

## **Pre-Law Plan**

*Representative sample of a real Pre-Law Blueprint deliverable. Client-specific names, local institutions, faculty, and research details are generalized or shown as bracketed placeholders; the structure, reasoning, and depth here are the real thing.*

### **The Big Picture**

Your personal statement will most likely center on your work in your target field: one focus area through your current firm and the second through the internship below. Your background will probably play a part, and possibly your research. We will figure out exactly what goes in when we build it. For now, the point is simple: the work you do over the next year or two is what the essay will be built from, and each item below has its own purpose beyond that too. Each of the four has a detailed companion guide; this memo is the overview.

### **1. Direct-Service Legal Internship**

You have one side of your field covered at your current firm and you have seen the opposing side through your prior placement. This adds direct exposure to the part of the system you have not yet worked from the inside. A part-time internship, ideally for at least a full semester, is the goal. Whether you keep your current role alongside it or adjust, we will figure out based on scheduling.

- Targets: [your county's primary and conflict public defenders], [your region's main civil legal aid organization], and [your district's federal defender]. Any of these accomplishes the goal.
- One of your student organizations already coordinates with the relevant office, so you have a warm introduction available. Use it.
- These offices recruit on semester cycles, so apply two to three months before the semester you want to start.

### **2. CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocate)**

CASA volunteers are trained, sworn in by a judge, and appointed to advocate for a foster child in dependency court. The program runs through the juvenile/family court in your county. The commitment is roughly 8 to 15 hours per month plus a court report about every six months, which fits your schedule.

- You must be 21 to be sworn in, so we time the application (orientation, fingerprinting, interview, five-week training) to land right around your 21st birthday. The Placement and CASA guides have the full pipeline.
- The program asks for a two-year commitment. Whether that carries cleanly into law school depends on where you land: if you stay in the area it's seamless, but if you'd be leaving the state for law school soon after starting, we'll time it so you're not walking away from a case partway through.
- In the meantime, keep your weekly volunteering at your current service placement going.

### **3. Online Community College Courses**

Some community colleges award A+ grades, and LSAC counts an A+ as a 4.33 when it calculates the GPA law schools see. A handful of manageable online courses can raise that GPA without overloading your schedule. These are real graded courses you have to ace, but a light, well-paced load can meaningfully help. Grades only count toward it if earned before your bachelor's degree is conferred,

so the window is now through graduation.

- A handful of A+-awarding schools offer manageable online courses you can take as a non-degree student. The Community College guide has the specifics and, importantly, the verification steps. Policies vary by school and even by professor, so nothing here is automatic.
- Nothing below an A can ever appear on these transcripts; every one goes to LSAC. If a course is going sideways, we drop it before the withdrawal deadline.
- Pick real, substantive courses tied to your interests (subjects connected to your two focus areas, plus foundational social sciences). No blow-off courses, because admissions officers see these transcripts. Manageable, not meaningless.

#### **4. Thesis and/or Independent Research Project**

Research with a professor on how your two focus areas intersect. This can take more than one form, and the forms stack; you can do a thesis and work as a research assistant, for example. It gives you real academic depth on the subject and a recommender who can speak to your mind, not just your work ethic.

- The forms: a departmental honors thesis, an independent study with a professor, and/or a research assistantship on an existing project. Working as an RA on a related project while doing your own thesis or independent study is a great combination if the opportunities line up.
- Keep building the relationship with a professor in your field now: office hours, questions about their work, then the direct ask about supervising your research.
- Publishing or presenting a shorter piece on your theme along the way is a strong milestone; the Thesis and Research guide lays out the venues, from an undergraduate journal to disciplinary journals and conferences.

#### **First Moves**

- Reach out to the direct-service offices about internship openings for the coming semester, starting with your student-organization contacts.
- Research the community college options, verify their A+ policies, enrollment rules, and online offerings, and plan to enroll in your first course next term.
- Start the professor conversations this semester so the research project has a home by next year.