Laws are rules enforced by governing authorities to enable people to protect their rights and know their responsibilities. Thus, the rule of law is the foundation of modern society. Much of modern daily life as we know it—from education, to marriage, careers, and retirement—would be impossible without the rule of law. Constitutional democracy means “we the people” ultimately make the laws. The academic study of law teaches not only what the laws are, but how to understand the relations between citizens and their laws. This involves the historical roots from which the Constitution and many laws sprouted— their evolution, their interpretation, and their impact on individuals and society. Such study explores lofty ethical ideals and their pragmatic applications.

THE PROGRAM
To become a lawyer, one must first graduate from college and then go to law school. Law schools agree there is no single undergraduate major that best prepares students for law school. Thus, Gonzaga Pre-Law students major in whatever academic areas interest them. Students preparing for law school should take courses that emphasize critical analysis of difficult reading material, logical thinking, and writing clear, effective prose. These skills are the tools needed to score well on the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) and meet the academic challenges of law school.

Courses in a wide range of majors help students develop such skills. The Pre-Law advisor suggests students choose courses they are interested in and that challenge them. No particular courses are required, but the following may be recommended based on students’ career goals and legal interests:

Business
- BUSN 283-Business Law
- ECON 310-Antitrust Policy and Regulation
- MGMT 415-Employment Law

Classical Civilizations
- LATN 101-102-Elementary Latin I & II
  (the traditional language of the law)

Criminal Justice
- CRIM 101-Introduction to Criminal Justice
- CRIM 390-American Court System
- CRIM 465-Comparative Criminal Justice

History
- HIST 367-Citizenship in the United States

Philosophy
- PHIL 408-Just War Theory
- PHIL 441-Symbolic Logic
- PHIL 451-Political Philosophy
- PHIL 453-International Ethics
- PHIL 470-Philosophy of Law

Political Science
- POLS 303-Constitutional Law: Civil Liberties & Rights
- POLS 318-Administrative Law
- POLS 323-Constitutional Law: Institutional Powers
- POLS 342-Law as Vocation
- POLS 371-International Law

Sociology
- SOCI 351-Criminology
- SOCI 385-Law and Society
- SOCI 351-Criminology
- SOCI 385-Law and Society

SERVICE & EXTRACURRICULARS
Beyond standard academic ability, law schools also seek students whose personal experiences and extra-curricular activities indicate dedication, ambition, and high ethical standards. Therefore, Gonzaga's Pre-Law program offers a variety of special services that are described below.

Internships
Available through the Political Science Department's Public Affairs Internship Program, these unpaid, 15 hours/week openings provide contact and experience with legal operations in local law firms, the Washington State Attorney General's Spokane Office, and various state legislators.

Introduction to Gonzaga Law School Faculty
Regardless of a student’s desire to attend Gonzaga's Law School, it is helpful to speak with law school professors about the realities of the legal profession. The Pre-Law program can introduce students to the Gonzaga Law School's faculty, providing access to their wealth of experience as educators and practicing lawyers. Students also have frequent opportunities to sit in on law school classes.
Workshops, Panels, and Presentations
Each year the Pre-Law advisor coordinates a variety of events such as personal statement writing workshops (a requirement for law school admissions), presentations covering the law school admissions process, and panel discussions on what it is like to be an attorney.

Debate & Mock Trial Teams
In addition to the above services and courses, Gonzaga’s nationally recognized Debate Program is designed and promoted as pre-law training in analytical and critical thinking, argumentation, and legal research. Participating on the award-winning Mock Trial Team offers students experience in trial advocacy, character study, and oratorical skill. Local attorneys often assist students in preparing for regional and national competitions.

LAW SCHOOL ADMISSION
Gonzaga graduates have been admitted to the following law schools in recent years:

- American University Washington College of Law
- Arizona State University
- Boston College Law School
- California Western School of Law
- Chapman University Dale E Fowler School of Law
- Cornell Law School
- Emory University School of Law
- George Washington University Law Center
- Gonzaga University School of Law
- Lewis and Clark Law School
- Loyola University New Orleans College of Law
- New York University of Law
- Notre Dame Law School
- Pepperdine University School of Law
- Santa Clara University School of Law
- Seattle University School of Law
- Stanford University Law School
- Tulane University Law School
- U of MD Francis King Carey School of Law
- University of California at Los Angeles
- University of California Berkeley
- University of California Davis
- University of California Hastings College of Law
- University of Colorado Law School
- University of Denver Sturm College of Law
- University of Idaho College of Law
- University of Illinois College of Law
- University of Nevada Las Vegas
- University of Oregon School of Law
- University of San Diego Law School
- University of San Francisco
- University of Southern California Law School
- University of Utah
- University of Washington School of Law
- University of Wisconsin Law School
- Vanderbilt Law School
- Washington University School of Law
- Willamette University College of Law
- Yale Law School

As this list shows, the quality of Gonzaga's curriculum and students has the respect of law schools across the country. Of course, admission to law school depends on each student’s individual ability and effort.

THE PEOPLE
Dr. Joe Gardner Sabbatical 2018-19, a faculty member in the Political Science department, serves as Gonzaga’s Pre-Law advisor. Dr. Gardner earned his Ph.D. from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and specializes in constitutional law and the courts, American foreign policy, and American politics. He helps students assess their interest in the legal profession and provides advice on curriculum and activities to prepare them for the challenges awaiting them in the legal profession. He may be contacted at gardnerj@gonzaga.edu.

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