Pre-Law

Law students and lawyers come from many undergraduate backgrounds, and the skills necessary to succeed in law school and as an attorney can be developed in a variety of courses across a range of disciplines. As a result, law schools do not treat any specific course or major as a prerequisite for admission. It is not a disadvantage to have majored in engineering, the physical or biological sciences, or the humanities; and it is not an advantage to double major or to accumulate minors in various fields. Similarly, law schools do not look with special favor on applicants who have graduated from a formal "pre-law" program.

Accordingly, Virginia Tech does not offer a formal pre-law major. The university does offer quality education in a large number of fields, as well as counseling about law as a career, how to prepare for law school, and law school admissions.

Because no single major is best suited for studying law, and because law schools accept applicants with a wide variety of undergraduate majors, students thinking about going to law school should take advantage of this freedom and choose a major of personal interest. At the same time, certain kinds of skills are important for studying and practicing law. Students should pursue a course of study that will help them strengthen their skills in reading comprehension, critical thinking and analytical reasoning, and effective oral and written communication.

A variety of courses in English, philosophy, history, the social sciences (economics, political science, psychology, and sociology), communication, business, and other areas may help students to prepare for law school. We encourage pre-law students to get as much information as possible about what career options are available to those with law degrees (to help them to make informed decisions about whether and if so how to pursue a legal career), to choose a major that interests them and in which they will do well, to use this guide to identify appropriate courses for their chosen major/s, and to consult with academic and career advisors who may assist with course selection and career planning.

For additional information on pre-law studies at Virginia Tech, please see the Pre-Law website.