Application Instructions

Instructions: Northwestern Law

To be eligible for admission to the Juris Doctor program at Northwestern Law, you must have a bachelor’s degree from an accredited college or university, or have completed the equivalent of six semesters and expect to graduate during the current academic year.

Typically, the Admissions Committee selects the 240 members of the first-year class from approximately 5,000 applicants. Decisions are based on a number of factors, including academic records, personal essays, recommendation letters, standardized test results, interviews, work experience, extracurricular activities, leadership, and personal circumstances.

Each state has character, fitness, and other qualifications for admission to the bar. Prior to matriculation, all applicants should consult the bar admission authorities in the states in which they intend to practice to determine these requirements. Information about these requirements is available from the American Bar Association.

The AJD Application

A completed application to Northwestern Law consists of:

- The Application for Admission form
- A personal statement (electronically attached to your Application for Admission)
- One letter of recommendation
- LSAT or GMAT results
- The Credential Assembly Service Law School Report, which includes your LSAT results and previous transcripts (sent to us electronically, if you have registered with LSAC)
- A current résumé (electronically attached to your Application for Admission)
- A nonrefundable $75 application fee (payable by credit card electronically, or by check or money order made out to Northwestern University)

Additionally, the Admissions Committee recommends that applicants complete:

- An evaluative interview
- Optional essays (electronically attached to your Application for Admission)

The various parts of the completed application may be sent to the Law School before the Application for Admission itself. Any supplementary materials submitted with the Application for Admission must clearly list your name on each page. Although your Social Security number is requested to assist in the accurate assembly of your file, you are not required to supply that number.

Application Updates

Although the Office of Admissions seeks to keep you informed of the status of your application, it is your responsibility to ensure that all parts of your application are received before the deadline. You can check the status of your application via a website that will be emailed to you after receipt of your application. To receive this email, you must apply with a valid email address. The Admissions Committee does not review incomplete applications.

Applicants will be notified of their decisions electronically. Decisions will not be sent via U.S. mail or provided over the phone.

How to Apply for Admission

We require that all applicants complete their application to Northwestern Law via the LSAC Credential Assembly Service electronic application.

If you have difficulty with the electronic application or lack access to a computer, we can email you a PDF copy of the application or fax you a paper version. Please contact the Office of Admissions at (312) 503-8465 or admissions@law.northwestern.edu.

Personal Statement

The personal statement is your opportunity to introduce yourself to the Admissions Committee and distinguish yourself from other applicants. You may discuss, among other topics, your personal or professional goals, or personal, academic, or career
history. Please do not submit revisions to your personal statement once you have submitted it.

Optional Essays

The optional essays are your opportunity to give the Admissions Committee additional information that you may not be able to incorporate into your personal statement. Topics for the optional essays are located in the Application for Admission.

Letter of Recommendation

One letter of recommendation is required as part of the admissions process. The letter should be completed by someone who can evaluate your professional work-related performance (current or former supervisor, clients or co-worker).

Please note that because only one recommendation is required, your file will become complete once we have received the first letter. The Office of Admissions will not hold your file for pending recommendations.

Credential Assembly Service Law School Report

The Credential Assembly Service (CAS) Law School Report contains a summary of each applicant’s academic work and LSAT results. It also includes copies of college transcripts. You may register with LSAC and the CAS here.

You are encouraged to register in early fall and should ask your college registrars to mail transcripts to LSAC as soon as they become available. Although LSAC attempts to inform each applicant about the receipt of transcripts, you are responsible for following up with LSAC.

If you received your undergraduate degree from an educational institution outside the United States, its territories, and Canada, you are encouraged to register with the CAS and have your transcripts and any other required documentation sent to LSAC for processing. LSAC will then forward your complete CAS report to the Law School. If you choose not to use a CAS report, you must have an official copy of your transcripts, in English (or a certified translation), sent directly to the Office of Admissions.

Standardized Test

When reviewing applicants to the Accelerated JD Program, our Admissions Committee considers test results from either the GMAT or the LSAT. In cases where candidates have taken both examinations, the Admissions Committee will consider both.

LSAT test results are sent directly to the Law School from LSAC. The Law School will accept scores up to 5 years after the test date. The LSAT is offered four times per year: February, June, September/October, and December. Applicants may register for the LSAT through the Law School Admission Council website (LSAC.org). To be sure that your application is completed on time, you should take the LSAT no later than December.

For applicants who elect to take the GMAT, please consult the Graduate Management Admission Council website (www.gmac.org) on submitting your score report to Northwestern University School of Law.

Interviews

The Admissions Committee recommends that all applicants interview on campus, via Skype, or off campus. It is your responsibility to sign up for an interview.

Each evaluative interview is conducted by a member of the admissions staff, a student admissions counselor, or a member of our 800-person alumni interviewing network. Interviews provide the Admissions Committee with additional information about your interpersonal skills, maturity, and motivation. Interviews also provide you with the opportunity to learn more about the Law School. Regardless of with whom you interview (staff, student, or alumnus), the Admissions Committee gives equal weight to all interviews in the review process.

Deadlines

- On-Campus Interviews are offered from September 15 through March 13.
- Skype Interviews are offered from September 15 through December 15.
- Off-Campus Interviews can be requested from September 15 through December 1.

If you are unable to interview during this time frame or apply after these dates, the Admissions Committee may contact you
with further questions about your application.

On-Campus Interviews

On-campus interviews can take place either before or after you submit an Application for Admission. You should self-schedule your interview here. On-campus interviews are conducted at the Law School on weekdays, and are usually 30 minutes long. Interviews occur during normal business hours, and appointment times are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Skype Interviews

Skype interviews can take place either before or after you submit an Application for Admission. You should self-schedule your interview here. Skype interviews are conducted on weekdays, and are usually 30 minutes long. Interviews occur during normal business hours, and appointment times are available on a first-come, first-served basis.

Off-Campus Interviews

To request an off-campus interview, you must first submit your Application for Admission and indicate your desire to have an off-campus interview in the “Interview” section. You can submit your Application for Admission before your CAS report is available in order to request an off-campus interview before the deadline. Off-campus interviews are available in most U.S. metropolitan areas, with a limited number of interviews available at each location.

After you submit your Application for Admission, the Office of Admissions will assign you to an interviewer, and you will receive an email alerting you of your assignment. Please allow approximately three weeks to receive your interviewer’s contact information. We attempt to assign applicants to interviewers within a 75-mile radius of their requested location.

Application Filing Period

Applications for Admission to the AJD program are accepted at the Law School from September 15 to January 15 and are reviewed beginning in late January. The Law School may exclude from consideration any application submitted after January 15 or any application that is incomplete at that date. Applications are considered only for the current year and for full-time registration. There is no evening program or mid-year entry. Applicants should complete the application process as early as possible.

Application Fees and Deposits

The Law School charges the following nonrefundable fees:

Application fee
$75

Deposit (required of all accepted students and applied toward tuition and fees)
$750

Late tuition payment penalty fee
$200

Reapplicants

Although previous applications are kept for two years, the Admissions Committee requires that reapplicants submit a full application, including an updated personal statement, in order to adequately present information that has changed since the original application.

Financial Aid Checklist
To be considered for scholarships and federal and/or private educational loans, you must submit:

- A 2015-16 Free Application for Federal Student Aid, due by February 15
- A 2015-16 Need Access application, available February 15

Northwestern offers a comprehensive financial aid program designed to enable any admitted student to attend the law school, regardless of financial need. To that end, all scholarships are awarded on a combined basis of need and merit.

Applying for financial aid is separate from the admissions process, and financial aid information has no bearing on admissions decisions.