

## PRE-LAW

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According to the American Bar Association “there is no single path that will prepare you for a legal education. Students who are successful in law school, and who become accomplished professionals, come from many walks of life and educational backgrounds.” However, they note that good pre law training includes “A fundamental understanding of political thought and of the contemporary American political system.” For that reason many students major in political science as a preparation for law school. In fact two-thirds of the majors in political science do go onto law school.

Course of Study: Pre-Law: This is NOT a major - students in the pre-law program may choose their own major field of study.

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VALPO PRE-LAW STUDENTS major in everything from History and English to Art, Education, and Computer Science!

Among the most popular majors for Valpo pre-Law students are History and Political Science. They know the rigorous academic training they receive as a Valpo undergraduate will more than prepare them for the challenges of law school and the fulfillment of a career serving justice.

What Is Distinctive About Valpo's Pre-Law Program?

- Valparaiso University School of Law: Valparaiso University's Pre-Law Program is distinct because of students' accessibility to Valpo's School of Law. Students share the benefits of the law community in an enriched environment with the available resources of a highly esteemed law school. The Valpo School of Law was one of the first in the U.S. to require pro-bono work. Through the pro-bono program, both pre-law and law students gain hands-on experience and develop relationships within the community. Pre-law students also have accessibility to the Law School's highly-regarded visiting speakers, such as Supreme Court Justices Sandra Day O'Connor and Antonin Scalia, and Chief Justice William Rehnquist.
- Law Library: Pre-Law students have access to Valparaiso School of Law's law library. Valparaiso's School of Law library is a United States Government Depository containing 283,000 volumes, both on hard copy and on microforms. There are also 1200 periodicals available, as well as numerous electronic resources. The law library is readily accessible, as it is open 111 hours during the week.
- Pre-Law Advisors: Pre-Law advisors at Valpo serve as academic advisors for each pre-law student. Students select the courses in their major or interest

areas. In the average class size of twenty, students receive personal attention from their professors to help prepare them for the law school curriculum.

- Valparaiso University Honor Code: Valpo students get a head start on learning ethical responsibilities, similar to ethics in law, through the Valparaiso University honor code, which develops integrity and personal growth in an academic environment.

*"Numerous political and legal speeches are sponsored by the Political Science department and the law school, offering students contact with actual political and legal issues. Having a law school on campus better prepares pre-law students for the reality of law school and provides resources like visits from Supreme Court judges."*

Megan Moeller VU Class of 2003 Pre-Law/Political Science major  
Dyer, Indiana

### How Will Valpo's Pre-Law Program Help You?

The path to law school begins with your undergraduate major. Valpo's pre-law students can choose any major and receive the stimulating academic training that will help students accomplish their goal of attending law school. A Valpo education develops your analytical skills and enhances your verbal and written communication. These skills will be called upon in your future law school courses. Valparaiso prepares you for this challenge by providing you with a preparatory undergraduate base that will allow you to excel in law school.

Kinds of Work Available to Graduates in this Field: Valpo alumni pursue diverse career paths such as working in large corporate law firms, in general practice, in the FBI, and in accounting firms.

Graduate Schools: Valpo graduates pursue law degrees at Indiana University, other Big Ten universities, DePaul University, Loyola University, Valparaiso University, and many other prestigious schools.

### What Beyond-the-Classroom Opportunities Does Valpo Offer You in Pre-Law?

#### Off-Campus Opportunities:

Study Abroad: Pre-Law students are able to take part in Valpo's study abroad programs in countries such as England, France, Germany, Greece, Spain, Mexico, China, and Japan, as well as semester programs in Chicago, Washington, D.C., and New York. Pre-Law students may be particularly interested in studying in Washington, D.C., or in New York, where the program focuses on the United Nations.

Internships: Internships will vary depending on the choice of major, but students are welcome to pursue internships in their given major if so desired. Valpo's Washington, D.C. semester provides popular internship opportunities.

Extracurricular Activities: Among the more than 100 clubs and organizations at Valpo is the EarthTones, which promotes a variety of environmental activities, including recycling and composting on campus and service to the Northwest Indiana community. Also, the Biology Club is active in stream habitat restoration.

What can you do to prepare?

Though the American Bar Association does not recommend any specific classes for pre-law students, choosing courses that are challenging is a great way to prepare for law school. Courses that stress analytic and problem solving skills, critical reading skills, writing skills, oral communication and listening, general research skills, and organizational/management skills will be among the most valuable in preparing students for law school. Pre-law students should also consider taking a wide range of courses that can further their knowledge in areas such as history (especially American history), political theory and systems, ethical theory, basic knowledge of economics, basic math and financial skills, some knowledge of human behavior and social interaction, and an understanding of cultural diversity and international issues.

#### Selecting a Major:

Choose a major that will be challenging, enjoyable, and will allow you to achieve competitive grades. There is no specific major that law schools prefer according to the American Bar Association, so it is important to consider a course of study that is interesting to you. Choosing a major that you will enjoy studying often leads to better grades and a higher grade point average., which are both important for law school admission.

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#### What Courses Will You Take For Pre-law at Valpo?

The course selection will depend on the major you select.

For detailed course descriptions, see: [Office of the Registrar : Catalogs Online](#)