

Community College Courses Guide

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.

Why This Matters

When you apply to law school, LSAC does not use the GPA on your home-school transcript. It recalculates a new GPA (the CAS GPA) that every law school will use to evaluate you and to report their medians for ranking purposes. LSAC uses a 4.33 scale, and A+ grades count as 4.33 instead of 4.0. Every A+ you earn moves you above the 4.0 ceiling that most schools cap at. The catch: many schools, likely including yours, do not award A+ grades. So the only way to get A+ grades into your CAS GPA is to take courses at institutions that do.

LSAC counts every undergraduate course from every institution you attend before your first bachelor's degree is conferred. That includes community college courses. It also means the window closes when you graduate: after that, community college A+ grades no longer help your CAS GPA. Right now, that window is open, and a handful of manageable online A+ courses over the next couple of years can pull your CAS GPA meaningfully above what your home transcript alone would deliver.

The Rules

- **Nothing below an A can ever appear on these transcripts.** Every transcript you generate goes to LSAC and every grade is included. If a course is genuinely heading below an A, a withdrawal before the deadline is the safety valve: a nonpunitive W won't touch your CAS GPA, while a B+ is permanent and would drag it below where you started. Two cautions, though. Confirm any W is nonpunitive: a late or "withdraw-fail" type withdrawal (WF, WU) gets converted to a zero by LSAC. And use this rarely: a transcript dotted with W's is its own red flag to admissions officers even when they don't affect the GPA, because it reads as a pattern of bailing on courses. The real goal is to choose and pace courses carefully enough that you almost never need to drop one.
- **A+ is often instructor discretion.** Even at schools that officially award A+ grades, individual professors decide whether they give them. This is not automatic. Verify before you enroll.
- **Grade forgiveness does not exist at LSAC.** If you retake a course, both grades count. Do not enroll in something to "try it out," because every graded attempt is permanent for CAS purposes.
- **Quarter credits convert.** LSAC multiplies quarter credits by 0.67 to get semester credits, so a quarter-system A+ actually counts for slightly fewer credits than a semester A+, so quarter schools don't give you "more units." What they do give you is more terms per year, meaning more enrollment windows to slot in an A+ course.
- **Pass/Fail doesn't help you.** A passing P/F grade is excluded from your CAS GPA, so it can't lift it, and a failing one (F, No Credit, Unsatisfactory) still converts to a zero and counts against you. Always take these courses for a letter grade so your A+ actually counts.
- **The window closes at graduation.** Once your bachelor's is conferred, these

grades no longer help your CAS GPA. Start now and space courses through your remaining semesters.

Schools Known to Award A+ Grades

The full plan names specific institutions that award A+ grades and have been verified for your use; here they are shown as placeholders. Whatever list you work from, treat every school as a starting point, not a guarantee, and re-verify before you enroll: confirm the school still awards A+, that you can enroll as a non-degree or visiting student, that the course is offered online, and that the specific course and instructor actually give A+ grades. That last one is on you every single time, because A+ is often left to the professor's discretion even where the school allows it.

[A+ school 1]. Quarter-system school with a large online catalog; enroll as a non-matriculated (non-degree) student.

[A+ school 2]. A companion school in the same system as the one above, same quarter calendar and A+ policy; between the two, most terms carry online courses in the social sciences, humanities, and general-education subjects.

[A+ school 3]. Term-based calendar with asynchronous online offerings; confirm how LSAC converts its credits (term or quarter style) before enrolling.

[A+ school 4]. A+ appears in its published grade scale; rolling non-degree enrollment.

[A+ school 5]. Awards A+ (its grade scale lists it), with a large online operation; used successfully in this strategy before.

[A+ school 6]. Reported to award A+ in law-school-admissions circles, but treat it as a lead: confirm the current policy directly, as with any school here.

There are others, and the real plan works from a verified set. If you research on your own, law-school-admissions communities keep recurring threads listing A+ schools; when you find one, run it through the same verification.

Verification Checklist Before Enrolling in a Course

- **School still officially awards A+ grades.** Check the current academic catalog or grading policy page.
- **Non-degree or visiting student enrollment is available.** Most community colleges allow this. Confirm the application steps, deadlines, and any transcript requirements.
- **Course is offered fully online.**
- **Instructor awards A+ grades.** Check RateMyProfessor and student forums for signal, but the most reliable way is to email the instructor directly and ask. Something short like: "Hi Professor X, I'm considering enrolling in your course this term. Could you tell me whether A+ grades are awarded, and if so, roughly what threshold?" Most professors respond honestly.
- **Course is substantive.** See course selection below.

Course Selection

Pick real, substantive courses tied to your interests. No joke or blow-off courses. Admissions officers see these transcripts and can tell the difference between an applicant who used community college courses to deepen their preparation and one who used them to game the GPA. The point is that the courses should be

manageable, not that they should be meaningless.

Best fits are substantive courses tied to your interests and your two focus areas, plus foundational social sciences (sociology, psychology, political science) and anything in ethics or logic. Anything that could plausibly show up in your future thesis or personal statement.

Timing and Pacing

- **Start next term.** The earlier you begin, the more A+ credits accumulate.
- **Take one or two courses per term.** You already have a full academic and professional load. The goal is quality, not quantity. A single A+ in a 3-credit course meaningfully moves your CAS GPA. Overloading and slipping to an A- is a net loss.
- **Space them across your remaining semesters.** You have roughly two years of undergraduate time before graduation. That is enough runway for six to eight substantive A+ courses if you pace it well.
- **It is cleaner to pick one school and stick with it,** but that is a preference, not a requirement. If the course you want is only offered at another A+ school, take it there.

When It's Time to Apply to Law School

You will need to request an official transcript from every school you attended, including every community college, and have it sent directly to LSAC as part of your CAS registration. Start this at least eight weeks before your application deadline. Missing a single transcript will prevent LSAC from completing your CAS report and will delay every application you submit.