The Law School Application Process Timeline

Discovering law as a career can begin as early as your first year of college. The application process should begin during your junior year or in the year prior to your anticipated attendance at law school.

**FIRST YEAR AND SOPHOMORE YEAR OF COLLEGE**

- Enroll in courses that will enhance your communication skills, writing ability, reading comprehension, logical reasoning, and analytical skills. Choose a challenging, balanced, and diversified course of study, but also one in which you will excel.
- Make an appointment with the pre-law advisor and your faculty advisor.
- Work diligently on class materials. If you need help, get it. Your transcript should reflect a performance of which you are proud.
- Develop relationships with members of the faculty. Begin to think about whom you should ask to write letters of recommendation. In most cases, you will need letters from two professors who can specifically address your academic performance and intellectual promise.
- Participate in selected extracurricular activities. Your contributions and involvement should be substantive and meaningful to you. If possible, obtain leadership status and identify some way to provide service to the college and/or local community.
- Talk with law students and lawyers about the nature of legal education and the profession.
- Maintain a strong academic standing. Your GPA is important in the admission process!
- Participate in Career Services’ A Day in the Life program and shadow a lawyer over winter break.
- Attend Colgate’s Law School Fair held in late September/early October every other year (or visit a law school forum near you—found on www.lsac.org).
- Join Colgate’s Pre-law Society, Mock Trial, or Debate Society.
- Manage your undergraduate finances wisely, to be prepared for the expense of law school.
- Check out the Career Services e-mails for updates on events, programs, and workshops.

**JUNIOR YEAR OF COLLEGE**

- Schedule an appointment with the pre-law advisor to discuss your current academic status, LSAT preparation, individual time frame, researching law schools, and LSAC.org
- Focus on academic courses that demonstrate depth, persistence, and perseverance. Maintain a good GPA.
- Attend pre-law programs, panels, and events.
- Attend an LSAC Law School Forum near you.
- Prepare for the LSAT. If applying to Law School your senior year, it is recommended you take the LSAT Junior year winter, summer, or again fall senior year.
- Identify faculty members for recommendation letters; discuss your plans with them and request permission to use them as references.
- Update your resume and have it reviewed by Career Services.
- Prepare a list of law schools which are of interest to you. Include reach, safety, and stretch schools.
SUMMER (before applying)
- Take the June LSAT or prepare for the October LSAT.
- Register for LSAC’s Credential Assembly Service via LSAC.org’s website.
- Request official transcript(s) to be sent to the LSAC Credential Assembly Service.
- Review law school websites; research, visit, and hone law school target list.
- Prepare application materials, focusing on resume and personal statement.
- Check-in with your letter of recommendation writers.
- Request a Dean’s Certification from the Office of the Dean of Undergraduate Students.
- Attend an LSAC Law School Forum (Boston or New York are the closest locations to Colgate).

FALL (of application year)
- Attend relevant pre-law workshops.
- Schedule an appointment with the pre-law advisor to discuss your list of schools; your personal statement(s); other important concerns.
- Take October LSAT and/or December LSAT, if necessary.
- Finalize your well-balanced list of law schools. Read application instructions for each school closely (with a particular focus on submission methods and application requirements), and prepare your materials for submission.
- Request a Dean’s Certification from your Administrative Advisor (if not yet requested).
- Complete and submit your applications and all supporting materials by Thanksgiving/Winter Break.

WINTER (after application)
- Check to be sure application file is complete, including letters of recommendation and Dean’s Certification. If you do not receive confirmation of application submission from the law schools, it is your responsibility to follow-up to confirm that your application is complete.
- File your financial aid applications. Research and apply for grants, scholarship and financial aid, both school-related and outside award programs.
- Send an updated transcript with fall semester grades to LSAC or directly to law schools.
- If you re-tested in December and want the law schools to defer reaching a decision about you until they receive your December score, you must inform the schools yourself.

SPRING (after application)
- As soon as you begin to get decisions from schools, decide whether you need to apply to additional schools or investigate optional programs.
- Update law schools you have not yet heard from regarding new evidence to support your application such as honors or awards.
- Schedule an appointment with the pre-law advisor to review multiple offers/scholarships or how to approach being wait-listed.
- When you have chosen your law school, mail in the appropriate deposit and confirmation forms by law school deadline. Then notify all other schools that you are withdrawing your application from their application review process or declining their offer of acceptance.
- Communicate your plans with the pre-law advisor and send thank you correspondence to your recommenders.