



PLANC Points

Newsletter of the Pre-Law Advisors National Council
PLANC.org

Spring/Summer 2022

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Regional Pre-Law Advising Associations

- Midwest Association of Pre-Law Advisors ([MAPLA](#))
- Northeast Association of Pre-Law Advisors ([NAPLA](#))
- Pacific Coast Association of Pre-Law Advisors ([PCAPLA](#))
- Southern Association of Pre-Law Advisors ([SAPLA](#))
- Southwest Association of Pre-Law Advisors ([SWAPLA](#))
- Western Association of Pre-Law Advisors ([WAPLA](#))



Chair's Message

Mike Vitlip, J.D., PLANC Chair
Director of Legal and STEM Professions Advising, Office of Student &
Post-Graduate Development, Franklin & Marshall College

Colleagues,

I hope this message finds you all enjoying some well-deserved relaxation during the summer months. The past year has been a busy one, as we all explored what “normal” means in today’s world. While many of us enjoyed a return to campus life and to in-person interactions, many others still found their lives impacted by the pandemic in a variety of unexpected ways. So this summer, I hope that you all get the opportunity to take a few deep breaths and to recharge your batteries in advance of the coming academic year.

We are excited to see the return of some in-person pre-law events over the coming year. The first in-person APLA conference since the start of the pandemic will be taking place this fall (have a great conference MAPLA!) and the LSAC will be hosting in-person Forums again. The PLANC Board is extremely excited that 2024 will see the return of an in-person PLANC conference after an eight-year hiatus! I hope that you will all be able to join us in New Orleans in June 2024 for what is sure to be a great celebration of everything that we have overcome and a great opportunity to plan for those things that are still ahead of us. There is much

work to be done in the legal industry, and the generation of lawyers we are now helping to prepare for the profession will be doing much of the heavy lifting.

In addition to the return of in-person events, there are many other exciting advancements in pre-law services on the horizon. The LSAC has begun to roll out a more robust version of LawHub and to reimagine the ways in which they serve pre-law students. Law School Transparency has joined forces with LSAC to both strengthen their offerings and to help bring about the LSAC’s vision for more comprehensive services. A growing number of law schools have begun accepting the GRE in the admission process. With all of the exciting and upcoming changes in law school admissions, make sure that you are staying up-to-date through the PLANC listserv, which serves as a tremendous resource for both newer and veteran pre-law advisors alike.

Allow me to close by thanking the PLANC Board and the leadership of each of the APLA’s for all of the tremendous work they have done and are doing. I have the honor of seeing how much time and effort these dedicated volunteers put into the work they do, whether pivoting from in-person to

virtual conferences and caravans or creating New Advisor Trainings to ensure that those entering the profession are supported in the work they do. The hard work of the APLA and PLANC leadership has helped to ensure that pre-law advisors across the country are well-supported in their important mission. Thank you for all of your efforts and your unwavering dedication.

I wish all of you a fantastic summer season, and I look forward to seeing you all again soon, at PLANC 2024 in New Orleans if not before!

Sincerely,

Mike

PLANC 2024 Conference is a Geaux!

Message adapted from Kevin Freeman, PLANC 2024 Conference Chair & Rita Ralston, PLANC 2024 Conference Program Chair

**PLANC 2024 is a
geaux!**

June 10-13, 2024
New Orleans

We look forward to seeing everyone in a little less than two years in NOLA, however we appreciate that these continue to be challenging times.

Consider joining the conference planning team! PLANC conferences would not be possible without the volunteer

efforts of so many pre-law advisors and law school admission officers.

Look out for an official call for conference volunteers in the coming days!

Laissez les bons temps rouler!

Professionalism and Pre-Law

Anna R. Marks, Esq., Pre-Law Coordinator Ursinus College, Collegeville, PA

Law school is a professional program meant to prepare students for work as an attorney, providing them with the substantive understanding of our country's legal system as well as the tools necessary in order to have a successful legal career. Students should enter law school ready to take on these challenges and possessing the analytical and writing skills to do so.

Less discussed, yet critically important, is the need for a student to be a professional *upon arrival at law school*. One could view this as ironic- expecting a student already to have obtained the status that the anticipated degree confers. Why expect one to be a professional on day one of professional training?

There are at least three reasons why understanding and appreciating professionalism prior to the start of law school is advantageous.

First, an attempt to develop the hard skills necessary to be a lawyer without having the "soft" skills of interpersonal compassion and emotional intelligence poses a challenge. Professionals communicate well, listen carefully, and respond with caution and respect. Such skills are necessary not only to advance one's career but also to learn

difficult concepts in the classroom and to take advantage of the knowledge of fellow students, both in informal conversation and in study groups. A student will find it more difficult to learn property law without respecting her professor and developing relationships with her classmates in property class. At a minimum, isolated learning is not ideal.

Second, in a world in which competition can be fierce, it helps to have the edge that professionalism provides. Positions are offered not simply to the candidate with the highest grades and the most impressive resume, but often to the candidate who is noted for being positive, responsive, and enthusiastic. We remember those who have a sense of duty and who are respectful—the students who respond politely and timely to email, for example – and often consider these individuals first when an opportunity arises.

Third, it's hard to become a professional when one fails to act like a professional. Showing interest, being attentive, having good manners, and appearing like someone who works in a professional legal setting make it possible, likely even, that a budding lawyer will succeed. On the other hand, a law student who is not reliable and or shows herself to lack discretion will not be a natural fit for work in a legal workplace.

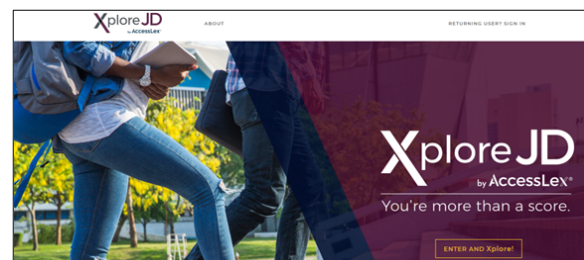
What does this mean for the path to law school? Preparation for law school should of course entail teaching students to write well and to parse complicated arguments. But pre-law should also seek to be professional training unto itself, teaching students workplace etiquette, integrity, and the ability to develop and cultivate relationships. This will allow students to enter law school as professionals on day one.

Answering the WIIFM with XploreJD by AccessLex®

by Teria M. Thornton, J.D., AFC®, CDP®, Pre-Law and Diversity Initiatives Director, AccessLex Center for Education and Financial Capability®

Undoubtedly, you've helped applicants consider their "what's in it for me?" (WIIFM) at some point during their law school journey. While many decisions don't always have clear answers to that question, [XploreJD by AccessLex®](#) is a step in the right direction to finding the right law school.

When an aspiring law student considers their law school options, there is no shortage of information. Whether it's a school's website or advice from friends and family, it can be overwhelming to process and synthesize all the information. XploreJD is a free and user-friendly, one-stop-shop for information about law school selections.



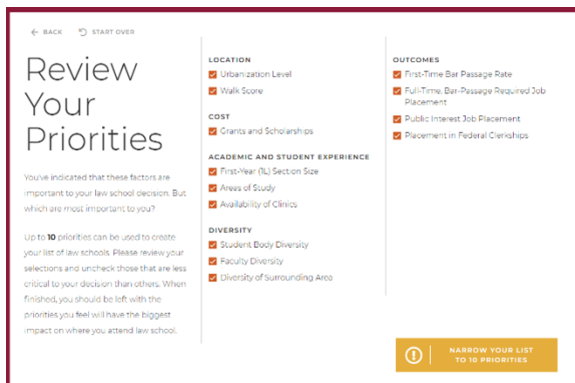
XploreJD offers students a data-based approach to finding law schools that fit within their priorities and values. Users are asked questions about five primary factors in the law school decision-making process – location, cost, academic and student experience, diversity, and outcomes – and then tasked with prioritizing the attributes that will most impact their decision on a

scale from 1 to 10. In the end, they receive a list of potential law schools that fit what they want and need in their law school experience.

While XploreJD has numerous benefits for aspiring law students, it benefits you as an advisor as well. First, the data. XploreJD is built upon publicly available general and school-specific data. Data sources include the American Bar Association (ABA), Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS), and the Wilson-Stern Book of Law School Lists, among others. Information is updated annually to ensure the most current data is available and has recently been updated to reflect the latest employment and bar passage data. And speaking of data, we found that in the first

quarter of 2022, users clicked on information related to location and bar passage rates the most. Knowing this, be sure to bring up location and bar passage rates when having conversations with your future law students!

In addition, XploreJD can be used early in an applicant's law school journey. First- and second-year students can use the tool when they are just beginning to think about law school. It allows them to think about their goals, needs and preferences, and consider key factors like a



school's location and size, its diversity, scholarship opportunities, specialized program opportunities, bar passage rate and

job placement rate. By encouraging your students to use XploreJD, they are primed for an initial conversation with you about what matters to them and their law school options. Encourage your students to use XploreJD and have them attend one of our [Choosing a Law School](#) webinars, where they can walk through the tool step-by-step, or schedule time with one of our Accredited Financial Counselors through [AccessConnex by AccessLexSM](#) so that they can do the same.

XploreJD by AccessLex is a powerful search tool that can help answer the WIIFM for both law school applicants and pre-law advisors. [Check it out today!](#)

LSAC Expands Resources for Students and Pre-law Advisors

Gisele Joachim, Executive Director of Education and Ambassador Programs, Schools & Institutions, Law School Admission Council

With the 2022-23 admission cycle getting underway, LSAC is expanding its programs and resources to support students and pre-law advisors.

The pre-law journey gets more complex and challenging every year, so LSAC recognizes the vital role pre-law advisors play in helping students understand the process, access the right information, and make the decisions that are best for their future.

Here are some of the new and expanded tools, resources, and programs designed to help students and pre-law advisors:

Two new free programs for prospective students

LSAC is offering two online programs to help students make sense of the law school admission process and the world of law school itself.

After its debut last year, LSAC is again hosting Law School Unmasked™, a program designed for students planning to enroll in law school this fall. Running from June 7 through June 23, this popular program combines live, interactive webinars with online modules that you can complete on your own schedule. Law School Unmasked will help you learn how law school differs from other educational experiences. You will also learn how to develop the skills that will help you prepare for academic and

professional success. Learn more about Law School Unmasked at:

www.lsac.org/law-school-unmasked.

New this year is Admission Unmasked™, an invaluable program for those planning to apply to law school in the upcoming cycle — or any time after that. How can you prepare to apply to your dream schools? What is the application process like? What kinds of careers are available to people with a law degree? These and other questions will be answered during this in-depth program, running from June 20 through July 29.

Learn more about Admission Unmasked at:

www.lsac.org/admission-unmasked.

Both programs are **free** to LawHub members, and students can register for either program within their LawHub account. Please encourage your students to sign up.

As you know, LSAC has joined forces with Law School Transparency, and together we

will be providing even more tools, resources, and programming to support students in their pre-law journeys.

New resources for Pre-law Advisors

LSAC understands the critical role pre-law advisors play in guiding students through the law school application and admission process, with limited time, support, and resources. To assist pre-law advisors, we have created three new publications which provide valuable information and step-by-step guidance for students.

- ***LSAT: Proven Track Record brochure*** – this 8-page brochure provides an overview of the LSAT exam structure and question types, how LSAC works to ensure the validity and reliability of the LSAT, and information about support LSAC offers test takers, from accommodations for a wide range of disabilities to online testing assistance.
www.lsac.org/LSAT-proven
- ***Law School Admission brochure*** – this 6-page brochure provides students with a quick summary of some of the most important tools for their application process, including the LSAT, LawHub, Khan Academy, how to apply for an LSAC fee waiver, how to apply to law schools, LSAC's Credential Assembly Service, and more.
www.lsac.org/admission-journey
- ***Law School Admission checklist*** – this 2 page checklist outlines the key actions prospective law school applicants should take each step of the way – 24 months

out, 18 months out, 12 months out, 6 months out, etc. This can be an invaluable guide for applicants, and a great way to keep your students on track.

www.lsac.org/admission-checklist

All three publications are available at www.lsac.org/prelaw/brochures-and-handouts. You can download each PDF to print on-demand or distribute digitally.

Expansion of the LSAC Fee Waiver program

LSAC has expanded its industry-leading fee waiver program to make more people eligible and added a new tier for individuals who don't qualify for the full fee waiver but still need some assistance.

As a result of these changes, 8,471 individuals qualified for Tier 1 fee waivers in the most recent fee waiver cycle, an increase of 52% over the previous cycle. In addition, 1,135 individuals qualified for Tier 2 fee waivers. All told, 9,606 individuals qualified for one of the LSAC fee waiver tiers this past year.

Detailed program descriptions of the two fee waiver tiers and eligibility information is available on the LSAC website at www.lsac.org/lsat/register-lsat/lsat-cas-fees/fee-waivers-lsat-credential-assembly-service-cas.

Please encourage the candidates you work with to apply for LSAC's fee waiver if they believe they meet the eligibility requirements.[MM1]

Free and low-cost LSAT prep resources

The LSAT continues to be the only standardized test designed specifically for law school admission.

Other tests are designed for different purposes and test different skills. ***In the Fall 2021 entering class, more than 98% of all matriculants used the LSAT in their application process.***

LSAC provides a wide array of free and low-cost LSAT test preparation resources, to help ensure that every test taker has access to high quality preparation and can demonstrate their true skills.

LSAC has worked extensively with **Khan Academy**, a leader in world-class online education, to provide free, personalized test prep with the equivalent of nearly 20 full-length LSAT tests. Our free Khan Academy LSAT Prep is now used by more than 60,000 students per month, and surveys show usage is highest among Black/African American and other underrepresented minoritized students, as well as women and economically disadvantaged students.

We are also seeing strong interest in our free and low-cost LSAT prep resources on **LSAC's LawHub**, which has had more than 180,000 free and paid subscribers since launching in March 2020. LSAC also provides a vast array of test prep materials via our extensive library of disclosed tests.

Ensuring access to test preparation is a great step forward in leveling the playing field for everyone who wants to take the LSAT, continuing LSAC's efforts in building the future of justice.

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planc.org/leadership

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