

Pre-Law Scholars Program
for Academic Year 2017-2018

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Pre-Law Scholars Program Academic Year 2017-2018

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I. Pre-Law Scholars Program: Description and Connection to SLU Mission

The SLU Pre-Law Scholar (PLS) Program offers an exclusive opportunity for SLU undergraduate freshmen students who are considering pursuing the legal profession. Students accepted into this highly selective program have a guaranteed admittance to Saint Louis University School of Law.

The PLS Program is motivated by the missions of Saint Louis University and SLU LAW. Guided by the Jesuit tradition of academic excellence, freedom of inquiry and respect for individual differences, the PLS Program prepares students to succeed in their law school classes. The Office of Pre-Health and Pre-Law (PHPL) Studies, together with SLU LAW, assists students throughout their four years at SLU to meet this goal. Pre-Law Scholars can choose any undergraduate major and minor to pursue their interests; there is no prerequisite coursework required to go to Law School. Our PLS program is designed to accompany all major/minor areas of study at SLU to develop students' skills to be successful in law school classes.

The PLS Program is composed of four linked courses that are **integrated on two levels:**

1. **Level 1 integration:** Pre-Law Scholars take four courses (listed in section V) in a specific order. Each course in the sequence develops competencies and knowledge necessary for the subsequent course, culminating with a practical experience in a professional setting where students expand and apply their knowledge and skills acquired in the classroom in previous courses.
2. **Level 2 integration:** The required courses develop a range of academic competencies; they do so by using common themes motivated by SLU Jesuit mission. Courses are aimed at character-building through fostering discussions leading to promoting racial, religious and ethnic equality, discussion of diversity issues, social and environmental justice or other contemporary issues (such as Voter ID laws during election years etc.). This level of integration and intentional choice of themes will be assured by providing and sharing syllabi among PLS faculty and yearly workshops for faculty and graduate assistants (Law School students) organized by Office of PHPL Studies prior to each academic year.

To increase the impact of such integration on students' development, the Pre-Law Scholars will be required to create a personalized e-Portfolio as a portrait of their professional growth by documenting their pre-law experiences as they progress through their curriculum. e-Portfolio will represent purposeful collection of diverse evidence incorporating academic learning activities with out-of-class

experiences over three academic years. More importantly, it will provide an opportunity for *reflective practice* to demonstrate both, the progress as well as achievements. The opportunity for making connections through ongoing reflective practice is an important goal; it will be fostered by incorporating the e-Portfolio development into all four required PLS program courses and becoming part of the assessment tools at the end of each semester. Upon completion, the e-Portfolio will be submitted to SLU LAW. Finally, it will serve as an internal assessment tool for evaluating PLS program. The ultimate expected outcome is to provide an opportunity for both, the students and our program, to capture students' integrated knowledge and experiences as their journey, rather than a simple destination to enter law school.

II. SLU Pre-Law Scholar Program Advantage

- a. Mentorship and interactions with Law School faculty and practicing lawyers
- b. Mentorship from SLU Law School students
- c. Small and diverse classes
- d. Strong sense of community
- e. Experiential learning outside of classroom
- f. Workshops organized through the PHPL office
- g. One dedicated SLU LAW 1843 full tuition scholarship will be offered to a certified Pre Law Scholar during the application process to SLU LAW.
- h. Individualized/Personalized advising from PHPL office
- i. Assistance/Guidance during application process to Law School
- j. Early/Guaranteed admission to Law School.
- k. Access to SLU LAW library
- l. Access to SLU LAW Admissions Office
- m. Invitations to PLS only events at the law school

III. Applying to Pre-Law Scholar Program

Qualified candidates for this program must have a combined (verbal plus mathematics) SAT score of at least 1390 or a minimum composite ACT score of 30, and have an outstanding academic record. Attention will be directed to students' experiences regarding leadership and community service. In addition, students will submit a 250-350-word essay addressing "*Why are you interested in pursuing a career in law,*" and two letters of recommendation.

Students will have two opportunities to be admitted into the program. The first opportunity is available to first time SLU applicants by completing the separate online application by Feb. 1 for priority admission. The second opportunity, will be available to eligible freshman students shortly after the beginning of the fall semester through the Office of Pre-Health and Pre-Law Studies. The requirements of the program are the same no matter when a student applies.

IV. Objectives of the Pre-Law Scholars Program

The goal of the SLU Pre-Law Scholars program is to provide substantive knowledge about the law and society, and to equip students with skills for success in rigorous law school classes. To meet these goals, the PLS students will:

1. complete 12 credit hours of pre-law course work.
2. receive instructions in legal studies by highly trained specialists in the field of law.
3. complete Internship in a legal environment overseen by specialized staff or faculty from the SLU LAW.
4. complete an e-Portfolio reflecting their academic and personal development.

Upon completion of the PLS program, successful students will be able to: *

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the three branches of the US federal and state governments, including the court system and legal processes.
2. Demonstrate an understanding of the important role that lawyers play in the rule of law, achieving social justice, and the good of society.
3. Demonstrate substantial knowledge of different fields of law (criminal, constitutional, human rights, alternative dispute resolution, international).
4. Demonstrate proficient verbal and written communication.
5. Demonstrate critical thinking, analytical and problem solving skills applied to pertinent legal issues, court decisions and case studies.
6. Demonstrate contextualization of law based on student academic, inter-cultural and service learning experiences.
7. Gain experience through engagement in community and ethical advocacy.
8. Demonstrate the ability to work in a professional environment.

*Specific expected students' outcomes are developed in greater details in syllabi for each of the four required PLS courses.

V. Program Requirements

- a. **Freedom of Declaring a Major:** SLU Law and the American Bar Association (ABA) recommend that students consider a broad range of options to prepare for a legal education. Scholars should choose to major in an area of study that is both interesting and challenging.
- b. **Academic Performance:** Scholars must maintain a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.6 at the end of the freshman year; a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.7 by the end of the fall semester junior year, as well as cumulative GPA of 3.7 at the time of graduation.
- c. **Required coursework:** Pre-Law Scholars are required to complete a series of four integrated courses by the end of junior year:

Course Number	Course Title	Credit Hours	Year Taken
PLS 1000	Introduction to Law	3	Freshmen year
PLS 2000	Introduction to Legal Research and Writing	3	Sophomore year
PLS 4965	Foundation of Law (course taught by Law School faculty)	3	Junior year
PLS 4910	4910 Legal Internship (directed by Law School)	3	Senior year

- d. **Case Study and meeting with the Dean of Law School:** This event is the first opportunity for freshman Scholars to interact with the SLU LAW community. They will have the opportunity to participate in a mock law school class taught by the Dean in the law school, Scott Hall. This will allow the students to get a feel for the law school environment and to become connected to the SLU LAW community. The first meeting provides freshman Scholars the opportunity to feel welcomed and the law school and honored to be a part of this prestigious program. They will leave knowing that SLU LAW is here to assist them on their journey to becoming successful law students.
- e. **Attending two events/year:** Pre-Law Scholars attend two events approved by the Office of PHPL Studies and the School of Law, and must incorporate their experiences into their e-Portfolio. (see requirement f)

- f. **E-Portfolio:** Faculty teaching the four required PLS courses will be responsible for assessing student progress in building e=Portfolio. Students will document their academic and other relevant experiential activities outlined in section I (incl. part e above). The Office of PHPL Studies will review the final e-Portfolios and submit them to the School of Law. While the main focus is on student growth, the e-Portfolio will serve as an important tool in PLS program assessment.
- g. **Approval by PHPL Director:** Successful Scholars are endorsed by the Director of PHPL after Junior year. This formal approval confirms that Scholars have met the requirements of the program up to that point and are eligible for the conditional admission to the School of Law. (Elements that must be completed are outlined above). Certified Scholars will be conditionally admitted to the School of Law via letter in the fall semester of their senior year. Scholar are still required to complete the internship course (PLS 4910), continue their e-Portfolio, and apply to the School of Law during the fall of their senior year. Admission to the School of Law is conditioned on the following:
 - i. Completion of the LSAT prior to enrollment at the School of Law
 - ii. Maintenance of a cumulative undergraduate GPA of 3.7 or better
 - iii. Submission of ePortfolio to SLU LAW Admission office
 - iv. Completion of a Bachelor's degree
 - v. Satisfactory responses to the Character and Fitness section of the application for admission.
- h. **LSAT:** SLU Law requires Pre-Law Scholars to take the Law School Admission Test (LSAT) and recommends it is taken in June following students' junior year, or in early fall of the senior year.
- i. **Character and Fitness:** Upon applying to the School of Law, certified Scholars must also provide satisfactory responses to the Character and Fitness portion of the SLU LAW application. Students will become aware of Character and Fitness Issues that they may experience in the future as a law school applicant and future BAR applicants. Students will have this understanding several years prior to the application process. The SLU LAW application Character and Fitness language and questions follow in the appendix.

VI. Advising and Student Support

- a. Pre-Law Scholars are supported by the Office of PHPL Studies throughout their undergraduate years. Advisors in the PHPL Office help students gain exposure to the law and the legal profession, select a course of study, and assist in the law school application process. Pre-Law Scholars should contact the staff in the PHPL Office if they have questions or concerns about their progress in the program. The Director serves as the liaison to the SLU Law School. In addition, the Scholars are supported by the SLU Law Admissions Office for general guidance and campus events.
- b. Each year, at least one full-tuition scholarship to Saint Louis University School of Law will be awarded to one student completing the Pre-Law Scholar Program. All Pre-Law Scholars will be eligible to compete for the award. All remaining Scholars will be eligible for additional scholarship opportunities.
- c. Students have the opportunity to complete an Internship Preparation Course, taught by the SLU Law Career Services Office, with a guaranteed internship their Senior year. This is a huge bonus for the PLS students and an integral component of the program.
- d. Throughout their undergraduate years, Scholars have the distinct opportunity for mentorship with SLU Law School students.
- e. SLU Law and the Office of Pre-Health and Pre-Law Studies, also strongly encourages students to participate in Mock Trial and Moot Court, and to publish their work in the Legal Studies Journal. Students who participate in these activities are encouraged to incorporate their experiences in their e-Portfolios.
- f. Pre-Law Scholars have direct access to the PHPL Office that offers resources for support throughout the undergraduate experience.

VII. Pre-Law Scholar Program Timeline:

<p>Freshman Year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PLS 1000 Introduction to Law; submit e-Portfolio (stage 1) - Attend the Pre-Law Scholar Reception (includes a Case Discussion with the Dean of the Law School) - Attend a case discussion with the Dean of the Law School - Earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.6 at the end of freshman year (fall and spring semesters only)
<p>Sophomore Year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PLS 2000 Introduction to Legal Research and Writing; submit e-Portfolio (stage 2) - No GPA requirement Sophomore year
<p>Junior Year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PLS 4965 Foundation of Law; submit e-Portfolio (stage 3) - Earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.7 at the end of the fall semester junior year - Take the LSAT (either junior or senior year) - Attend law school admissions process workshop
<p>Senior Year</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PLS 4910 Legal Internship; submit e-Portfolio (stage 4) - Earn a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.7 at the end of senior year - Take the LSAT (either junior or senior year) - Attend law school admissions process workshop, resume writing for law school admissions workshop, and personal statement workshop - Apply to SLU Law via LSAC

VIII. Addendum

Character and Fitness Language from SLU LAW application.

You have an obligation to report any conduct that would require you to answer yes to any of the following questions from the Character and Fitness section of your application. The obligation to report conduct pertaining to the Character and Fitness questions below continues up to and through your graduation from law school and application to the state bar of your choice.

1. Have you ever been charged with or subject to academic or disciplinary action (probation, suspension, dismissal or other disciplinary action, hearing or investigation of any type) at any institution of higher education?
2. Have you ever pled guilty or nolo contendere to, or been found guilty of, any felony, whether sentence was imposed or not?
3. Have you ever been issued a summon, charged, arrested, or cited for driving under the influence (DUI), driving while intoxicated (DWI), minor in possession (MIP), public intoxication, or for any other alcohol or controlled substance-related offense?
4. Have you ever been convicted, cited, arrested, charged, summoned or taken into custody for the violation of any law? (Please exclude incidents listed in 2 & 3 above and also exclude minor traffic or parking violations wherein the fine did not exceed \$250.)
5. Have you ever been a party to any criminal, civil or administrative proceeding? (Please exclude incidents listed in 1, 2, & 3 above.)
6. Have you ever been disbarred, suspended, censured, reprimanded or otherwise disqualified as a member of another profession or as a holder of public office?
7. Have you defaulted on any student loan obligations?