Choosing a Major

So, what is the best major for preparing for law school? There are nearly as many answers as there are people you ask. English, philosophy, economics, political science, accounting and mathematics are among the most common answers you will hear. The diversity of these responses leads to the best answer-no one major best prepares all students for the study of law.

Since there is no set curriculum or major preference for law school, how should you choose a major? Ask yourself the following questions:

- What subjects do I most enjoy studying?
- Are these subjects academically challenging?
- Will they allow me to demonstrate high levels of academic success?
- What would I want to do if I did not attend law school? Graduate school?
- Career?
  - Will the subject/s I enjoy also prepare me for these options?
  - If not, what degree/s would prepare me for my top 2 law school alternatives?
- Do I need specific undergraduate preparation for an area of law that interests me?

For most areas of law practice a Juris Doctor (J.D.), the standard law degree, is the preparation you need. For a few highly specialized legal careers you will need specific undergraduate preparation. Examples: patent law requires an undergraduate background in science or technology; tax law requires an undergraduate background in accounting.

Once you have selected a major that meets your interests and career alternatives, compare requirements to the list of skills you need to succeed in a legal career. Which of these skills are built into the curriculum and which need to be added? Careful selections among general education and elective courses will help develop and refine the language, critical thinking and human relations skills you will need.

Achieving a good balance of activities and experiences while maintaining a strong grade point average in a solid curriculum will provide you an excellent educational base for law school or a variety of other opportunities.