

PRE-LAW HANDBOOK

A Guide for Undergraduate Students
Interested or Enrolled in the Legal Studies Minor



UNIVERSITY of
ROCHESTER



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Acknowledgements

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Susan B. Anthony Center, University of Rochester

For a more accessible version of this handbook, contact the Susan B. Anthony Center at sbac@ur.rochester.edu.

About the Susan B. Anthony Center

The Susan B. Anthony Center works to bring awareness to and advocate for social justice and equality. We work in collaboration with the University community and partner with a wide range of local, national, and international organizations to fulfill our goal of translating research into policy. Visit rochester.edu/sba for more information.



INTRODUCTION

This handbook is designed for undergraduates who are passionate about law and legal studies or who intend to pursue a legal career in their post-college life. While the University of Rochester does not have a pre-law degree, it does offer a legal studies minor. This handbook organizes information about a variety of resources, both on campus and off campus, to support the experience of pre-law students.

PRE-LAW TIMELINE

1st and 2nd Year

- Apply yourself diligently to get good grades to be a competitive law school candidate.
- Join clubs, organizations, and explore internships for exposure to law/legal-related matters.
- Forge deep connections with professors and mentors who will guide you through the process and whom you will call upon to write strong recommendations when needed.

3rd Year

- Start researching possible law schools—remember, you did this for college. Choose reach, applicable, and safety schools. Consider rank, programming, and finances.
- Start studying for LSAT and explore registration dates.
- Consider LSAT prep classes to help you achieve your goal score.
- Create a spreadsheet with the application requirements for each law school.
- Contact the Gwen M. Greene Center for Career Education & Connections or pre-law advisor to guide you through the application process.
- Ensure your résumé/CV is tailored for the law school application process.

4th Year

- Write your personal statement and any other essays. Seek feedback to make them as strong as possible.
- Update your preferred school spreadsheet and add the deadlines for each school.
- Ask professors for recommendation letters and let them know the deadlines well in advance. Ask if the recommenders need any material (e.g., essays, résumés, etc.) to write a strong recommendation letter.
- Request your most recent official transcript ahead of time to submit to LSAC's Credential Assembly Service.
- Submit applications and keep track of the decisions.

LEGAL STUDIES MINOR

The legal studies minor is an interdisciplinary program designed to develop analytical and writing skills, to introduce a scholarly perspective about the law in different societies as it relates to a variety of social phenomena, and to encourage connections between faculty and students interested in law and society.

To Declare, Please Contact

Professor Randall Curren (Philosophy): randall.curren@rochester.edu

Professor Kristin Doughty (Anthropology): kristin.doughty@rochester.edu

Professor Joshua Dubler (Religion and Classics): joshua.dubler@rochester.edu

Professor James Johnson (Political Science): jd.johnson@rochester.edu

PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

Students who plan to declare a minor in Legal Studies must define a coherent program of study in consultation with a Legal Studies minor advisor (listed above). The program requires a minimum of six (6) courses, drawn from the lists below and distributed as follows:

- two courses from the analytical techniques course list
- at least one course from the legal studies list
- at least one course from the cognate course listing
- two additional courses selected from any of the three lists or any other two courses approved by the student's advisor

Independent study is subject to departmental approval.

To see available courses, visit: rochester.edu/college/msc/major-minor/legal-studies.html

Note the Following

A legal studies minor may count as a humanities minor if at least three of its courses are in the humanities (English and philosophy courses, except PHL 110, are humanities courses).

A legal studies minor may count as a social science minor if at least three of its courses are in social science (anthropology, economics, history, political science, and sociology courses are social science courses).

No more than two courses used for the student's major(s) may be used toward the minor.





CLUBS, SOCIETIES, AND RESOURCES FOR LEGAL STUDIES

University Pre-Law Organizations

The following organizations are closely related to the development of legal skills. Students interested in developing their pre-law experience may wish to participate.

All-Campus Judiciary Committee

The All-Campus Judicial Council (ACJC) is the Judicial Branch of the Students' Association Government. ACJC serves both as the highest court of the Students' Association and as a hearing panel, authorized by the university, to address alleged violations of the student conduct standards. Fundamental to each of these roles is the principle that ACJC provides a true jury of one's peers.

- *Contact:* sa_chiefjustice@u.rochester.edu
- *Website:* sa.rochester.edu/sa/acjc/

Mock Trial

University of Rochester Mock Trial (URMT) is a group of University of Rochester undergraduate students who prepare for and participate in intercollegiate Mock Trial competitions throughout the school year on both a regional and national level. In addition, URMT hosts its own annual tournament, the Yellowjacket Invitational, right on Rochester's campus. Throughout the season, students work to foster an introductory education of trial techniques and strategies through teamwork and with the help of an attorney coach.

- *Contact:* ur_mocktrial@rochester.edu
- *Website:* sa.rochester.edu/mocktrial/

Rhetoric and Persuasion Resources

The ability to cogently form and express an opinion is an essential element of both interpreting the law and presenting legal arguments. The following university resources refine oral and written rhetorical skills, including the University of Rochester theater programs, which offer the opportunity to develop public speaking and presentation skills.

Debate Union

The University of Rochester Debate Union was established in 1850. It is an intercollegiate debate team that supports two formats: policy debate and British Parliamentary debate. Members compete at regional, national, and international competitions and participate in the Cross Examination Debate Association, the American Debate Association, and activities sponsored by the World Universities Debating Championship (WUDC). The Debate Union is unique because, unlike many programs across the country, it focuses on continually bringing new students into the activity.

- *Website:* rochester.edu/debate

Toastmasters Club

Toastmasters is a public speaking club that meets at the University of Rochester Medical Center. The group helps individuals refine their speaking, presentation, listening, and leadership skills. The club offers a fun, low-pressure learning experience that uses a proven methodology to improve these skills. All are welcome!

- *Contact:* vpm-3685@toastmastersclubs.org
- *Website:* 3685.toastmastersclubs.org

The Campus Times

The *Campus Times*, the university's official student-produced newspaper, has served the university community since 1873. Students can join the staff at any point during the school year and may contribute as much and as often as they'd like. No prior experience is necessary, and no long-term commitment is required.

- *Contact:* publisher@campustimes.org
- *Website:* campustimes.org

Writing, Speaking, and Argument Program

The Writing, Speaking, and Argument Program, in concert with faculty across the college, builds a strong community of undergraduate and graduate writers, speakers, and researchers. The program leads the effort to familiarize students with key principles and strategies for becoming successful communicators across different modes and contexts. The Writing and Speaking Center is staffed by professional, graduate, and undergraduate writing and speaking tutors from the humanities, social sciences, and natural and applied sciences. These tutors provide individualized feedback and assistance on all types of academic writing and speaking. For example, one of the services offered is the support of writing consultants, graduate students, and professional tutors from a variety of disciplines. Consultants are educated in providing feedback on, and assistance with, all types of writing at any stage of the writing process.

- *Contact: wsap@ur.rochester.edu*
- *Website: writing.rochester.edu/tutoring*

International Theatre Program

The University of Rochester International Theatre Program aims to offer students a comprehensive introduction to the performance aspects and technical demands of theater within a liberal arts educational setting. Directed and designed by professional artists of international standing and reputation, the productions offer student actors rigorous challenges with significant professional support. In addition, smaller productions and workshops offer further opportunities for public performance.

- *Contact: todd.theatre@gmail.com*
- *Website: www.sas.rochester.edu/theatre/*

Off Broadway On Campus

Off Broadway On Campus (OBOC) was formed to provide a venue for University of Rochester students to perform musical theater. The group strives to bring musical theater shows to life in a professional fashion while having fun and exploring individual talent. OBOC stages one entirely student-run musical theater revue per semester and participates in smaller performances throughout the year.

- *Contact: ur.oboc@gmail.com*
- *Website: ccc.rochester.edu/oboc/home/*

Politics and Policy

The law can function as a model for political legislation, a means of fulfilling political intent, and as a corrective measure to political power. Studying and engaging in political practice and policy formation is an important element of pre-law preparation. The following clubs offer a variety of options for political and policy engagement.

Students' Association Government

The Executive branch of the Students' Association Government consists of the student President, Vice-President, and the President's Cabinet, which supports the Executive team. The President's Cabinet includes the Directors of Student Life, Campus Services, Academics, Public Relations, Alumni Relations, and Community Engagement.

- *Website: sa.rochester.edu/sa/*

College Democrats

The University of Rochester College Democrats provides a space to have a level-headed and well-informed conversation about politics. Meetings are designed to be as informative as possible, and all students are encouraged to attend no matter what background knowledge they might have regarding politics and government. College Democrats also frequently hold debates and joint meetings with the College Republicans, focusing on a range of policy issues from health care to gun control.

- *Contact: uofrcollegedems@gmail.com*
- *Website: ccc.rochester.edu/democrats/home/*



College Republicans

The mission of College Republicans is to define and discuss social problems, regulated by evidence and objectivity, recognizing that, in the pursuit of truth, all good-faith parties are allies, political affiliation or party notwithstanding; to provide a setting for educative and productive discussion; to respect the rights of individuals involved in such discussion; to host programs to the campus and greater Rochester community in furtherance of the principles supported by such discussions; and to connect Republicans with political campaigns in accordance with such principles.

- *Website: ccc.rochester.edu/republicans/home/*

Rochester Center for Community Leadership

Committee for Political Engagement

The Committee for Political Engagement (CPE), a Rochester Center for Community Leadership (RCCL) initiative, is a nonpartisan, student-led organization that promotes engagement with domestic and international politics. Throughout the year, CPE provides the university community with opportunities for voter registration, issue education, conferences, and more. In coordinating these efforts, CPE works closely with College Democrats and College Republicans, which are advised by RCCL, as well as other campus organizations.

- *Contact: CPE@rochester.edu*
- *Website: www.rochester.edu/college/rccl/civic-engagement/cpe.html*

Components of Community-Engaged Learning

Like traditional courses, community-engaged learning starts from a place of academic inquiry. Students learn foundational approaches to their area of study and engage in academically rigorous work. Academic material includes items such as course content, academic theories and frameworks, discipline-specific research, and research questions. These can be supported by activities in the community that are relevant to academic material or community-identified needs, interests, and capacities. This innovative learning model not only allows new ways of learning but also can be reflected in the transcripts of the students if requirements are met.

Through pursuing an academic citation in community-engaged scholarship, students passionate about integrated learning and responding to community-identified needs are able to design a course of study and practice that complements the Rochester Curriculum and their chosen areas of study. The citation is designed to contextualize abstract theories, develop critical skills, and challenge assumptions that will prepare them for their future at Rochester and beyond.

- *Contact: lauren.caruso@rochester.edu*
- *Website: www.rochester.edu/college/rccl/*

ON-CAMPUS WORK AND INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Office of Counsel

The Office of Counsel oversees all aspects of the university's legal services. Its primary responsibility is to ensure that the legal rights and opportunities of the university and its employees are protected and that the university's legal obligations are met.

- *Website: www.rochester.edu/counsel*

Gwen M. Greene Center for Career Education and Connections

Career center advisors assist students in achieving their individual career goals and finding work and internship opportunities in the legal field while providing them with the resources and tools they need to develop connections among their aspirations, academic pursuits, and cocurricular experiences.

- *Contact: career.center@rochester.edu*
- *Website: www.rochester.edu/careercenter*

College Center for Advising Services

The College Center for Advising Services can provide advisement to undergraduate students interested in pursuing a legal studies minor or the law in general in a respectful, supportive, and confidential environment, including helping them find accurate academic information, opportunities to make the most of their undergraduate years, and solutions to academic problems.

- *Contact: cascas@ur.rochester.edu*
- *Website: www.rochester.edu/college/ccas*

UR Ventures

The mission of UR Ventures is to develop University of Rochester innovations into valuable products and services to make the world ever better. The group is tasked with protecting, developing, and commercializing the intellectual property that arises from research.

- *Contact: URVenturesinfo@ur.rochester.edu*
- *Website: www.rochester.edu/ventures*

International Services Office

The International Services Office (ISO) assists international students with a variety of needs during their time at the University of Rochester, offering interesting work or internship opportunities for students interested in law. The responsibilities of the ISO staff include issuing immigration documents, advising on relevant immigration matters, meeting US reporting requirements, and offering information on adjusting to life and culture in the US and Rochester.

- *Contact: questions@iso.rochester.edu*
- *Website: www.iso.rochester.edu*

OFF-CAMPUS WORK AND INTERNSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

Internships at the Monroe County Public Defender's Office and District Attorney's Office are open to juniors and seniors. Applicants must have a minimum GPA of 3.0. Students are required to work for 12 hours per week in the Public Defender's or District Attorney's office and to write a substantive research paper (approximately 25 pages). Interns earn four academic credits (one course in political science, PSC 394). Students interested in applying should contact Professor Lynda Powell at lynda.powell@rochester.edu before the start of the semester in which they plan to intern.

Washington Semester Program

The Washington Semester Program (PSC 396) offers internships in Congress; the executive branch; party campaign committees; and lobbying, advocacy, and policy groups. The Department of Political Science partners with The Washington Center in Washington, DC, for support. The center helps students secure a placement, provides housing, and offers other programming. An internship provides students with an opportunity to experientially learn one or more of the following: how government functions; how public policies are created, adopted, and implemented; and how political campaigns work. Contact the Greene Career Center for more information and about how to apply (see page 13).

Education Abroad for Legal Studies

Visit the website for the Center for Education Abroad at rochester.edu/college/abroad/ for more information on specific programs. Internships are available in several European cities, and placements include working at parliamentary offices as well as a variety of organizations.



& Vision Values

Our Vision

The University of Rochester will continue to frame and solve the greatest challenges of the future.

We are a community in which all who work, teach, create, and provide care are welcome and respected, and where all can pursue and achieve their highest objectives for themselves, their community, and the world.

Steeped in Rochester's rich history of social justice and entrepreneurial spirit, we will always be an inclusive, equitable, sustainable, and responsive organization at every level.

Our Values

We will hold ourselves accountable to these values in the design of our programs, the development and delivery of our services, the evaluation of performance, and the ways in which we interact as a community.

- M Meliora
- E Equity
- L Leadership
- I Integrity
- O Openness
- R Respect
- A Accountability