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.

Application Materials

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 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. The letter should be completed by someone who can evaluate your professional performance (e.g., current or former supervisor, client, or co-worker) or your academic performance (e.g., college professor).

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.

LSAT Score

Applicants must take the LSAT. If you take the LSAT more than once, we will use your highest score when evaluating your file.

LSAT test results are sent directly to the Law School from LSAC. The Law School will accept scores up to five years after the test date. The LSAT is offered four times per year, in February, June, September/October, and December. Applicants may register for the LSAT through the LSAC website. To be sure that your application is completed on time, you should take the LSAT no later than December. Although February results are accepted, waiting for these results may delay review of your application.

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 January 16.
- 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 are accepted from September 15 to February 15, and are reviewed on a rolling basis beginning in late November. Applicants should complete the application process as early as possible, as an early application often yields an early decision. If your materials are received by the February 15 deadline, you will be notified of your decision by the end of May.

The Law School may exclude from consideration any application submitted after February 15 or any application that is incomplete on that date. Applications are considered only for the current year and for full-time registration. There is no evening program or mid-year entry.

Early Decision Program

Applicants who have thoroughly researched their law school options and identified Northwestern Law as their first choice law school may wish to apply through the Early Decision program. Applicants admitted through the Early Decision program receive a $50,000 per year scholarship.

Northwestern’s Early Decision program is binding. If admitted through the Early Decision program, you must commit to matriculate at Northwestern Law and submit a non-refundable $750 seat deposit by the date indicated in your admission letter. You must also withdraw all of your applications to other schools and refrain from initiating any new applications. You may not be an Early Decision candidate at more than one law school.

To be considered for the Early Decision program, your application must be complete by December 1, including your Credential Assembly Service Law School Report. Accordingly, it is in your best interest to submit your application by November 15 to make sure all materials are received in time. The last acceptable LSAT score is from the September/October LSAT administration.

An interview is required for all Early Decision candidates. Your interview must be completed by November 15. You are encouraged to sign up for your interview as soon as possible to ensure that there are appointments available.

Finally, you must sign and return the Early Decision Certification (Supplemental Application) directly to the Office of Admissions with your Application for Admission. Your Early Decision Certification will not be transmitted by the Credential Assembly Service.

Early Decision candidates will be notified of their decisions by the end of December.

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.

Foreign-Educated Applicants
Applicants with undergraduate degrees from institutions outside the United States are required to take the LSAT and are encouraged to register for the LSAC Credential Assembly Service (see page 2 for more information). A Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) is not required.

JD-MBA Program
The Law School and Northwestern’s Kellogg School of Management offer a combined JD-MBA program. The joint program enables you to complete both degrees in three years instead of five.

All applicants must submit a single online application, which is available here. Please refer to the application for deadlines.

An evaluative interview must be arranged with a member of Kellogg’s admissions staff or a Kellogg alumni representative. The admissions staffs at Kellogg and the Law School jointly evaluate all applications.

Both degrees are conferred upon completion of 16 managerial courses, including all core courses, and a minimum of 72 semester hours of Law School coursework.

JD-PhD Program
The Law School and Northwestern’s Graduate School offer a combined JD-PhD program. The JD-PhD program allows students to earn a law degree and a doctorate in approximately six years. Applicants can select a doctoral program in any discipline, provided they can incorporate their interest in legal studies with their graduate research, and they can complete a dissertation that integrates both disciplines.

All applicants must submit a single online application and must take both the LSAT and the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or the Graduate Management Admission Test (GMAT), depending on the graduate program. More information about the JD-PhD application is available here.

The primary objective of the JD-PhD program is to produce scholars who have the skills necessary to do basic and applied research in legal systems. Graduates qualify for admission to the bar.

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 March 1
- A 2015-16 Need Access application, available January 1
- The Scholarship and Grant Supplemental Application (available only to admitted students on the Admitted Students Website)

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
Financial Aid for International Students

International students do not need to file a FAFSA, as they are not eligible to receive federal loans. However, they may be eligible for scholarships and private educational loans.

To be considered for scholarships, you must submit:

- A 2015-16 Need Access application, available January 1

To be considered for private educational loans, you must submit:

- A 2015-16 Need Access application, available January 1
- A signed copy of your 2014 foreign tax return or a notarized document verifying your 2014 income

Please include the conversion rate of foreign currency into U.S. dollars. Tax returns in a foreign language must be accompanied by a certified translation.

http://www.tgs.northwestern.edu/admission/index.html.