Prelaw advisors and prelaw advisor conferences generally do a great job of teaching prelaw advisors how to advise students on how to get into law school. A few years ago, Tom Rozinski began creating prelaw pedagogy panels at the Northeast Association for Prelaw Advisors. Many undergraduate faculty who teach classes to predominantly prelaw students are creating and revising courses to prepare students to gain skills that will enable them to succeed once they are in law school. Essentially, especially for prelaw advisors who are also faculty members, the focus has become shared and transformative: to advise students on how to get into law school but also to prepare students to succeed once they get there.

In my own law-related courses, I have built assignments into classes to aid students in the development of important skills such as reading comprehension, critical thinking, public speaking, developing arguments, and defending arguments regardless of their own personal views on the subject. However, although it occurred to me prelaw advisor conferences spend valuable time devoted to the admissions staffs of law schools discussing the application process, we learn virtually nothing from law school faculty concerning the skills undergraduates need to succeed in law school. To that end, I developed a survey of law school faculty asking them various questions so prelaw advisors and undergraduate faculty can learn from those who teach our students once they get to law school what skills and knowledge are important to obtain at the undergraduate level.

The survey was administered in 2017 to all law school faculty at ABA accredited law schools. After presenting the results of this survey at the Northeast Association for Prelaw Advisors Conference in Boston 2019, several audience members asked for the full data from the

survey as well as the written comments from the law school faculty, which may be more

instructive than the ratings of importance themselves. I include the results in full below.[1]

Survey Results

Question 1: How important are the following for law students' overall success in law school?

	Not Important/ Somewhat Important	Important/ Very Important
Getting A's as an undergraduate	33%	67%
LSAT scores	26%	74%
Extracurricular involvement	74%	26%
Volunteer experience	80%	20%
Professional experience such as an internship related to law	69%	31%

Law Professors' Written Comments

• Doing well in school is always a positive in terms of the likelihood of success in law school,

but I also really encourage students to get some exposure to the law and think carefully about

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[1] The Law Professors' Written Comments are not edited in any way. The responses are exactly what the law professors wrote. Therefore, any typos found within are original.

why law school appeals to them. Do they have a cause they are passionate about? A type of practice they can't wait to begin? How will a law degree help them advance those goals? What can they do in undergrad to get a real sense of what lawyers do in the areas that interest them? This is why I think interships and volunteer experiences and so forth are important - they help you know who you are and what you want to do and why a law degree would be beneficial to you in that work.

• Being an avid reader with a sense of history and good writing.

• writing skills are very important

• LSAT scores predict success; they aren't inherently important to success. Getting As is important only insofar as the student has to struggle for them -- to reach the goal, the student develops good work and study habits. Those are critical. EVEN MORE IMPORTANT are the courses the student takes. Students should be taking courses that challenge and develop their thinking skills -- philosophy and economics are particularly good preparation.

• It is more important for a student to have good study skills and the ability to critically read and evaluate information. This comes from a challenging undergraduate environment. A student does not necessarily need to earn A's as an undergraduate as long as these skills are developed.

• The most important factor is being a self-motivated learner who can treat law school as a full-time job through internal, not external, motivation.

• Steady work habits.

• some of these questions depend on the law school to which the applicant is applying. Some schools are seeking a well-rounded applicant, others are looking merely at the combinatio of LSAT and GPA.

• Among these things, LSAT is the best predictor followed by undergraduate grades. In my experience, however, there are other factors. I list everything else as somewhat important because I have found that well rounded individuals are better able to cope with the stress. So, these things have an indirect influence. Finally, other important factors not on your list,are metacognition skills and the willing to work hard. I have seen students with poor LSAT scores and poor undergrad grade outperform students with higher scores because they are willing to work hard and reflect on their learning.

• Grades and LSAT score will determine if an applicant is admitted. As for success once they are admitted, good study habits and critical thinking skills are more important. I sit on our Admissions Committee, and I will vote to admit a B or even a C in Calculus over an A in Criminal Justice. I look at the courses they took as much as the grades they got. The extra curricular and volunteer experiences can help them to manage their time, but otherwise have no bearing on their success in law school.

• I think that the key to overall success is study habits.

• Much more important than volunteer experience is PAID WORK EXPERIENCE. Students who have not had "non-academic" experiences do so much more poorly than those who have been "out in the world" for some time. No comparison between the 22 year olds and the 24 year olds who have worked somewhere - anywhere. Law school is not for the immature.
We've looked carefully at various predictors for law school success and the best recipe is a good undergraduate GPA in a rigorous program at a good college/university.

• This will vary among schools. Also, LSAT scores are pretty accurate indicators of potential student success.

• reading comprehension ability is very important

• Extracurricular involvement and volunteer experience important only because they show the applicant has initiative and is capable of doing more than just studying.

• getting to know a professor for letters of recommendation.

• Grit, understanding of practice of law, growth mindset, self-directed learning, strong work ethic, positive mindset

• Ability to self motivate and self direct (maturity)

• Personal statement that speaks to either the mission of the law school or a weakness in the applicant's credentials.

• Critical thinking skills and training, understanding the commitments and expectations of professionalism.

• Being able to articulate a sincere interest in studying the law.

• Rigorous curriculum; courses requiring writing; success in endeavor requiring hard work for a distant goal, without guarantees of success, e.g. athletics, performing arts.

• Lots of writing -- and demonstrated work ethic!

• best is a legal mentor

• Performance in a summer/short program designed to approximate the law school experience. (In other words, evaluate actual performance in something like the program.)

• Motivation is really the key to success in law school, as long as the student has some basic level of ability.

• A period of independent living and gainful employment of any sort.

• Professional work experience between undergraduate and law school is very important, regardless of area.

- Diligence, tenacity, focus, organization and categorization skills, ability to appreciate and understand nuanced meanings.

- I'm doing my best, but everything depends on everything else. Getting A's is a great way to get a job, but we all see students who get A's who will really never be lawyers. A variety of skill sets can make for a good lawyer, and someone who might be excellent at one kind of lawyering might be terrible at another.

- Evidence of critical thinking is important. If it's an extracurricular that helps with analytical reading and reasoning, then it is important.

- They will have ample experiences in law school.

- This is an ambiguous question. Undergrad grates and LSAT scores are important for *predicting* success -- but they aren't important preparation. The other three are.

- Critical reading; ability to write well and ability to express yourself verbally

- I assume that success is measured while in law school, rather than employment outcomes.

- Learning time management skills is vital.

- Learning to think and analyze critically, write well, work effectively under pressure

- I answered based on success in law school not getting into law school, where grades and LSATs are super important.

- This a subject currently being debated. Critical thinking skills are most important, I think. Reading and writing skills (may not be reflected in under grad grades), logic and thinking skills

- Breadth of experience is best

- Taking classes with in depth writing opportunities - very important.

- Reading the homework and taking notes is the single most important factor in student success.

- Writing skills

- Articulated and specific reason for wanting to go to law school

- At WMU-Cooley, we've crunched the numbers up and down. And undergrad GPA and LSAT score together are still the best predictor of law-school and bar success.

- Don't pick Poli Sci as a major

- Taking challenging courses and doing reasonably well in t hem if not As.

- Research and writing experience.

- Taking time off after undergraduate school before beginning law school

- Most of these factors are grossly overrated.

- capacity to critically analyze questions

- Students need the ability to think critically. Students with the best critical thinking skills are the ones most likely to succeed.

- The most important predictors of success in law school include a love of the printed word -- meaning a student likes to read and likes to write.

- Exposure to legal processes

- Any practical experience in the real world of work is very helpful. Understanding how to behave in a professional work setting, be on time and responsible, and manage multiple deadlines and varying expectations can help.

- Participation in student/community activities

- time management skills are very important in law school--students who successfully juggled course work and extracurricular/volunteer work while in school seem to do a better job of prioritizing assignments and managing law school course work and other obligations overall.

- Leadership experience (more than merely extra-curricular involvement or volunteerism), did the person take a leadership role?

• I honestly don't know the answers to most of those questions b/c I don't know about the undergraduate records of my students.

• writing experience! many students come to law school with poor writing skills . . .

• Reading, writing, knowledge of history, knowledge of American constitutionalism, formal logic

• time management is the key and students who can do more than just go to school, tend to manage time

• Maturity is crucial: taking a couple of years off between college and law school seems to help a lot.

• having a strong work ethic is most important of all. many of the options listed above are good proxies for working hard.

• Really having had a job! law firms do not want anyone who has only taken interships & fieldtrips. Job does not need to be legal

Question 2: How important are the following for law students' overall success in law school?

	Not Important/ Somewhat Important	Important/ Very Important
Drafting, writing, and editing concisely?	4%	96%
Ability to brief cases	76%	24%
Persuasive/argumentative writing skills	29%	71%
Legal research skills	86%	14%

Understanding how to read judicial decisions	81%	19%
Undergraduate research	47%	53%
Questioning fundamental concepts	5%	95%
Analyzing material from different points of view	4%	96%
Statutory analysis	79%	21%
Critical reading	2%	98%
Problem solving	8%	92%
Reading and comprehension of complex texts with accuracy and insight	3%	97%
Organization and management of information and the ability to draw reasonable inferences from it	4%	96%
Analysis and evaluation of the reasoning and arguments of others	5%	95%
Problem solving skills	9%	91%
Intellectual engagement	3%	97%
Issue spotting	45%	54%
Experience reading cases	88%	12%

Law Professors' Written Comments

• You will be taught how to brief cases in law school, I wouldn't sweat it in undergrad. But learning how to be a concise, persuasive writer, immersing yourself in powerful storytelling, and thinking carefully about how to craft an argument and see an issue from multiple perspectives -- those are essential tools for lawyers. I want to emphasize storytelling again - great lawyers are powerful storytellers, people who can take the facts and weave them into a narrative. Reading literature, poetry, persuasive essays, watching plays and movies -- all those things will help students succeed in the law.

• Knowing the rules of grammar; having a working vocabulary.

• they will learn how to brief in law school

• Briefing cases -- it is important, but I would HATE to have my students learn to brief cases in undergraduate school. I can say with absolute certainty that they will not learn to brief a case the way I think a case should be briefed.

• The quality of writing has greatly decreased, and it is becoming more apparent to employers. Some employers are now requiring remedial grammar courses as part of their hiring process. It's important to have writing experiences where people give critical feedback to the organization of the writing and the critical thinking behind it.

• Basic writing skills are important, and are lacking in incoming law students. If they can write clearly and concisely, we can teach them predictive and persuasive form.

• Strunk and White, Elements of Style

• Are you a member of PLANC? I did talks on this exact topic at MAPLA and NAPLA

• It helps to come in knowing how to brief and draft an argument but it is not essential. A student will learn these skills in law school. If a students comes without any writing skills, then

that is a large deficit that needs to be corrected. BTW, to teach your pre-law students briefing, consider sending them to www.lawnerds.com.

• I drew a distinction between helpful and important here. Obviously, being able to do all of these when they arrive gives them a let up, but we will teach them to brief cases and to write and argue persuasively. The problem we have is that they do not arrive with the skills that allow them to learn those skills. You have left off of your survey one of the biggest deficiencies we see--reading comprehension. Students come into law school completely unprepared to read at the expected level, both as to quantity and as to complexity. In the first year, they read a lot of older cases, particularly older, English cases in my class Property. They don't have the vocabulary skills to understand the cases. They don't have the vocabulary or general life knowledge to put things in context. One of my colleagues and I were discussing this only a couple of days ago. He teaches Civil Procedure and realized this year, after three years of teaching, that when he told his students that a plaintiff needed to have a certain level of minimum "contacts" with another state in order to be able to sue someone in another state, that the students thought he meant that they had to have a certain number of residents from that state listed in the "Contacts" app on their phone. As for writing, they need to come in able to write proper paragraphs with topic sentences, and they need to know how to transition from one paragraph to another. If they can write a coherent, objective, in-depth analysis of a topic, we can treat them to be persuasive. I could go on, but I have already written a short dissertation.

• They should learn briefing and argumentation once they're in law school

• Strong reading skills are also critical

• We will teach them how to brief cases.

• Analytic writing is more important for most first-year law school courses than persuasive/argumentative writing.

• critical thinking and critical writing are the most important

• briefing cases isn't a skill they need before law school. It's easy to learn. Students who cannot adapt to the legal-writing style - persuasive or not - really struggle.

• question misleading; they need "ability" to brioef cases but they need never have briefed a case in their lives

• Understanding how to write clearly is more important than legal writing. Strong expository writing skills are essential. If a student doesn't have strong writing skills, having a positive view, being self-directed, having a strong work-ethic, and learning from criticism can surmount any lack of experience

• Having writing skills period is important.

• We teach law-specific skills in law school. Students don't need to arrive with them.

• Understanding of need for multiple drafts and rewriting

• We will teach case briefing. Clarity of writing is what matters!

• Writing clear, well-organized essays that draw on different sources and use those sources well is crucial.

• Analytical "showcase both sides of the argument and choose a side" writing skills

the more practice in the basic writing skills, the better. The technical skills are helpful if they've had experience doing it, but I wouldn't say it is essential. Just important.

• Grammar & Punctuation, attention to precise meanings of words.

• Strong grammar skills are very important.

• These are important skills, but it's the law school's job to teach them

• Grammar. Attention to detail. Understanding that you are writing for an audience, and it is up to you to ensure your meaning is easy for the reader to comprehend.

• This one is easier. My institution has looked at this hard. The ability to write clearly is perhaps the best indicator of success in law school. Everything else can be taught here. we teach briefing and i would not like to see someone it before law school

• Critical thinking! The ability to read something and discuss it using their own words.

• Strength in basic grammar and writing skills is very important.

• We will teach and train them in law school.

• all of these are actually taught in 1-L; having them ahead would be bonus. Excellent grammar, spelling is better.

• Ability to write long (>10 pages) papers with argument analysis - very important.

• Taking notes on homework is key. Underlining or highlighting is the most foolish task in which a student can engage.

• They need to know how to write generally; we teach the specifics of legal writing.

• A traditional, liberal art education where the student learns to engage in research, analytical writing and critical thinking is essential. Law school will teach the student how to be an attorney; undergraduate education should equip the student with foundational skills that will help them be successful in law school.

• Not only is writing important, but the the TYPE of writing. Flowery, verbose writing experience is actually a detriment.

• Clarity, brevity, accuracy. Writing to explain/demonstrate a thesis. Using supporting statements. Not essays or papers of the "I think this a out that" variety.

• Incoming students simply need to write well so that we can teach them legal writing without having to waste time teaching them remedial writing skills

• Knowing the difference between persuasive and explanatory styles of writing. Organizational skills.

• These Law students need fundamental writing skills. This is, by far, the most important skill they need. Sadly, few have them. Fundamental skills can always be adapted to specific tasks, but focusing on specific tasks instead is a HUGE mistake.

• Strong writing skills are vital. Students who are organized and coherent writers will be in the best position to succeed. Concision is important, but good organization is more important.

• Analytical thinking and strong foundational writing skills (grammar, spelling, punctuation; tone) are even more important than persuasive writing skills

• Clarity of writing; avoiding false complexity and jargon.

• I teach first year research and writing. We can teach all of the above. We see students who cannot put together a grammatically correct sentence and cannot break ideas into paragraphs. Those are the critical skills that are important. Sometimes students who have the other skills fail to appreciate that they may need to re-learn or adjust what they have been taught.

• Students are taught how to brief a case in the first few weeks of law school. Teaching them to write succinctly and how to be persuasive is a much harder task.

• Clear, plain language use with a professional but not overreaching vocabulary

the basics--spelling, grammar, decent vocabulary and precision with language--students who read and write a lot do well in law school

• Law school, especially at the beginning, is far, far more about analysis than about persuasion. Sadly, though, we do not teaching writing well so they benefit from what they bring.

• being a good clear writer with the ability to convey complex information concisely is important. the specifics of legal writing can be learned in law school.

• I do not care that students start law school with legal writing skills

• I say these things are "important" or "very important" because of course they would benefit students have a head start in law school by knowing these things, but honestly legal reseach and analyzing judicial decisions are part of the law school curriculum. Students with those skills will be a step ahead, but it is common for students not to have that exposure prior to law school. I think being curious and intrepid in any kind of research (not just googling issues) is the best preparation for legal success. Curious, thoughtful, persistant, creative people will do best in law school even if they don't have research experience specific to the law.

• Students should be comfortable using a library to look up information and learn about a subject.

• Research skills are important, but they do not have to be law-based. If a student has problem-solving skills and can manage a complex issue, we can teach them how to translate that into the legal resources.

• Again, the first two skills are things they will learn, so they are just ahead of the game if they have some experience in them. That said, most schools assume that you did some sort of reference based research in undergrad. A incoming student should know their way around a library and how to use book-based reference materials. Although everything is electronic, much of the material originated in print and is structured for print. An understanding of how print based reference books works is important.

• Again, we will teach them to be lawyers and to do legal research and read legal opinions. We need them to come in with a solid foundation. Understanding the benefits of researching

what they don't understand when they are reading a case or solving a problem is one of the most important skills they can have. They also need to know the mental process of research, the ability to read what they find, synthesize it, and determine what questions are answered and which questions have been answered by their research.

• They should learn research etc once they're in law school

• Not sure how important the skills are for INCOMING students, because this is something they'll learn first year

• A student can be successful without any prior legal research or judicial decision experience. They will learn legal research skills in law school -- don't have to have them coming in. I'm not sure what "undergraduate research" means here. I'm assuming it means researching something other than law.

• We teach law-specific skills in law school. Students don't need to arrive with them.

• Ability to do intensive and critical reading

• Basic skills are essential -- we teach how to apply to law

• Students absolutely should have been required to define a problem or question and write an original paper discussion the solutions or answers.

• Skills relating to citation and avoiding plagiarism.

• Experience in all of these areas are very useful.

• law school teaches all necessary legal research skills. No need for undergrads to worry about this.

• Again, skills specific to law should not be expected from entering law students; that's the law school's job

• Diligence, tenacity, focus.

- We can teach this stuff.

- we teach legal research and how to read a case. When attempted by others it can be highly detrimental to the student

- Information Literacy

- Legal research and how to read decisions are taught as part of 1-L, good general skills are important

- We teach these skills.

- A traditional, liberal art education where the student learns to engage in research, analytical writing and critical thinking is essential. Law school will teach the student how to be an attorney; undergraduate education should equip the student with foundational skills that will help them be successful in law school.

- Knowing how to use hard copy materials for research, and not being reluctant to do so, instead of being wholly dependent on the Internet

- This is another vastly overrated skill. Despite waht some people might say, finding law these days is really pretty simple.

- Understanding basic ideas of research are important. We will teach you how to research the law, but I want my students to have a fundamental idea of how to research any problem. It will make the transition easier.

- Intellectual curiosity and the ability to research seeking answers OR comprehensive research in a field, which is uncommon in UG research

- I think that undergraduate legal studies courses sometimes create bad habits

- Ability to read critically, and to reason impatially

- Anything helps, but I think we do a better job of teaching research skills.

• the ability to navigate a complex document, identify the important points from among a range of less important ones, and understand the text is what matters.

• We will teach students how to do legal research, but good research habits in general are critical for entering law students. Comfortable using a library. Being savvy about online resources. Understanding attribution.

• Learning actual If a student had to undertake academic research, understand the relative values of multiple sources, and understand that google for all its greatness is not sufficient for any important research.

• but they do need to know about government, importance of rule of law   Many students have never taken a history, poli scior civics course

• Legal research and reading cases is taught in law school.

• We teach the specifics of legal research. It's more important that students know how to begin and follow through on a research projects and what counts as an actual authority in research. We will teach them legal research. They just need to understand basic non-legal research methods.

• Sometimes learning all this in undergraduate is not helpful, if they learn it incorrectly, or it gives students a false sense of security.

• Again, Law Schools need to be teaching these important skills effectively

• courses with heavy work loads, curved grading

• These are incredibly important skills. Lawyers are problem-solvers, or they should be. They need to think critically and creatively. Critical thinking in any area will help students prepare for law school.

• Of course, we teach critical thinking skills in law school; however, students need a foundation coming in.

• ability to communicate one's critical thinking conclusions

• Problem solving is listed twice in these responses

• They will learn statutory analysis in law school -- don't have to know it coming in (and may have to unlearn what they learned in college).

• Less important than the skill and experience is the positive attitude and willingness to learn. ability to appreciate and tolerate ambiguity

• Critical thinking is far and away the most important skill a student needs in law school.

• These skills are absolutely esssenrial; they provide the foundation of legal learning.

• These all hit the mark. The statutory analysis question is the only one that I think we can adequately teach in law school, so it's better if they have the others engrained in them already.

• We can teach this stuff. Students who already have it are at an advantage

• Reading original texts

• THESE are KEY!

• Self-confidence and intellectual curiosity

• Intellectual engagement is key. Much of the rest follows from it.

• I can't stress how important intellectual engagement is to success in law school - it is not a trade school despite lots of bs from practicing lawyers.

• Sense of objectivity and need for accuracy with respect to historical materials. Stay away from teaching law-anything.

- We teach students "how to think like lawyers" relatively well, and those who arrive with a bit of that already under their belt don't really have an advantage. The best students exhibit intellectual curiosity, engagement and an openmindedness to new ways of thinking

- These skills (apart from statutory analysis) are also essential. But they MUST be tied to writing. If a student cannot articulate his/her thoughts in writing, then these skills have not been learned.

- basic critical thinking skills are far more important at the undergraduate tlevel than anything law related

- Critical thinking skills are the most important predictor of law student success. But they shouldn't be taught in a vacuum. They can be taught in connection with almost any discipline and be successful.

- A lively engaged mind is the most important thing to bring to law school. You will be pushed.

- These are the most important skills for success in law school!

- Identifying and avoiding logical fallacies, commitment to the principle of non-contradiction

- One of their biggest challenges is from answering undergraduate knowledge-dumping exams (e.g., "Napoleon: Explain.") to the problem-solving of law school exams. They need to acquire legal knowledge, but it only pays off when they can apply it.

- law is about ideas and their instantiation in policy. the ability to navigate complexity is vital to succeeding in law school. again, the specifics of legal analysis can be taught, but the abilities to analyze and read critically are key to success.

- Thinking skills are more important than specific lawyering skills (statutory analysis) in terms of preparation for law school.

- You've hit it on the head. This is why philosophy and history majors do well in law school ... and criminal justice majors don't.

- teach them how to reason and write, and it will be easier for us to do the rest.

- This is the heart of what successful law students need to succeed in Law School

- Time management skills

Question 3: How important are the following for law students' overall success in law school?

	Not Important/ Somewhat Important	Important/ Very Important
Personal interaction skills	25%	75%
Debate experience	88%	12%
Moot Court experience	94%	6%
Mock Trial experience	95%	5%
Listening skills	4%	96%
Persuasive/argumentative verbal skills	31%	69%
Speaking in class	28%	72%
Acting experience	96%	4%
Serving faithfully the interests of others while also promoting justice	30%	70%
Public service and promotion of justice	38%	62%

Discussions of personal and professional values, ethics, and morals	32%	68%
Extracurricular activities	79%	21%
Volunteer activities	75%	25%
Confidence	30%	70%
Leadership experience	65%	35%
Relationship building and collaboration	32%	68%
Conflict resolution	49%	51%
Building relationships with other students	35%	65%

Law Professors' Written Comments

• I say "important" because this would be a nice jump start, but honestly students without these experiences can still do very well in law school. The skills I have already emphasized - creativity, critical thinking, problem-solving, a sense of purpose, focus, intellectual curiosity, etc -- are the best indicators of success in law school, in my opinion, even if students don't have prior experience reading cases or issue spotting.

• Critical reading is THE most important skill to develop prior to law school.

• Again, we teach these skills in law school. An in-coming student who has these skills is jsut a little ahead of the game.

• We will teach them. It is important for them to be strong readers so that we can teach them. ability to communicate one's critical reading assessments

• More than reciting law, which we can and do teach them, they need to read and understand FACTS. They are profoundly weak in this area, and it hurts them just as profoundly in their understanding, and eventually, in their grades.

• Students can be successful without having ever read a case before law school. It's not the prior experience as much as the reading comprehension that matters.

• They will learn to read cases in law school -- don't have to know how to read them coming in (and may have to unlearn habits they learned in college).

• As noted earlier, the willingness to learn, the grit to persevere and the stamina to work hard and learn from others are paramount.

• Critical reading and comprehension skills are something we feel like we have to teach again because students aren't getting it when they make it to law school. Just because you can read doesn't mean you can read critically and comprehend.

• Critical reading skills at high level. Not of cases but of any difficult text. We will help them transfer that capacity to law

• Read literature and history.

• "Critical reading" and "Comprehension . . . with accuracy" (listed under "Critical Thinking", above) are general reading skills far, far more important than the specific reading skills you list here.

• Reading for comprehension/extraction of central arguments

• we will teach them how to read cases

• It will help them ease into law school to have some previous experience w/legal texts, but it also could backfire if they are taught in ways that conflict w/the approaches of their law profs

• Careful reading for detail, and being able to read large amounts, speedily and retain the key concepts would be better

• We can train for issue spotting and reading cases.   They just need to do a LOT of reading for comprehension.

• Prior BA level exposure to law not terribly important except to indicate an actual interest in law!

• again--that's what we do

• Students don't have to have read cases. I want my 1L students to be able to read dense material and be able to understand and analyze it. It does not have to be case law.

• Read anything and everything you can get your hands on, preferably non-legal matter. Good writers are always drawing on their foundational knowledge of good writing developed by being enthusiastic readers of everything (instruction manuals; graphic novels; high quality newspapers and magazines, you name it).

• this can be learned easily and quickly in law school. it is the ability to analyze and to wade through complexity to find the key underlying concepts that matter most, and then to be able to express those points in writing and orally is what matters for success in law school.

• Many do not know history/political science/civics basics

• More important that they be able to read LOTS of pages of dense material, in any subject. They should be expecting about 60 pages per class for four to five classes every week -- i.e., close to 300 pages a week.

• We will do that here. Basic critical reading is what they need--see question 4!

• Few entering law students know how to read a case as needed for Law School

• Leadership and confidence are great, of course, but people of all types can be successful in the law. Law school can be stressful and demoralizing for many students, so it is good to be in an emotionally grounded place - but that doesn't necessarily mean overall confidence, but rather a sense of self-worth that is connected to deeper things than grades and so forth.

• All of these things help obviously, but are not critical.

• Group leadership

• Building relationships with members of the bench and bar WHILE STILL IN LAW SCHOOL.

• This means joining professional organizations as soon as they start law school.

• As noted earlier, the willingness to learn, the grit to persevere and the stamina to work hard and learn from others are paramount.

• Effective communication skills, particularly professional communication -- highest importance

• The student needs interpersonal skills so they can network with potential employers and find a job.

• But shy students and students with lower social skills do often find ways to excel in law school

• These are all skilss that can be learned adn developed in Law School and practice. The ability to learn (flexibility, openness to new ways of thinking and expression, focus, and curiousity) are necessary coming in.

• Most practicing lawyers get their business frmo referrals from other lawyers, so building those skills is vital.

• Respect for the points of views of others; professionalism in demeanor and civility in the face of conflict

• Empathy. Sense of Humor. Compassion. Ability to accept feedback and criticism gracefully.

• A thick skin.

- Successful students come in many varieties. But it's difficult to succeed without confidence (though over-confidence is also an impediment to success).

- All of these can be helpful, but I wouldn't call them necessary.

- Even the strongest students benefit from more chances to talk through legal issues than the professors provide. So study groups are important.

- If anything incoming law students are too confident.

Question 4: How important are the following for law students' overall success in law school?

	Not Important/Somewhat Important	Important/Very Important
Inductive reasoning	14%	86%
Deductive reasoning	13%	87%
Analogical reasoning	13%	87%
Experience with syllogisms	48%	52%
Learning the fundamentals of legal reasoning	69%	31%
Experience outlining	41%	59%
Time management skills	5%	95%
Study groups	72%	28%
Exam skills	23%	77%
Tutoring	91%	9%

Time and stress management	12%	88%
Exam preparation and performance	23%	77%
Task organization and management skills	12%	88%
Organization and management	17%	83%
Experience with the Socratic Method	76%	24%
Experience with a majority of their semester grade based on one assignment	66%	34%

Law Professors' Written Comments

• While these skills are helpful, if a student has critical thinking skills we can teach the reasoning models.

• We teach all of these things but if they have it coming in, then so much the better.

• We teach the fundamentals of legal reasoning. Students do best when they have experience with deductive and analogical reasoning experience, but that is "legal reasoning."

• They will learn fundamentals of legal reasoning in law school -- don't have to know them coming in.

• As noted earlier, the willingness to learn, the grit to persevere and the stamina to work hard and learn from others are paramount.

• Formal methods of basic propositional and predicate logic

• Legal reasoning IS analogical reasoning.

• This is absolutely vital.

- Eperience is not the important thing; ability to learn and thereby become experienced makes more sense.

- Teach skills, not law-skills.

- same point as before--we devote the first year of law school to this. Students who enter law school already familiar with these skills can be a little less stressed, which is good; on the other hand, a little knowledge is sometimes a dangerous thing, when students assume they know things that they do not.

- We teach most of the skills you have listed here; students are not expected to have them when they arrive at law school.

- Again, it's the fundamentals that are important.

- These are very helpful to law students, and make the transition in to law school easier.

- These skills are helpful, but not essential. They are taught in the foundational courses, so having a base to tie new knowledge to helps.

- Classical logic is a great course for pre-law students!

- This is what we do, and they need to be able to distinguish between when we do it well and when we do it badly.

- I am concerned about who is defining "legal reasoning".

- Not sure I completely understanding the dividing lines/definitions of all these terms

- Test skills and exam prep and things like that can be of use if they are the types of exams that students will see in law school, which are generally quite different from the exams they are used to in college. That's a good experience to have, but far more important to me are the development of the skills of time management, stress management, self-care, etc. Those types of skills will carry students through law school and beyond.

- Not sure what you mean by tutoring

- As noted earlier, the willingness to learn, the grit to persevere and the stamina to work hard and learn from others are paramount.

- Again, "skill," not "experience," is the operative word.

- Organized and consistent evaluative note-taking (too many students don't take notes at all)

- Deemphasize exam skills. They think it is all tricks (as opposed to know the law and how to do legal reasoning) already.

- Far too much is made of the need for "special techniques" to succeed in law school. In my 30+ years of experience of teaching law in 4 different countries, those who are most successful employ none of them, but instead have worked out how to get the best out of themselves.

- Students who don't come in to school with proper study and time-management skills will often struggle.

- Exams in law school cannot be prepared for in undergraduate education. Very different animals.

- They have too much work and so need to be able to prioritize it without freaking out. Better to do half the reading on time than all of it late.

- I don't understand the difference in this survey between "task organization and management skills" and "organization and management."

- being able to successfully manage a large workload is key to both lawschool and the practice of law

- personbal awareness of commitment needed to succeed.

- I feel like many of these choices are duplicative (by the way).

- This might be modern law students' biggest challenge.

- Knowing how to test takes; the "meta" aspect of learning.

Question 5: How important are the following in order for students to feel at ease with the academic experience in law school?

	Not Important/ Somewhat Important	Important/ Very Important
Comfort meeting with professors	40%	60%
Cultures of competition	61%	39%
Experience in a cohort of the same students through many classes	86%	14%
Taking difficult courses from demanding professors	20%	80%
Taking advantage of programs and opportunities	36%	64%
Legal internships	78%	22%
Understanding the legal system	56%	44%
Understanding the civil and criminal justice process	66%	34%
Shadowing practicing attorneys	84%	16%
Networking with attorneys	81%	19%
Knowledge of legal terminology and concepts	78%	22%

Professionalism   27%   73%

Law Professors' Written Comments

• It is really not great that law school classes are often based on a single assignment, and I really hate to suggest that students have more experiences like that - it's just not a great way to learn or be evaluated, in my opinion. But having a class or two with a big final project or presentation can give students a taste of traditional law school classes. Students uncomfortable with this approach (and really, who wouldn't be?) should look carefully at schools that offer a robust array of experientially-focused classes, like clinics, moot court, externships, etc. Those types of courses will not be the socratic, one-grade model of traditional legal education. That is, rather than just asking themselves if they can fit into the mold of traditional legal education, students should consider what schools provide educational models that are best for them.

• Law school is not supposed to be easy. I do not like the trend toward trying to make it like a vacation.

• It really depends on the student's personality whether they feel at ease.

• I don't approve - at all - of the mandatory curve, but it is not going away any time soon. Students would be well served to understand that "just because they study or do their homework" they will not get an A. That seems to be a widespread view, and it is not remotely the law school view.

• "Socratic method" is done differently by different professors, so hard to generalize. Availability of professors and "culture of competition" differ radically at different law schools. As noted earlier, the willingness to learn, the grit to persevere and the stamina to work hard and learn from others are paramount.

- Some of these are helpful but their absence shouldn't make a student feel inadequate

- I think I object to the premise that experience and feeling at ease are necessarily important at all.

- Experience with technology for word processing, online research, efficiency and time saving. Experience taking an all eggs in one basket exam might make them feel more at ease but is indefensible pedagogically. It persists in law schools because we are assigned large classes with no teaching asssistance.

- Comfortable being surrounded by classmates all of whom are equally bright and all of whom have a comparable work ethic.

- The most important factor here is actually just a degree of self-confidence.

- To a greater or lesser extent, these can all be helpful.

- Realistic expectations for grades, employment outcomes, and the profession itself

- Soft socratic teaching is part of the one-L experience; students must be comfortable speaking in class and answering questions which they have not been able to memorize/prepare in advance--to think on their feet

- law school is hard. all the other students will be just as smart and as motivated as you are. being comfortable with the fact that you might not be number one in law school, when you are used to being at the top academically will help. the more you challenge yourself intellectually, the better prepared you will be for law school.

- Legal ed now requirese assessments through out semester NOT one final exam

- One really can't generalize about most of these, but the rigors of law school are a shock for everyone, I suspect.

• the deeper an understanding that students have of the law and what lawyers do, the more likely they are to choose law school for the right reasons and be happy in their careers. Are they passionate about an issue? Volunteer at a legal organization that works on that topic, take the lawyers out to coffee and ask them about their careers, think carefully about what their work looks like. The more students understand about the law and legal careers, they better sense they will have of why they want to practice law in the first place.

• I don't actually understand the question. My answers assume you mean how important is it that students are exposed to the law in these ways before attending law school. My answer to that question is mostly 'not very important.'

• Professionalism is rapidly decreasing, and students do not understand the importance of respecting someone in authority such as a judge, even if they do not agree with the opinion.

• Students need exposure to BUSINESS. Very few lawyers actually go to court or work in criminal law. In 25 years of practice, I never went to court and have never had a criminal case. I am the rule, and not the exception.

• I'm answering on the assumption that you are referring to students once they're already in law school -- I would answer differently if you meant to ask whether they should experience these things prior to starting law school.

• As noted earlier, the willingness to learn, the grit to persevere and the stamina to work hard and learn from others are paramount.

• We teach law-profession skills in law school. Students don't need to come to law school with them.

• I'm not sure what you are after here. If you are asking how important is it for folks to do this stuff before law school, the answer is "not important at all." But it is very important to do this

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stuff in law school. Again, our studies indicate that if we have a student who can read and write well, who is willing to work hard, we can mold that student into a lawyer.

• The best foundation for undergraduate students is learning how to THINK, how to WRITE, and how to REASON. In terms of learning the law, frankly the best students are those who were English, Engineering, Philosophy majors.

• Following a law reform process (e.g., legislative bill drafting, passage of bills, appellate decisionmaking)

• You have to have certain skills and values. You don't need any particular experiences.

• this question assumes that exposure to law is necessary or helpful for an incoming student. Not sure it is. It's value is limited to enabling students to discern if law is right for them and I've checked boxes accordingly

• It is often a negative for students to arrive thinking they know something about the legal system or with prior exposure to practicing lawyers, because they often make inappropriate generalizations from limited information and have to "unlearn" some or much of this material.

• Again, it's the basics that matter.

• We will teach the students about the law with no prior experience necessary. That said, certainly some knowledge is helpful to at least consider what kind of path in the profession a student may want to pursue.

• All these things are taught in law school and not necessary for exposure before if student is good enough.

• Realistic but flexible expectations about the nature of the profession and their place in it

• We take care of that. Better not to be jaded or biased to begin with.

Question 6: How Important is it for law students to have taken classes at the undergraduate level in the following disciplines and/or subjects?

	Not Important/ Somewhat Important	Important/ Very Important
Public policy	74%	26%
Political thought	76%	23%
International issues	81%	18%
American politics	63%	37%
State and local government	68%	32%
Presidential politics and policy	80%	19%
Congress and the legislative process	60%	39%
Interaction of economics and public policy	62%	37%
Studies of diverse cultures	75%	25%
Human behavior and social interaction	74%	26%
Psychology	82%	18%
Sociology	82%	18%
Gender studies courses	86%	14%
Courses that deal with historically underrepresented groups	78%	22%
American history	42%	58%

World History	62%	38%
English	36%	64%
Literature	60%	40%
Public speaking	67%	33%
Understanding philosophical questions of ethics	66%	34%
Understanding philosophical theories of justice	66%	34%
Religion	88%	12%
Logic	46%	54%
Constitutional Law	85%	15%
Communication Law	97%	3%
Business Law	93%	7%
Environmental Law	96%	4%
Criminology	94%	6%
Civil liberties	89%	11%
Civil rights	89%	11%
The Courts	85%	15%
Business	82%	18%
Finance	87%	13%
Macroeconomics	84%	16%
Microeconomics	81%	19%
Precalculus	87%	13%

Physical sciences	89%	11%
Biological sciences	89%	11%

Law Professors' Written Comments

• Students who engage with how our society and government works will be better lawyers and, frankly, better citizens.

• None of this is important, but most/all of it is required in Jr. High, HS, and some college. It makes sense to have an interest in and knowledg of the system of laws in the country if you want to be a laywer.

• There is no prescribed series of undergraduate courses necessary for succesful law studies

• My strongest students tend to have a background in physical sciences or engineering. The content of the undergraduate class does not seem to matter. Rather, it's the rigor.

• My experience is that students can and do learn these things in law school. It's more important to develop basic skills (e.g., reasoning, writing) than substantive knowledge as an undergraduate.

• As noted earlier, the willingness to learn, the grit to persevere and the stamina to work hard and learn from others are paramount.

• This depends on what kind of law they want to practice.

• All of this can be taught, as long as students have a "growth" and flexibility mindset. Foreign LLMs are case in point.

• Too often undergrad courses that teach law or law-like subjects confuse rather than inform about how courts and lawyers approach those matters

• American structure of government (three branches, dual sovereignty, how bill becomes law, etc.) is very important foundation, whether from secondary school or undergrad

• They could be art history students and still do well.

• They just need some understanding of the world around them. Some might need specific classes to get that; others, with different life experiences, might not.

• All of these are helpful, but not necessary.

• No prerequistes for law study officially. Ironically, my best students have been physics and philosophy majors.

• Constitutional law; U.S. History

• I find that students with analytical skills (science majors, for instance) do the best.

• American history

• its all important and it will all help, so long as the course is rigorous and pushes you to think and defend your ideas. but, taking chemistry or literature will help too, so long as the class forces you to think and to defend your ideas with rigor. anything that does not push you to work hard and think critically will not help.

• Don't need all of them, but it's very important to have at least some experience here.

• everyone should take most of courses in the humanities in order to develop critical thinking skills.

• There is no prescribed series of undergraduate courses necessary for succesful law studies

• Empathy and relatability are good lawyering skills, but students can learn that outside of an undergraduate class.

• These topics are less likely to be an overt focus in law school than the topics in item 13, and they're useful background for practicing law.

• As noted earlier, the willingness to learn, the grit to persevere and the stamina to work hard and learn from others are paramount.

• I didn't take any courses like this during undergrad and many of my students haven't either (we get a lot of criminal justice and philosophy backgrounds) and it hasn't affected student outcomes. Rather than focusing on a single (or few) aspects of diversity, such as gender or race, courses which focus on the concept of diversity generally would be of great benefit to undergraduates preparing for law school.

• a student should understand how social scientists define questions and the methodologies that social scientists use to answer those questions.

• I personally think diversity studies are critical but they don't necessarily contribute to law school success that much.

• These are important in helping us change & improve the legal profession -- sadly, not necessarily helpful to succeeding in law school. Family law & crim. defense law attys esp wd benefit from these

• No particular curriculum or courses predict success. Again, it's all about skills and attitudes; everything specific can be learned.

• My answers would be different on many items, all questions but especially this ##14-19, if an answer choice were "helpful" if "not important," rather than "not important at all"

• Oh please.

• I value the perspectives students bring when they have taken classes on gender and race, but often the law and modes of legal reasoning do not accommodate those perspectives and students can find the disconnect uncomfortable.

- They just need some understanding of the world around them. Some might need specific classes to get that; others, with different life experiences, might not.

- all are helpful, but not necessary.

- same point as above. any or all of this will help. nobody has all the background that will matter. any background can be good preparation so long as it is rigorous

- Business and accounting

- Might be useful.

- There is no prescribed series of undergraduate courses necessary for succesful law studies

- What matters is their ability to learn.

- Public speaking skills are useful in law school--good to have them coming in, but also can be developed as a law student.

- As noted earlier, the willingness to learn, the grit to persevere and the stamina to work hard and learn from others are paramount.

- You see the bias of a liberal arts guy in these responses.

- They just need some understanding of the world around them. Some might need specific classes to get that; others, with different life experiences, might not.

- Helpful, but not necessary.

- Constitutional Law; U.S. History (Colonial and Founding era)

- Should take courses in the humanties -- which do not matter

- Students have to be able to write, so humanities courses are important for that skill.

- Political Science, Economics, another Language.

- Most important are classes that cultivate writing skills.

- Philosophy majors do better in law school. The undergrad major that outperforms the other majors in law school is engineering! There is a study out there that confirms this. The engineershave been taught a logic way or reasoning, so they are used ot that type of study. There is no prescribed series of undergraduate courses necessary for succesful law studies

- I have not noticed that philosophy (logic) undergrads do better in law school than others.

- As noted earlier, the willingness to learn, the grit to persevere and the stamina to work hard and learn from others are paramount.

- Logic will help students on the LSAT

- No one should go to law school without having taken at least two philosophy classes.

- Ditto. Really, I don't think it matters what you study as long as you can read and write clearly. They just need some understanding of the world around them. Some might need specific classes to get that; others, with different life experiences, might not.

- helpful, but not necessary

- A philosophy course is good -- I don't think it matters which

- Rigorous thinking matters, pretty much in any field.

- For all these courses, it would be helpful but is not essential to success in law school. Again, students who are engaged in the world around them and seek to understand our society on multiple levels will be the best prepared to practice law in a meaningful way.

- The way these courses are taught at an undergraduate level are completely different from a law school level, so prior experience is really not needed.

- It cannot even be a disadvantage as they often think that they do not have to study in that subject because they already know everything.

- There is no prescribed series of undergraduate courses necessary for succesful law studies

Context and exposure are great, but not necessary to success.

• Students who have not taken these courses can be as successful in law school as students who have taken them. Student who have taken them often have to unlearn or struggle with preconceptions.

• As noted earlier, the willingness to learn, the grit to persevere and the stamina to work hard and learn from others are paramount.

• Undergrad courses are so different from law classes that I don't think they're necessary.

• These can't hurt, but it's more important that they learn to read and write analytically law school will teach all essential legal subjects. There is no need for undergraduates to spend their time studying these subjects.

• these are hard to answer because it depends on what they do in law school -- business law for example is only useful if they go on to study that in law school, etc.

• In general, I find that taking an UG course makes it more difficult for students.

• They will learn the substance of these courses in law school.

• We can teach them the law. Some of our best students come from math, physics, or engineering. they thrive because they have excellent analysis skills.

• Too often undergrad courses that teach law or law-like subjects confuse rather than inform about how courts and lawyers approach those matters

• Undergrad legal studies tend to do more harm than good. They're not rigorous and inspire false confidence.

• Some exposure to these issues sure but courses? Not really.

• Please steer them away from these! They need to use their undergraduate experience to learn how to write and how to think and to develop a base of general knowledge. As I have said repeatedly, they will get plenty of information about the law in law school

• Either no-one should be studying law at undergrad, or law should be an undergrad major (as in most other nations). Half-way houses just create the worst sort of comprised education.

• International Law

• helpful, but not necessary, except in exposing students to the types of law they may be most interested in.

• Take the most demanding courses you can. Push yourself to this standard in science and math as well as in the humanities. Stay out of pre-law classes or pre-law tracks/programs. You will not find the most demanding classes there so you should not be there. If you have not written a great deal in an extracurricular (school newspaper), push yourself to take a course with daily or weekly "responses" to readings due. Learning to write quickly and fluently on demand is not only the secret to law school success it is also the secret to law practice success. If developing these skills does not interest you, re-consider your decision to apply to law school. It is a reading, wrting, and talking job and a reading, writing, and talking curriculum.

• I think it depends on what the student's interests are. Communication law and evnironmental law are not required first year courses so only students who have an interest in pursuing a career in that practice area (and take higher level courses in that area) would really benefit from them. Probably too much emphasis on taking law courses in college. It really is not that helpful. I suspect students demand more of it than they should.

• these classes will help, I find that students who immersed themselves in a subject other than law, and really worked hard at their subject are well-prepared for the rigors of law school. I am

skeptical that undergraduate law courses help as much as a course of study that helps a student understand what it means to be solidly grounded in a subject.

• Any class that makes you excited to understand how the law works and what it can do. general,non focused courses in Political science, history important

• We teach them the law.

• These courses tend to be absolutely worthless, positively counterproductive to future law students.

• Again, some experience here is essential, but need not take all.

• I don't practice or teach business or corporate law so I'm not really well situated to answer this question.

• Basic concepts are helpful here for understanding policy and managing firm finances.

• BUSINESS IS THE RUIN OF THE LEGAL PROFESSION.

• There is no prescribed series of undergraduate courses necessary for succesful law studies

• ACCOUNTING - highly, highly useful for them. They don't even know the word "balance sheet" - which drives so many areas of law. They come in like little, little children. It does not SERVE them well.

• Item 1 is too broad. Basic accounting is extremely valuable; business forms and formation, corporate finance, and employer-employee relations are also valuable.

• As noted earlier, the willingness to learn, the grit to persevere and the stamina to work hard and learn from others are paramount.

• Unless you want to go into that area of law it really isn't needed.

• It is helpful, but not essential, for students to understand "how the world works."

• Econ is helpful but not essential

- It really depends

- Depends on professional focus perhaps. Business classes might be helpful in commercial law, but I had none, and practiced complex commercial litigation for 20 years.

- Unlike law-lite undergrad courses, business fundamentals are a pre-req for law school

- More important if you want to practice in business and corporate law.

- They just need some understanding of the world around them. Some might need specific classes to get that; others, with different life experiences, might not.

- These courses can be helpful in certain practice areas, they are not generally necessary.

- Accounting is quite helpful; the others, mostly so that jargon does not confuse them.

- Business and finance are quite useful to students intending to represent business clients. these are where the jobs are; not civil rights law

- I teach business law courses, and I never took any undergrad business. We'll cover it here!

- I don't know about precalculus, but many areas of the law require engagement with science and math, and lawyers are often horrible at it. Students with a background in science and math will be stronger lawyers.

- Math is more relevant to law than business!

- There is no prescribed series of undergraduate courses necessary for succesful law studies

- Some exceptions: if interested in environmental law or patents.

- Anything to get them past the fear and loathing most law students have for math.

- The reasoning and rigor translate well to legal studies.

- statistics

- As noted earlier, the willingness to learn, the grit to persevere and the stamina to work hard and learn from others are paramount.

- STEM majors w/ decent verbal skills tend to do very well in law school

- If law students were good at math they would have gone to med school.

- So many things can be beneficial to or relate to an area of law that I cannot say students should take a specific thing.

- Any one hard science class is good; need not be all.

- Unless they are interested in a speciality that requires science -- health law, certain forms of intellectual property

- A student needs statistics more than anything.

- Unless they are interested in patents.

- Precalculus isn't enough to understand economics-based arguments, the student ideally should have calculus.

- these days it seems that it's important for everyone to have basic literacy in the sciences

- It would provide them with a solid foundation to know something about math and science - everyone should!

- only patent students

- Unless you want to be a patent lawyer.

- Fundamentals of modern physics, e.g., through quantum theory but geared for the non-scientist, can be a help

- Bio is good if you are an IP person

- For certain legal specialties like patent law, extensive exposure to science or engineering is essential. Any math course will deal rigorous thinking and attention to detail which are good things.

- They just need some understanding of the world around them. Some might need specific classes to get that; others, with different life experiences, might not.

- Some exposure to math & science is helpful but not necessary.

- Science studies important for Intellectual Prop and environmental specializations only. depends on what the student specialises in--if health law, for example, comfort with science is important

- Some math or science is valuable -- does not matter what

- No specific course is important; but science classes seem to help.

- Rigor is good. Students with strong science backgrounds often do well, although the indeterminacy of law often drives them up a wall.

- the rap is that law students are afraid of math, but understanding law, along with math and science gives you a tremendous advantage

- Any science that forces students to think critically and question what is known, how it came to be known, and what is not known.

- get rid of "arithmetic anxiety"

- If someone is interested in patent law, science is more important.

- These classes only become important if the student pursues a legal field where they are relevant (e.g., environmental law)

- If you're interested in IP, maybe, otherwise, NO.

- Probably depends on what students wants out of legal education--if you want to be a patent attorney, this is critical.

Question 7: In your experience, what else is beneficial for undergraduate students to know/learn/ experience before entering law school?

Law Professors' Written Comments

• It is important for undergraduates to have done a lot of reading. Regardless of the subject-matter, reading well-written, properly researched, well-reasoned materials is likely to have a beneficial effect on writing and reasoning ability. The form of the material is not critical, although it is important that students have read their share of full-length books (fiction and non-fiction) and a good daily newspaper (i.e., The New York Times, The Washington Post, or The Wall Street Journal).

• Undergrads should take courses in which they have a sincere & passionate interest & a desire for deep & thorough understanding. I don't think undergraduate teachers should try to teach law. They should teach their own areas of study in profound, demanding & challenging manner.

• Incoming law students are deficient in the foundational skills needed in order to teach at the level law school demands. If students can come in with a strong foundation in writing, reading, and research, law schools are able to start teaching at the law school level. If students are not entering with the strong foundation, law schools are having to start with remedial and basic level courses, which makes for a steep learning curve.

• What life is like for a practicing lawyer. What are the good things and bad things about the job? What kind of law practice do they think they want to do, e.g. litigation? criminal defense/prosecution? transactional? They should have some idea of what being a lawyer is actually like and some reason to think they'd enjoy that type of work.

• The survey is a bit confusing because it would be fantastic for *incoming* law students to have experience reading cases, analyzing statutes, responding to the Socratic method, etc. However, if they already have these skills I don't know how useful law school would be... We are here to teach them to think and reason. I answered "somewhat important" to a lot of things because I would (and do) enjoy having a student with an understanding of economics or political philosophy in class but really any good undergraduate academic training is useful for law school. In my opinion, the skills most necessary to succeed in law school are about work ethic, attention to detail, and being open to learning analytical reasoning (including how to form arguments and counterarguments). It is a lot to ask students to come to law school with many of the substantive and analytical skills described above. I think it is more important to success not to have this preexisting knowledge base but to be willing to put in the work to acquire it. Just my two cents.

• Undergraduates would, in my view, benefit from taking four courses:

1. a general introductory course in philosophy.

2. a course focused on Plato's dialogues.

3. a writing course.

4. a course on African American history or African American intellectual history.

• You have covered everything, but without an agenda. I have an agenda: any class or course of study that helps to develop critical thinking skills. No classes that require mere regurgitation of lessons will help with critical thinking. The steepest learning curve for law students is to deal with the three players in legal analysis: 1. the existing law, BOTH the statute or common law; 2. the common law CASE LAW INTERPRETATION of the existing law; 3. the client's facts. Students who do not understand critical thinking, or who are able to adapt to the concept of the common law SKIP OVER the interpretation of the statute, ordinance, or common law and just

want to apply the standing law to the facts. The concept that the law is malleable is lost on students who are unable to think critically.

• BASIC WRITING SKILLS are VERY IMPORTANT and are SERIOUSLY LACKING in MOST STUDENTS!

• They have to work much harder than they did in undergrad.

• They should expect to spend 10-12 hours studying or in class every day.

• For every class hour, expect to spend at least three hours preparing for that class.

• Brief every class.

• Outline every course.

• See www.lawnerds.com for advice on how to succeed.

• Look at the ABA Section of Legal Education and Admission to the Bar's Statement on Prelegal Educatiom,

• There is a culture of grade inflation throughout the U.S. and internationally. Students who got straight As (or close to it) as undergraduates need to realize that these grades may not (unfortunately) be reflective of their abilities as compared to other students. When you're graded on a curve, which most law schools require, you'll probably NOT get all or even mainly As. There IS a little bit of grade inflation at law schools, as most have a B or B+ curve, such that a"B-" signals unacceptable work, but grade inflation is a serious problem at the undergraduate levels and below; this means that students don't have a realistic ability to assess their own mastery of a subject. Being able to assess how good you are at a subject, metacognition, is as important a skill to acquire in terms of success, and having the right attitude, at law school, as any of the other things we talked about in this survey.

1. Have the ability to manage the emotional roller coaster of the first year.

2. Have the ability to study/focus on written material for extended periods of time.

The key to students doing well is the willingness to work hard and to not give up. The students should understand the growth mind set so that if they do not do well the first semester they continue to work hard. They also need the social skills to be able to network with professors and lawyers.

• Writing. Writing. Writing.

• Working experience, particularly office experience, where one learns the internal cooperation necessary among office personnel and staff. It helps if future lawyers can observe and learn the "rhythm" of law practice--responsibility for meeting deadlines; thorough preparation; handling interruptions to (and cancelling of) personal recreational and vacation expectations; deference to older and more experienced persons whose prior efforts have built the firm and client relations; ability to proofread carefully so weak documents are not filed or sent to clients..

• They should have WORKED. While it is lovely to volunteer in Peru (I am not being glib in the least), it is monumentally important for them to simply work for a living, or a partial living at least, for a year or two.

• Working ANYWHERE, but especially in an office setting is hugely beneficial for them. Many have experienced nothing but school and grades. This will not help them when reading cases and going for job interviews.

• They spend their first year of law school learning about contracts, property and torts. If they have never had a lease with their name on it, the value of a contract (or property rights) doesn't mean much. If they have never been involved with some kind of accident, torts goes right by them.

• By WORKING, they are so much more prepared to appreciate - intellectually - what they are reading. Many come thinking they're going to learn a "thing" called 'law". That is not law school AT ALL. They learn "stories" of things that went wrong between parties. THAT is what most case law (outside of crime) is all about. They have monumentally difficult times trying to grasp it. Many find it disappointing, mundane, boring. YET, this is what lawyers do for a living.

• They should work a year or two before coming to law school. Their analyses (which is what they are graded on) would be so much more mature. There is simply no comparison between the quality of work provided by the students who have worked for a year or two and those who come straight out of law school. So much of law school is about PRACTICAL experience - not some pie in the sky theory.

• Most students are unused to being surrounded by other students who are as smart as or smarter than them and unprepared to learn from their classmates and teach their classmates in and out of the classroom. Many students come to law school with an insufficiently broad undergraduate/pre-law school experience and too little exposure -- from school or otherwise -- to the human experience.

• Students need to come in prepared to be challenged and they should embrace that challenge. It is much harder than they are used to in undergrad and they are frequently surprised. Writing skills and analytical skills are keys to success in law school. It's also important that students really learn about other cultures and that they will work in a global community. Collaboration skills are useful. You've hit time management already, but students who are struggling are frequently struggling because of poor time management skills.

• Understanding that law school is nothing like college. They need to self-assess and know if they are mature enough of the undertaking of law school and its demanding schedule. Many

students are simply not mature enough for law school following college - they believe law school is an extension of college and they end up flunking out.

• The real world. Students who have lived on their own and held a job before coming to law school have a real world context to which to apply the concepts they will learn in law school. They also have a stronger motivation to learn the material for long-range purposes, rather than simply "checking the box" to get another degree.

• the broadest kind of learning opportunities so that the student is exposed to a wide range of skills and thought processes.

• Self-directed learning.

• I appreciate what you are trying to do. But I believe there is a flaw in the wording of your survey. For most of the questions, when you ask how "important" a given background of experience is, my response could be - not important, because law school will fill that gap or give that training. But if you had asked how VALUABLE that background is, I might respond that it IS valuable to give the pre-law student a head start or exposure, even if law school will assume no prior knowledge.

• Students who have taken at least a couple of years in between college and law school to work in the real world--get to know themselves as responsible adults--often do better than students who went directly from high school to college to law school. They can relate abstract legal concepts to real problems more easily, ask more practical and operational questions, and often manage their time and conflicting pressures more effectively.

• I just finished a year at an undergraduate institution teaching in the pre-law program after spending 8 years teaching law. I am a firm believer that if you are going to have something called a "pre-law" program it needs to have a two-part focus: (1) helping students get into law

school; and (2) helping them in the first year of law school. If a pre-law program does not do that, then it is less than useless because it is giving students a useless degree.

• Getting into law school: The LSAT and GPA are by far the most important areas of focus. A student can be the best case briefer and most persuasive arguer, but if they do not have a good LSAT/GPA then none of that matters. These are undergraduate students and they do not understand the importance/difficult of the LSAT. I was shocked how many students said "I'll just take it and see" or "I took it and didn't take it seriously so I'll just retake it." Kaplan says that the average increase for those retaking is 2 points. I believe that because the students anticipate that they will change their study habits but they do not. I don't know if there is any way to negotiate with Kaplan to create a for-credit LSAT class (like law schools are doing with BarBri). This is the first step.

• The undergraduates I taught were also largely first generation college students (and many had family obligations that made complete focus on their classes difficult). Undergraduate pre-law programs also need to have a more structured way to help students put together their application packet. These programs need to be active in providing feedback on personal statements, assisting with letters of recommendation, how to draft a resume. In addition, there needs to be structure in applying to law schools (and visiting if possible). This all needs to be part of a structured class. There is an element of hand-holding here, but if a degree in pre-law is not hand-holding through the process, I don't know what it is for.

• Giving a leg up in the first year. All pre-law programs should include every course offered in the first year curriculum: Torts, Contracts, Civil Procedure, Property, Criminal Law, and Legal Research/Writing. I was shocked in the program that I taught in that these classes were offered -- but for the paralegal degree. I'm not as concerned with students being exposed to the socratic

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method (although I do think that is important), as it is that they are exposed to the concepts and cases that are at the heart of these areas of law. Once again, a pre-law degree that does not give these tangible benefits is useless.

• So these are my thoughts. Sorry to ramble, but I just came out of this and this survey's timing was perfect.

• As noted earlier, the willingness to learn, the grit to persevere and the stamina to work hard and learn from others are paramount.

• Work in a law office or other full-time job.

• Writing, writing, writing. Our students could benefit greatly from increased writing (AND EDITING) at the undegraduate level. By the time they get to us, some can put their thoughts down persuasively on paper, but many cannot and those that cannot are WAY behind their classmates.

• They need to know why they want to come to law school, and what they think a law degree will do for them.

• Learning to write clearly and analyze and explain issues logically.

• Students need to be open to knowledge and new information and not become too fixed on their own personal views and opinions. They need to learn that there are two sides to any issue and their may be merit in both views, such that neither is totally right or totally wrong.

• Math and philosophy majors do well. Students need to have written multiple research papers preferably with feedback and revisions, not just turning in first drafts.

• Students should have an ability to think critically, able to write well, to be articulate and curious. Substantive knowledge of the law is less important, they will get that in law school.

• All that is really important is being very intelligent, having an excellent command of the English language (including the ability to write), having a strong work ethic, and being highly ethical. Everything else can be, and is, taught in law school.

• Oddly enough my experience indicates that the study of music seems to correlate well with success in law school classes, particularly those involving business and finance. The other thing you left out was accounting. I am appalled at how few entering law students have had any exposure to accounting principals or a basic understanding of finance. Don't they realize that nearly everything lawyer do calls on a finance and accounting background.

• Money management skills.

• The ability to read difficult texts is the biggest shortcoming in students that begin law school.

• How to trach yourself to enjoy difficult tasks as well as pleasurable ones. Develop the courage to undertake the seemingly impossible.

• Undergraduates should be broadly educated, especially in thinking/writing skills and in history. They should avoid undergraduate courses in law, which are unnecessary at best and often give them a false sense that they know the subject when they do not.

• As my responses above indicate, my experience based on 30-plus years of teaching is that undergraduate courses and experiences tied into the legal system are not necessary to succeed as a law student. (They may, however, help the student know whether they'd enjoy law school and the practice of law, which is important -- my point is that they are not necessary to succeed in law school). Far more important than law-oriented undergrad courses are taking a wide range of courses in fields to give the multidisciplinary background against which the law can be projected once one becomes a law student/lawyer.

• Critical reasoning. Any undergrad courses that are demanding and require and writing

• It is an an entirely new way to think and write. Those that succeed as 1Ls are willing to give themselves over to learning in a different way. Students will have a hard time if they continue to use in law school use methods that succeeded in undergraduate courses.

• Travel, whether domestic or international; work experience, in any capacity.

• Meditation, mindfulness, other reflective practice can be very helpful

• Questions 1-19 ask about what is "important", but here in question 20 you ask what is "beneficial". There are many items listed in the first 19 questions that I might have marked higher if you had asked if they were "beneficial". To me, "important" indicates a degree of necessity -- one will very likely do worse in law school without that particular quality or experience -- while "beneficial" merely indicates helpfulness -- one might well be able to perform well without that particular quality or experience, but possessing that quality or experience could certainly help.

• Are you looking for a list of factors that an incoming law student cannot do without, or merely a list of factors, any one of which might be unnecessary, but which in the aggregate pack the most helpful punch?

• In any case, the factors I think "beneficial" that I have not marked as "important" above are:

- Realistic cost/benefit analysis of investment in law school

- Experience working/living/speaking with lawyers

- Experience writing in a *variety* of styles (expository, creative, etc.), including the precise objective style used in hard scientific writing

- First-hand exposure to different cultures (travel abroad, moving to rural from urban [or urban from rural] areas, close and substantial cross-cultural relationships, etc.)

- Habits of reading frequently in a wide range of genres (history, literature, biography, opinion, science, etc.)

• The most beneficial experience a student can have before law school is a significant professional and/or personal experience where they actually have identified why they want to be a lawyer. "I've always wanted to be a lawyer" or "I didn't have anything else to do" aren't good enough reasons. A student needs to have really experienced a professional world - the legal world is helpful, but not essential - and see what the work of professionals looks like, and how they're going to have to adapt and change to be successful in that world.

• Analytical reading and writing are more important than anything else. Thus, the best preparation for law school are majors that require a lot of both: History and English literature being two good examples. I would also suggest that law school applicants not go directly from their undergraduate program to law school. They should work in a legal environment to help discover if they are interested in the practice of law.

• Make a mature decision about studying law. TAKE TIME OFF BEFORE GOING TO LAW SCHOOL!! Work for a few years so that your decision is thoughtful and careful, and you have some idea of what you want to do with a career in law.

• It is possible for a student to graduate from any major university in the U.S. (as opposed to small liberal arts college) with decent grades but without ever being required to think hard. Students who graduate from college having taken courses in which information is received and given back, whether in multiple choice exams, essays, or papers, have not been prepared for law school. That is why courses in philosophy are particularly useful. It is almost impossible to take three courses in philosophy without being forced to think hard. Really grasping the differences between Socrates and Aristotle or Kant, or between John Rawls and Frederick Hayek requires

students to think hard. That's what we require in law school-- thinking hard to answer a question for which there is no easy answer anywhere in any of the texts.

• Undergraduate major really doesn't matter. Ability to analyze material, read and comprehend what you read, good writing skills and study skills (including time management) are perhaps the most important.

• ANY courses that train them in critical thinking and clear, cogent writing would be beneficial

• It's best to know some lawyers and how they think/live/practice, as well as have a background in subjects that frequently come up in law school, such as the U.S. Constitution. • Having developed notions of justice and ethics provides a moral compass and hopefully leads to success in life, but unfortunately, not always in law school, so there's a little ambiguity here.

• demanding courses from demanding faculty; lots of practice writing and editing papers are the top priorities.

• I do not think undergraduate institutions should attempt to mimic law school curriculum, as many of your questions appear to point to. That is a waste, and may be counter-productive to law school experience.

• Focused exploration of issues and topics. Ability to be organized and use time effectively. • No particular subject matter knowledge is required. What's required is the ability to succeed when focusing time and energy on a particular set of studies, and the ability to think and write effectively, no matter on what particular subject.

• Figuring out whether she needs a law degree or can get the job of her dreams without it, whether she can handle the debt, and the outsize influence it is likely to have on her job choices at the end.

• I haven't been teaching all that long (seven years). Incoming law students are less intellectually curious and far lazier than they were when I started.

• They should be ready to work, to work hard, to read a lot, to manage their time effectively, and to teach themselves part of the material--that is what the competitive aspects of law school are meant to inculcate. Far fewer of them are ready to do this than in the past. I always ask students to tell me about their academic interests, any significant writing or research that they've done prior to law school. Far fewer of them can do so now than when I started, because they haven't taken anything very seriously up until this point. It doesn't matter a bit what they've studied up until they start--most people who have studied some pre-law course of study or taken political science or philosophy to prepare for law school haven't really prepared any more rigorously than people studying engineering or art history or a zillion other things. In fact they're often less prepared, because they think they know more procedurally and substantively about what law school is going to be like.

• The only thing every law student should take prior to law school is a typing class (assuming they are physically able to type). But whatever else they take or study, they should work harder at it.

• A fair portion of what you have listed is best done in law school on a relatively clean slate. All courses that require coherent thinking about abstract concepts are useful. Unfortunately, students smart enough for law school increasingly have no experience with the kind of disciplined study required there. Except those who have had serious courses in science, engineering, or programming, most beginning law students are used to an easy pre-exam sprint/cram and don't start out putting in the weekly work necessary to internalize concepts well. Catching up us stressful and some students don't get it until after the first semester.

• 1. Strongly consider majoring in math, computer science, engineering, economics, or philosophy. Too many students come in with insufficient logical reasoning and problem-solving skills. Also, a science undergraduate gives the student the option of a career in intellectual property law. Please stop sending us criminal justice, political science, and english majors!

2. Encourage students to work for at least a year, if not more, in a professional job between undergraduate and law school. Students need skills learned in a professional work environment. Also, law school isn't the place for unemployed liberal arts majors.

3. Students need to take demanding coursework as undergraduates.

4. Students who aren't comfortable public speakers should join Toastmasters.

5. Law school makes mental illness worse. The time to deal with unresolved depression, anxiety, or the like is undergraduate. Law school makes things worse and lawyers have one of the highest rates of depression of any profession.

6. Students interested in combining science with a legal career should early on consult the Patent & Trademark Office's guidelines to learn who is eligible to sit for the patent bar. Too often I get students who are just a few credits short of meeting the requirement.

• If there is anything I would add, it is skill with a foreign language. I majored in classical Greek and Latin and found that dual major extremely beneficial in law school. The process of learning those languages instilled discipline; the sources examined (Plato, Thucydides, Cicero, et al.,) were a great introduction to human life; and the study of vocabulary and grammar greatly improved my writing. I favor students who have had some critical exposure to another language, and that often comes from a study of classical languages. (And if not classics, there are other languages, from German to Mandarin, that would have the same impact).

• Writing critical thinking papers.

• I didn't have time to complete survey. But my basic point that undergrads don't need a lot of background to succeed in law school because law school teaches most of the skills needed to succeed in law school. If you are smart and hard-working you will succeed. Experience in reading cases, mock trial, etc. is not necessary. The best preparation of law school is simply a challenging undergrad experience that pushes students to develop their thinking capabilities. Everything else is gravy.

• Taking advantage of support is important for students of color, women, queer students, and other who might feel alienated within typical law school culture (some schools are better than others). Once students have had a month or two of law school classes, it can help to get tutoring in law school exam-taking (whether through a fee-paid service like they did for LSAT prep, or maybe something their own school provides). It's a very specific skill that is rarely taught in law schools. Also important for students to know that the ups and downs of first year have very little to do with their long-term success; it's important not to get sucked into stress or pressure. And for long-term job success, summer internships, or previous work as a paralegal, or volunteer work at law-oriented nonprofits, can be useful.

• Read, read, read. Most incoming law students, even at elite schools, have weak reading skills and hence weak writing skills. Legal literacy, which is necessary for success in law school, is harder to acquire if you do not have deep general literacy to begin with.

• Knowing grammar and punctuation.

• I think that students succeed best when they've had a few years of experience between college and law school. It doesn't matter too much what they have done, but the additional maturity is very helpful

• Students need more help at matching their needs with what law schools have to offer. My law school specializes in making lawyers out of lower tier students, and we are very good at what we do. Many of our students would fail abysmally at another school, but go on to be successful lawyers because we know what they need.

• A higher profile student might be better served by another school.

• The focus I see at the undergrad level is on getting in to the highest ranked (US News) school possible, but those rankings are based almost entirely on the qualities of incoming student profiles. Outcomes can be more important for marginal students.

1) Relationships between societal institutions.

2) Proof, how to prove, evidence.

• Watch a mock class. Attend a law school class.

• As a undergraduate a student should choose classes for only one of two reasons: (1)the teacher; (2) interest in the subject matter. They will be better law student and lawyers if they pay no attention to the goal of going to law school.

• Some of our best student were art majors or philosophy majors who took nothing in undergraduate school to prepare them for law school. Undergraduate school should prepare own for life, not law school.

• Students are woefully underprepared to write, critically analyze arguments, synthesize data from a wide variety of sources, and they tend to be self unaware, especially in the context of receiving constructive feedback about poor performance and standard expectations. It would be beneficial to acquire a basic set of writing, critical thinking, synthesis, and self-evaluation tools before arriving at law school. The topic might be different, but students can quickly catch on to the substance if they have the skills for performing the tasks demanded of them in law school.

• Students need to spend time reading complex original texts and garnering information from them. Taking classes that only use text books and spoon feed information is not solid preparation for law school and makes the first semester much harder. Researching and writing complex analytic papers in the humanities classes is also very helpful.

• In my experience I would recommend English as a major. Both writing and literature courses give undergraduate students experience in thinking logically and critically as well as organizing thoughts.

• As a gross generalization I find philosophy students and math students often have some difficulty adjusting at the outset. They don't feel comfortable with gray areas. Math students like 2+2 to equal 4 all the time. Philosophy students are comfortable with ambiguity but get nervous at the point where a decision must be made.

• Folks with total science or business backgrounds and no humanities at all often have difficulty with writing assignments.   I think they have no experience with the type of writing law school offers.

• I tend to think that there is no one class that students MUST take before LS. There are areas where science is emphasized (e.g., patent, product liability) or personal relationships are emphasized (e.g., family or employment) or where damages/finance matters (e.g., contracts or commercial transactions). BUT, in my opinion, no student MUST have a certain class or background to succeed in LS. And telling students that they must take X class or Y class is deceptive because no class prepares you for LS. My one exception is that I do think a strong sense of grammar can help.

• Aside from that, the most important criteria for LS are based on attitudes. A curious, challenging mind. A willingness to explore. A desire to SERVE. And the like. If there are

classes, extracurriculars, etc. that demonstrate such characteristics for that individual, then those are important.

• The best preparation for law school is not majoring in these so-called legal studies, etc. programs. Rather, the best preparation for students wanting to pursue law school is teaching them how to think and how to write with majors such as the English, Literature, arts and humanities, sciences, math, engineering, philosophy, etc. An undergraduate program should prepare and expose students to learning how to think critically, how to write well, how to think about ethics and morality, and how to consider different disciplines, cultures, and areas of thought. The law school curriculum will teach them the rest in terms of thinking like lawyers and preparing for the legal profession.

• I truly hope this is helpful to you and, as a law professor, I appreciate that you are carefully considering how best to educate and to prepare your undergraduate students for succeeding at professional and post-graduate work.

• Law school students fresh from undergraduate studies generally suffer from one overriding deficiency which impacts their law school experience and that is, no real concept of how the "real world" actually works. Not sure what colleges or universities can do about this other than stop coddling undergraduates and encourage them to take business courses and other more traditional courses which take them outside their comfort zone. Come to think of it, poor writing skills ranks as the number 2 deficiency. This can be fixed more easily I would think.

• Taking law-related classes as an undergraduate may be useful for determining interest in law student, but is not particularly valuable as strategy for preparing for law school. Indeed, I even worry that classes on "constitutional law" or "justice" may actually be counterproductive on this score. Law school is simply a different beast than undergraduate education.

• Further, watching movies or reading books like The Paper Chase will be affirmatively misleading. Introductory-level academic work like Llewellyn's The Bramble Bush or popular press accounts of legal work such as Stern's The Buffalo Creek Disaster, however, may be useful.

• In terms of preparation more generally, what matters is strong grounding in a liberal arts education, ideally with persuasive writing skills and a willingness to explore and argue both sides of an issue, no matter how uncomfortable. Some background in the "hard" sciences or economics/political science is sometimes nice but not necessary. Also, "real world" experience often helps develop work ethic, professionalism, and interpersonal skills that are valuable in law school.

• Each student must have an experience in which they have had a write a longer piece which is heavily edited and then they have to rewrite the same piece, which is edited again. All lawyers are edited. I sometimes am frustrated in that students will say they have written a great deal, but their mechanics are weak, their focus is hazy, and their attention to detail is sorely lacking. Attention to detail and time management might be two of the more crucial skills students can garner.

• -Using technology to one's business advantage and not merely for entertainment.

-Building a simple website using Wordpress

-Foreign language should be included as part of possible diversity exposure.

• I think many law professors absolutely don't want students learning in undergrad what is thought of as "law." We end up having to unteach what has been taught. Political systems are helpful.

• Local history is important in terms of appreciating diversity as well.

• Intellectual curiosity along with a willingness to learn and work hard, while making law school an experience that is as enjoyable as possible.

• Networking

• Building their personal and professional brand

• Submitting work product on time - if lawyers don't they have to petition the court - or suffer consequences

• Integrity - example - if a student takes an officer position in a student group they must execute their duties

Fortitutde - law school is not charm school - they have to be ready to deal with tough issues and conflict

Maturity - law school is a doctoral program - it is A LOT of work - stop whining about it

• Being open, thinking people

• I'm not sure any of what you listed is essential or necessary, so I'm not sure how to weigh "important." I answered based on a "valuable to have" standard. I think the more experience a person has the better he or she is likely to be.

• The most important thing is the ability to think critically, including self-analysis of one's learning style and comprehension (or non-comprehension) of material. Humility is important, as well (though I'm not sure how that would be taught), because the student will enter an environment where they're probably not the smartest room any more, and where they will have to be able to be comfortable with asking for help and/or admitting that they don't know they answer.

• Hope this helps - i'm of the school of thought that there is no required set of courses one needs to take before entering law school to be successful. A class mate of mine is now a very successful (and rich) lawyer, and she majored in dance . . .

• Experience with people unlike themselves, engagement with national and world news and policy issues.

• Incoming law students must understand that what worked for them in college may not work for them in law school. Incoming law students must be willing to change their study habits once they arrive at Law School due to the sheer volume of work.

• Incoming law students must be willing to change their outlook on education, especially if they are coming from non rigorous undergraduate institutions. Students must be willing to put down their video games and pick up a book. A real book, and read it all the way through. Students arriving at Law School must already know how to take notes with pen and paper and not to rely upon their laptops in class.

• Healthy living (diet, exercise, sleep) and independent living

• Avoidance of substance abuse and excessive alcohol use

• Familiarity with spending long hours at work (e.g., serious law students tend to have only one day weekends)

• Take intellectually demanding courses in which the student must learn multiple sets of rules and then is presented with the facts of a problem and must discern which set, among the multiple sets, applies to that particular situation, and then apply the relevant set to reach the appropriate result.

• That can occur in STEM courses, in economics, in business, finance, and accounting, and some of the liberal arts. Be wary of a steady diet of liberal arts courses in which students need

only defend their opinions. In law, a lawyer's own opinion counts for little, until she is appointed to a state or US supreme court, which happens for an infinitesimal small percentage of lawyers.

• Broad-based liberal education in the classic sense; developing ability to step outside of preferred or comfort modes and take calculated risks.

• ANY demanding class with a lot of reading and writing. No particular course is that valuable, and some undergraduate classes have to be retaught in law school. Some might be important for a career as an intellectual property or tax or business lawyer but not for a general practitioner. Some are potential useful but not at all necessary or imporant, just helpful.

• In addition to the ability to read long, complex material and absorb it, it is important for students to be able to read arguments and critique them in their writing. Students need to be able to make a persuasive argument in their writing by researching sometimes competing claims or views and synthesize them in a manner that allows the reader to be convinced of their conclusions.

• Undergraduates need to spend their time becoming adept at undergraduate studies. How to read a case is what they learn in law school. Learning how to read carefully and well is what an undergraduate should be doing, not law school lite.

• Confidence that you understand what it means to practice law and you have talked to lawyers about their daily work life.

• Writing and critical thinking, period.

• They should understand that modern lawyers do much less full- blown trial work and much more negotiation, drafting, mediation, advising, and transactional work.

• TAKING THE INITIATIVE FOR ONE'S OWN EDUCATION-- Understanding that law school/professional school is about _teaching oneself_. The professor is a guide, but students who expect to be spoonfed what will be on the exam will be sorely disappointed.

• Motivation to be a lawyer or to know you want the JD training to do something else.

• Discipline.

• For most students they will encounter intensive study that they have never been required to do before.

• For most students they will encounter a quality of classmates they cannot imagine exists.

• Law students need to be able to:

1. think logically and critically;

2. organize information logically;

3. read carefully;

4. write coherently and grammatically;

5. speak publically;

6. make decisions; and

7. solve problems.

• Any kind of challenging school or work experience that requires significant amounts of analytical thinking and writing. Students who major in science or business need to have a grounding in historical analysis and an ability to write. Students who major in the humanities need to have some grounding in logic and economics.

• We want students who are relatively articulate, intellectually engaged, open-minded, and there for the right reasons (wrong reasons include: my friends went to law school; I want to make lots of money; I don't know what else to do). Because we teach everything from music majors to

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engineers, we assume nothing about the skills entering students possess and those with a preexisting familiarity with such skills are not really better positioned to excel--just a little less likely to freak at all the newness.

• The ability to accept rejection reasonably well. I'd rather have a student who didn't get a coveted internship or win an student government election and who then went on to do other useful things with his/her time, than one who hit constant home runs.

• Willingness to get help when needed, which I could word as lack of stubornness or lack of pride. I refer here not only to academic help, but help on issues such as mental health problems.

• Students need to be able to set personal and professional goals on their own, know how to execute those goals, and have enough self-efficacy to assess and improve.

• You've missed one of the most important: a foreign language. If a student is really to understand how someone else (judge, jury, opponent, client) thinks, the very best training is to learn a foreign tongue.

• Writing, writing, more writing.

• It does not matter what discipline the student majors in or what courses he or she takes. The important think for law students is to come in with critical reading and thinking skills, as well as strong writing skills. If a student can read and analyze dense written material, if a student can consider complex problems, and if a student can communicate their thoughts in a clear and well-organized way in writing, the student is likely to succeed in law school.

• I would say the biggest drop off in recent years has been in the critical reading skills.

• Take the most demanding course load you can as an undergraduate. Seek out professors who push you to do more. Learn to manage your time and your projects. Bring strong analytical skills -- as a reader and as a writer -- to law school.

• We will teach them legal skills in law school. They'll be happier and more successful law students, though, if they have figured out who they are, how they learn, and why they want to be lawyers.

• Deep analytic reasoning and understanding that law school will be a totally different experience than undergraduate. Exams are based on totally new hypothetical situations, not on memorizing what was taught in a particular course. Very hard for students to grasp that as they make outlines of past learned materials and don't focus enough on "thinking analogically."

• Grammar and writing.

• An incoming student needs to have experience handling extensive reading assignments and to be able to write clearly.

• Students need real world experience. Even a simple job as a waitress or store clerk gives students a better understanding of the way the working world operates and the importance of a good work ethic.

• Specific undergraduate courses are not nearly as important as the ability to think critically, write clearly, and master large volumes of material. Students tell me they have lost the ability to memorize and to focus for longer than a few minutes. Studies have revealed that most undergraduate schools do not have courses that require enough reading and writing to develop those skills.

• Visual literacy --courses in art history, etc. Foreign language study and music performance study--both disciplines include study and practice behaviors common to effective law study. To have lived or studied away from home, preferably in another state or country.

• Students without a basic economics course under their belt are at a distinct disadvantage.

- Classes in counseling would be very beneficial especially for law students who plan to work in a clinic or complete an externship with direct client interaction/representation.

- Coursework in computers and technology would also be very beneficial. Students in trial prep classes are often asked to create multimedia presentations and anyone who has an interest in being a litigator must be comfortable with a variety of office and presentation technologies. Often students do not even have a good grasp of the capabilities of Microsoft Office products beyond basic word processing and spreadsheets.

- Students who wish to work in the legal aid field (especially public defenders) would also benefit from Spanish classes as an undergraduate. Many legal aid internships and post-graduate jobs give priority to bilingual speakers (or at least those with some language skills).

- General research skills are important--students need to understand how to use boolean or field searching to craft searches in highly sophisticated databases rather than approach every resource with a google keyword approach.

- Any courses where students are expected to be extremely responsive and work independently will be beneficial--so something like an independent research study or an online course that requires constant "checking" in via virtual chats or posting of assignments would be idea. First Year law students tend not to check their email or the weekly student announcements email as frequently as they should nor do they pay attention to syllabi. Students do well in law school when they realize that a lot of it is self-directed and the professors are not going to remind them about every assignment, reading or quiz. And in many doctrinal classes they may just be working towards that one final exam and they must realize that they have to stay on top of the readings and start their outlining early if they are to be successful on the exam.

- The current state of the legal profession

• What professional careers exist in law, with and without a J.D.

• The cost/benefit analysis of attending law school

• The actual education and environment provided by a law school beyond the faulty US News rankings

• Full-time job experience after college (if it is now being left to join law school) is a plus because those students tend to treat law school like a full-time job.

• Some awareness by students coming right from undergrad what it really means to study 60 hours/week.

• Good writing is at the top of the list. Logical reasoning two. Critical thinking three.

• Critical thinking, intellectual curiosity, and an ability to write clearly strike me as the most important; much more important than any particular subject.

• I think that the students who do best in law school are avid readers (not just for school work) and writers who are comfortable expressing themselves in writing. Verbal expression is also important. Students from just about any background or major can do well in law school if they have these basic skills.

• Read a lot and read widely.

• Disappointment

Subordination

Delayed gratification

Losing

• Grammar. Punctuation. Outlining. Sentence structure. Paragraph cohesiveness. Listening skills.

• Read hard texts. Something not a textbook. Could be English literature (Dickens, Austen, Shakespeare, Melville, etc.). Could be Political theory written over 100 years ago (Montaigne or Rousseau or whomever). Anything in which the student has to learn to read at a level beyond their prior training. Also CRITICAL reading helps prepare, as opposed to simple knowledge acquisition reading.

• Other key component is ability to work hard over a sustained period of time. Some people have big buckets, some have small buckets. But everyone has a chance to put stuff in their bucket, no matter the size. Law school makes you work harder than you are used to working in order to succeed. Some people are better at quickly gauging where they are and what they need to do to achieve.

• A strong work ethic and a sense of perspective are critical. A passion for justice is also desirable.

• I recommend that students not take a pre-law program. It gives them very little preparation and makes law school less interesting. One or two law courses will do the trick to let them know if this is the right path for them.

• The specific subject matter is less important than the skills: writing, logical thinking (analytic) and problem solving.

• They need to learn how to read carefully and critically, think in a thorough analytical manner, write clearly and concisely, be persuasive, and support their ideas. Anything that helps them attain those goals will help them succeed in law school. Subject matter is not that important.

• They also need to learn how to manage their time. Many overcommit to extracurricular activities and work. Consequently, they "burn out" and don't do well in school.

• Participation in organized sports. Only athletics these days seems to imprint upon young people the importance of personal initiative,discipline, and accountability.

• Ideally, lots of practice writing so that it becomes second nature to them. And a wide range of serious, demanding courses: someone that can adapt to philosophy, econ, history, Chinese, chem, and sociology in rapid succession has the versatility to handle law school.

• One semester of formal logic (from philosophy department) or computer programming (from computer science department) will be very helpful for incoming law students, and I always recommend this. No other courses are necessary, so long as they take classes that are challenging and that involve some combination of research and writing. There is never any need to take undergraduate courses on legal topics.

• How to work hard and study with high concentration. Background is irrelevant. Native intelligence, in the classical sense, is all it takes.

• Students gain nothing by coming into law school having taken law courses as undergraduates or having worked for a law firm in some capacity. It creates a completely false sense of confidence. Students are better off with a strong undergraduate major, where they explored issues in depth, wrote papers, did exams in advanced subjects. It almost doesn't matter which major but sciences are especially good because they teach students how to apply law to facts. Math is also good because there are lots of things in law that require a basic understanding of how numbers work, Economics is good because much of law depends on the underlying economics, History is good because it requires the student to analyze factual material, Philosophy can also be good. Undergraduate law courses are bad because law is rarely approached the way we do it in law school and by taking them, the student is deprived of a

general education in some other topic that can be really helpful in law school or in choosing a field in which to work.

• Foundations of western civilization (Shakespeare, history classes). Also challenging coursework of whatever sort. Lot of opportunities to write.

• Aside from basic foundations of our society, being able to think and articulate thoughts are the best things to learn pre-law.

• Students need to be realistic about what life is like as a lawyer. Forget the TV shows and movies. Talking to practicing lawyers to get their views.

• Law school is specialized, graduate professional education. It is therefore unlike graduate education in demanding that students acquire a particular set of skills and vocabulary as well as a disciplined, adult approach to one's own education and future trajectory.

• In my opinion, it is not important that students arrive at law school with a preliminary knowledge of legal terms or skills - Law school is designed to teach those things. It is more important that students arrive with critical reading and writing skills as well as the ability to work independently in a focused way. Those skills can be acquired in many fields.

• Have a 360 degree view of public policy issues and able to articulate the various sides of an issue. Often students entering law school have a rigidly defined worldview and are unable to understand various perspectives.

• Again, the biggest deficit I see in entering students is an inability to cope with reading large amounts of material efficiently and well, including pulling out the most important points. Beyond that, an ability to write well is the biggest advantage. Third is a general exposure to different ways of thinking about the world.

- The students who get themselves in the most trouble are students who have taken an undergraduate "law" course and then think they understand what they need to know. Quite frankly, most undergraduate "law" courses are worse than no exposure to the subject at all.

- Activities that foster wellbeing, emotional regulation, and happiness

- Physical activities that encourage them to exercise regularly later in life

- A nice intro to "succeeding in law school" or similar pamphlet about the method of law instruction, testing and grading, and general expectations for the experience. Beyond this, just be prepared to work hard, question everything, and be plugged in. Time to move from the passenger seat to the driver's seat!

- Students must have a strong desire to learn and be willing to be intellectually challenged.

- Being critical thinkers and readers is most important.

- They should know themselves, how they function most effectively in a challenging and competitive environment, and how they learn best. There are no answers that are right for everybody.

- Good writing and analysis are keys. Everything else is optional.

- Most important things are: (1) diverse courses and work experiences, including those that will give background to legal education and those that will give student an opportunity to make an informed decision about whether and why they want to be a lawyer; and (2) coursework and other experience that will provide ample opportunity to develop essential skills, especially writing, but also including time management, effective studying, exam taking, and how to deal with stress and competition.

- The law students who succeed are the ones who dedicate themselves to their studies. There is no substitute for 60-80 hours of study per week in law school.

• Don't try to teach them law as undergraduates! Teach them background knowledge they will need, such as history. Teach them how to write and argue and reason. We can do the rest. students need to be able to write well and to read closely. I have found that students who did well in serious undergraduate schools are best prepared -- especially those who studied in writing-intensive programs like English and history. Serious social science subjects, like econ and to a lesser extent psychology, are at an advantage, too.

• Basic concepts of accounting are helpful. A diversity of skill sets that would include what you've listed above (microeconomics, political science, basic math skills, etc.) are all important.

• How to work hard, get good grades, and write effectively.

• Writing skills and time management are the most important.

Conclusions

The results of the survey reveal several important factors. The first I previously learned at the 2017 NAPLA conference in Pittsburgh, PA when a legal writing professor from a law school attended one of the pedagogy panels. This professor was stunned after the presentations on teaching undergraduates how to write effectively and exclaimed, "I had no idea you all were doing this at the undergrad level!" In fact, the survey results show law professors generally do not understand what is being taught at the undergraduate level.

Second, law school faculty clearly want ownership of what law students are taught. They do not seem to think it is important for undergraduate faculty to prepare students by giving them the any information they may encounter in law school. Generally, law school faculty seem to believe they should impart certain knowledge to law students and would be perfectly happy if undergraduates focused on knowing how to write. This is not a new revelation. In fact, this has

been a discussion among undergraduate faculty who teach law-related courses. "[L]aw schools should recognize the benefits that undergraduate courses can provide in helping to improve students' understanding of legal doctrine. By working with professors who teach law to undergraduates, law school faculty can reap the benefits that come from having better prepared students in their first-year classes" (Rozinski 2017: 96).

Third, the results of the survey may have been somewhat different had I changed the wording of the questions. Rather than asking whether a skill or quality was "important" for prelaw students, several law school faculty suggested their answer may have changed had I asked whether a skill or quality was "valuable" for prelaw students.

Finally, undergraduate faculty who teach law-related courses to students in order to prepare them to succeed in law school need to engage in prelaw pedagogy and skill building. Although law school faculty and law school admissions personnel may not acknowledge the value of undergraduates taking law-related courses, it ultimately depends upon the professor who teaches those courses. Students who take several law classes at one university may be doing themselves a disservice by thinking they are learning the content knowledge they will need in their law school classes, and that is valuable to their success in law school. However, the clear conclusion from the comments from law professors in this survey is they are reticent about undergraduates learning legal content in their college courses. However, students taking the same courses at another university may receive the same content knowledge, but they are better prepared to succeed in law school due to the reading comprehension, writing, critical thinking, argumentation skills, etc. in a rigorous and intellectually challenging undergraduate program.

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