PLANC conference in Washington, DC. Conference Chair Cindy Cogdill (Columbia University), Program Chair Wendy Vonnegut (Methodist University), PLANC Treasurer Karen Severn, and Conference Registrar Frank Homer (emeritus, University of Scranton) are working with a committee of APLA representatives to plan the national conference. Conference hotel: [Washington Marriott](#)
- New Tools for the Trade: LSAC.org. If any pre law advisor does not have a user name and password to log on to the members only area of www.lisac.org, email pre-law@lisac.org for assistance.
- Are having a law school fair or professional and graduate school fair on your campus? Have you picked your date? Do you know the event dates of other schools in your area so you can schedule consecutive events? Use the **LSAC Recruitment Calendar** (<http://www.lisac.org/Choosing/recruitment-calendar.asp>) to register your campus event and to learn more about other events in your region.