

UTSA Pre-Law Insights NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2024
ISSUE 4, VOL III

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UTSA PRE-LAW INSIGHTS NEWSLETTER

Welcome to this fourth issue of UTSA Pre-Law Insights newsletter! We are delighted to share prelaw advising news that will keep you informed to make better decisions.

About the Editor



guide you for law school preparation and law school application – and admission! I am looking forward to hearing your feedback on this newsletter and learn what you would like to read in the next issue. Thank you!

Ana Alvarez, Ed. D.

It is my honor to serve as the UTSA official prelaw advisor (recognized by the LSAC), Professor, Certificate in Legal Studies Program Advisor, and Program Manager of the Institute for Law and Public Affairs.

Currently serving on the Board of Directors of the Southwest Association of Prelaw Advisors (SWAPLA) and AccessLex Prelaw Advisory Committee, I am happy to



Some Pre-Law Updates

WHY SHOULD YOU ATTEND THE UTSA 2024 SUMMER LAW SCHOOL PREPARATION ACADEMY? BY DR. ANA ALVAREZ



If you are thinking about law school, do some exploration on what the legal education and law school admission entail, from LSAT preparation to understanding law school application items, admission requirements, and costs. You should also learn how to study for law school and build your professional network. Hone your analytical, legal research and writing, logic, critical thinking, problem-solving, communication, time management, and teamwork skills to excel in law school. These skills not only provide a competitive edge in law school but are crucial for a successful legal career. Most importantly, assess whether you belong in law school and have the potential to thrive in a legal profession.

SLSPA COURSES PROVIDE A REAL LAW SCHOOL EXPERIENCE AS YOU WILL BE CHALLENGED TO READ, WRITE, ANALYZE AND STUDY EVERY DAY – WITH THE RIGORS OF LAW SCHOOL

In this guide, we will delve into the multifaceted roles of the [Summer Law School Preparation Academy](#) (SLSPA) and how you can use it to your advantage.

1. Curriculum (up to 12 credit hours)

SLSPA courses have been carefully curated to offer you a feel of being in law school. SLSPA 3-credit courses taught in the first 5-week summer term (F) are PHI 2043 Introductory Logic and PAL 3343 Constitutional Analysis. Courses taught in the second 5-week term (S) are PAL 3023 Legal Research and Writing and PAL 3863 Contracts.

You may earn up to 12 credit hours that count toward your GPA, appearing in your transcript. Classes are Mondays through Fridays, giving you a real experience of being in law school as you will be challenged to read, write, brief cases, analyze, and study every day with the rigors of law school. Classes are taught with the Socratic Method, which most law schools use to teach courses. The SLSPA's active learning environment that fosters critical thinking will give you an advantage. When you are in your law school first class, you will already know what to expect in law school, how to study, and what the

professor is expecting from you. You might even be familiar with some cases, because you would have already studied them in the SLSPA.

2. Professional Development and an Insight into Legal Ethics and Professionalism

There are also two additional courses that do not offer any credits but appear in your transcripts with a Credit or No Credit grade. Through the cost-free *UCS 4000 Law School Experience I* taught in the first 5-week term (F), students learn about different legal fields and career paths from panels of attorneys practicing in diverse legal fields. Lawyers may be working as in-house counsel, in private practice, government, or non-profit organizations.

You will directly hear from all Texas law schools' admissions -and other law schools across the nation - about application and admissions and have the unique opportunity to take law school mock classes – with real law school professors. You will learn how to effectively connect in a professional setting and start your own network, which is useful to develop professional

YOU WILL HEAR DIRECTLY FROM ALL TEXAS LAW SCHOOLS' ADMISSIONS AND HAVE THE UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE LAW SCHOOL MOCK CLASSES – WITH REAL LAW SCHOOL PROFESSORS.

connections and have internship opportunities and mentors. Hearing from all panelists and law school professors will provide an insight into professionalism, extremely valuable for law school and your legal career.

3. LSAT Workshops

In the second 5-week term (S), UCS 4100 Law School Experience II offers cost-free LSAT workshops. Whether you are taking the LSAT this fall 2024 or thereafter, there are multiple benefits offered by this course. If you plan to take the LSAT this fall, make sure you start your LSAT preparation early in spring semester (2024). Attending the LSAT workshops will assist you to review and practice what you have already learned, with the opportunity to ask questions to your LSAT professor. If you are planning to take the LSAT in fall 2025 or afterward, UCS 4100 will be a perfect way to introduce you to studying for the LSAT. You will learn strategies for every LSAT section with drills, exercises, and full LSAT practices.



Students who successfully complete the two 3-credit courses in the SLSPA in Summer F (the first five-week term) and are enrolled in the two 3-credit courses in the SLSPA Summer S (the second five-week term) are eligible for registration in UCS 4100 Law School Experience II.

4. Resume' Enhancing

The purpose of the SLSPA is to prepare students for success in law school, from admissions to academics, and all Texas law schools and many others across the country value the UTSA Summer Law School Preparation Academy. Law school admissions appreciate the fact that students *take an extra*

LAW SCHOOL ADMISSIONS APPRECIATE THE FACT THAT STUDENTS TAKE AN EXTRA STEP TO PREPARE FOR LAW SCHOOL, REGARDLESS OF THEIR MAJOR.

step to prepare for law school, regardless of their major. An *extra step* shows their desire to be ready for law school, not only for admission, but for academic performance. At the end, law school admissions' task is to admit students that have a higher probability to graduate and pass the bar exam.

5. SLSPA and Certificate in Legal Studies

As you may know, you are not required to have any specific major for law school; however, during your undergraduate education, you should develop skills needed for law school and the legal career. With a multidisciplinary approach, the [Certificate in Legal Studies](#) helps you hone skills that go from problem-solving, critical reading, writing and editing, oral communication and research, to background knowledge and exposure to the law. Students pursuing the Certificate in Legal Studies are required to complete 15 semester credit hours. Since the SLSPA provides an intentional pre-law curriculum supplemented by experiential learning and networking experiences to assist students gain admission to and excel in law school, all Summer Law School Preparation Academy credit courses (12 credits) count for the Certificate in Legal Studies.

6. Additional Benefits of SLSPA



Students successfully completing the SLSPA (passing the four 3-credit courses within the SLSPA and earning a credit grade in both non-credit courses will: 1) be bestowed a graduation medallion during the SLSPA Graduation Ceremony (the graduation medallion can be used at UTSA's Commencement Ceremony), and 2) earn a Milestone Electronic Badge to include in their resume', showing law school admissions and employers all skills learned at the program.

7. Eligibility, Application Deadline, Application

The SLSPA is open to undergraduate students attending any accredited college/university with at least 30 credits by the end of spring 2024. SLSPA Admission is on a competitive basis. Priority Admission Application deadline is March 8, Regular Admission Application Deadline, April 19. **You may apply [here](#).** Consider attending the SLSPA, whose alumni have secured acceptances to and enrolled in over 160 law schools throughout the country.



 **IS THE SUMMER LAW SCHOOL PREPARATION WORTHWHILE?**

By Thomas Zapata, current 2L at The University of Texas at Austin School of Law

In the summer of 2020, I participated in the Summer Law School Preparation Academy (SLSPA). I was a junior pursuing a degree in politics and law with the prospect of applying to and attending law school. Admittedly, prior to the SLSPA, I was unfamiliar with the process of applying to law school and the rigorous amount of work that law school would consist of. Not only had I not heard of the Law School Admissions Council, but I had also never even attempted to take an LSAT. *The Summer Law School Preparation Academy was truly my first exposure to the law school experience.*

THE SUMMER LAW SCHOOL PREPARATION ACADEMY WAS TRULY MY FIRST EXPOSURE TO THE LAW EXPERIENCE.

When I first heard about the summer program, I will admit that I was a little hesitant. I had heard from a few students that they had dropped out of the program and that it would just kill my GPA and would not benefit me in my law school application process. I even had a meeting with Dr. Alvarez who confirmed that the summer program was *not a walk in the park but meant to simulate the intense workload expected from students at the law school level.* While I was concerned over the comments of some of my fellow students, I decided that I would find out for myself. As a 2L at The University of Texas School of Law, I can now confirm that *participating in the Summer Law School Preparation Academy was one of the best decisions I could have made towards my legal education.*



UTSA 2023 Summer Law School Preparation Academy Graduates

On the surface, the SLSPA seems as though it is just a culmination of law school related courses, panels, and seminars directed towards those of us who are interested in a legal education. While this is, in fact, the essential core elements of the program, there is much more that lies beneath the surface. Not only are the courses in the SLSPA taught by some of the most capable and first-rate professors in their fields, but *the connections and networking that takes place in the law school experience panels are among some of the most valuable experiences a prospective law school student can have.* I formed connections with students and professors alike that will outlast my time at UTSA. *My late-night study partners became my closest of friends and are now 2Ls at their own respective law schools.* I even received one of my law school letters of recommendation from my Constitutional Analysis professor.

The very Admissions Dean I met during a law school experience panel was the same individual who called to inform me of my acceptance to Texas Law.

MY PARTICIPATION IN THE SUMMER LAW SCHOOL PREPARATION ACADEMY CONTRIBUTED TO MY SUBSEQUENT ACCEPTANCE TO THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS SCHOOL OF LAW AND PREPARED ME FOR THE RIGORS OF LAW SCHOOL.

Additionally, the very Admissions Dean I met during a law school experience panel was the same individual who called to inform me of my acceptance to Texas Law. The program's rigorous nature taught me essential skills such as time management and organization and gave a taste of the Socratic method that is utilized in law school. I truly feel that the SLSPA provided

me with a head start on my legal education. *Prior to stepping foot into a law school, I had already experienced what it is like to write a case brief, read and examine a case, use logic and reasoning when analyzing arguments, and respond to questions from professors using the Socratic method.* Not only the SLSPA provided me with a head start on my legal education, but it also provided me with the tools necessary to be successful in the law school application process. This ranged from tips on letters of recommendation, LSAT study methods, registering with the LSAC, and meeting with admissions faculty from various law schools to learn the ins and outs of the application process.

While the SLSPA was one of the most intense programs I participated in at UTSA, the experiences, connections and tools I gained from the program cannot be replaced. I wholeheartedly believe that *my participation in the summer law School Preparation Academy contributed to my subsequent acceptance to The University of Texas School of Law and prepared me for the rigors of law school.*



APPLY FOR FEE WAIVERS FOR LSAC PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

By Dr. Ana Alvarez

As you may know, Khan Academy currently offers cost-free LSAT preparation. This service will cease in July 2024 as the partnership with the Law School Admission Council (LSAC) ends. At that time, the LSAC will directly provide LSAT training but with a cost. Don't be discouraged, though. *You may apply for [fee waivers for LSAC programs and services](#) as the program is intended for prospective law students who have insufficient resources.* The LSAC offers [two tiers of benefits](#) according to varying economic circumstances.



Application Process. The LSAC suggests applying for a fee waiver *at least six months prior to the registration deadline* for the LSAT administration you wish to take. Consider this time frame as you may want to give yourself some time for potential appeal if the fee waiver application is denied. But don't hesitate to apply even if you plan to register for the LSAT in less than six months. LSAC reviews complete applications on a rolling basis and usually renders a decision within 2 business days.

After your application online submission, send your documentation within 45 days. You will hear from the LSAC within two days, and at that time, your online fee waiver application will be either conditionally

You will hear from the LSAC within two days, and at that time, your fee waiver will be either conditionally approved or denied.

approved or denied. Your LSAC file will be placed on hold while LSAC reviews your application and supporting documentation.

Even if your file is on hold, you may proceed to take the LSAT. However, your LSAT score will

not be released to you or any law schools until your application is fully approved or, if denied, applicable fees are paid. If your online fee waiver application is denied, you may appeal the decision once, but appealing decisions are final. To apply for the program, look at the eligibility criteria, complete an application, and provide supporting tax forms and other documentation as required by the LSAC. Be intentional and take advantage of all available resources and services, from LSAT training to law school application.



UTSA SPRING 2024 PRE-LAW EVENTS



Mark your calendar! Below are the Institute for Law and Public Affairs Spring Events.

February 24, 10am-1:30pm. AccessLex Law School Launch Virtual Summit. Register [here](#).

10-11 am: All things law school admissions

11:15am-12pm: Figuring out financial aid

12:15-1:15pm: The inside scoop of law school: student panel

1:15-2:30pm: Next steps and AccessLex resources

February 27, 2024, 3-4pm. Summer Law School Preparation Academy Session. Learn what the SLSPA is about and why you should consider attending it. Student Union 2.01.20 – Oak.

March 5, 2024, 3-4pm. Certificate in Legal Studies Session. Hear the value of and how to earn the certificate. Student Union 2.01.20 – Oak.

Summer 2024

SLSPA First 5-week summer term (F): May 28- July 2, 2024

SLSPA Second 5-week summer term (S): July 3-August 7, 2024No index entries found.

[Apply Here](#)

The University of Texas at San Antonio

UTSA Institute for Law and Public Affairs