

**C/LA 394B:  
LAW SCHOOL READINESS –  
BECOMING A SUCCESSFUL LAW SCHOOL APPLICANT**

**Fall 2018 – 10/1-11/2  
TTH, 11-12:15  
SSPA 212**

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**Office: SSPA 251**

**Regular Office Hours: T, 9:30-10:30, W, 3:30-4:30, or by appointment.**

**Prelaw Advising Appointments can also be booked online [here](#).**

**Course Description and Goals.** This is the second in a three-course series (5 weeks per course) designed to provide students interested in law school with the information they need to make an informed decision and become a successful applicant. This particular course will help you with everything you need to know about actually applying to law school. You will learn: about the academic and personal characteristics that law school most desire; about the timing and content of the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT); How to compare different law schools and make good decisions about where to apply; How to solicit and receive strong letters of recommendation; How to write a clear and effective personal statement, resume, and other application documents; and how to master the on-line application system at LSAC.org.

**Course Assignments – this is a credit/no credit class, and all of the following are required to receive credit:**

- **Class Attendance:** Attendance is mandatory. Any student missing more than 3 class sessions without an acceptable excuse will not receive credit for the course. See syllabus appendix for list of acceptable excuses and necessary procedures for being excused.
- **Law School Roadmap (Due Online Sunday, Oct. 14, at 11:59 PM).** In this document, you will compile some of the information you will need if you apply to law school, including a list of law schools, information about their application requirements, a list of possible recommenders, and a list of ideas for your personal statement. A template for the document is available on BeachBoard.
- **Law School Personal Statement Draft (Due Online Sunday, Nov. 4, at 11:59 PM):** For this assignment, you will write a draft of a personal statement that meets the requirements of one law school you are thinking of applying to. Instructions will be given in class.

**Submitting Written Assignments.** The only way to submit a written assignment is to upload it to the appropriate electronic dropbox on BeachBoard in one of the following formats: .doc., .docx, .pdf, or .txt. *I will not accept assignments submitted in any other way.* You must save a copy of the electronic notification you receive when you successfully upload your assignment to BeachBoard. In the event of a discrepancy as to whether or when you submitted the assignment, this electronic

notification is the only proof I will accept. You must also keep an electronic or paper copy of any document you upload.

**Grading of Written Assignments.** For written assignments, I will award a grade of credit or no credit on BeachBoard soon after the due date. If you fail to receive credit for an assignment that you uploaded, you may rewrite it as many times as you need until you receive credit. The only exception is the final assignment, which is turned in at the very end of the semester.

**Individual Advising Sessions.** You are welcome (but not required) to meet with me in person to discuss your individual situation. However, please do not use regular office hours for this purpose. Instead, individual advising sessions may be booked online here:

<http://www.cla.csulb.edu/departments/polisci/advising/dr-jason-whitehead-advising-booking-calendar/>

If you need an advising session but no satisfactory time-slot is available online, e-mail me at [Jason.Whitehead@csulb.edu](mailto:Jason.Whitehead@csulb.edu) with the days and times that work for you and I will do my best to accommodate. *ALL ADVISING SESSIONS ARE HELD IN MY OFFICE – SSPA 251.*

**Course Readings.** There is no required text to buy. Instead, short readings and web resources are available on BeachBoard for each week of the course.

## Workshop and Assignment Schedule

Week of Oct. 2: Getting Ready to Apply

Topics:

- The Law School Application Timeline
- Developing the Right Academic and Personal Credentials
- Preparing For and Taking the LSAT
- Researching Law Schools and Law School Data
- The Law School Application Timeline
- Deciding Where to Apply
- Comparing Law Schools

BeachBoard Readings: Resources for “Getting Ready to Apply”

Week of Oct. 9: Law School Applications

Topics:

- Elements of the Application File
- Setting up LSAC and the CAS Accounts
- Adding Schools to LSAC Account
- Application Questions



## Appendix: Miscellaneous Course Policies

**Written Assignment Submissions.** You must upload your assignments to the appropriate electronic “dropbox” on BeachBoard in one of the following formats: .doc, .docx, .txt, or .pdf. I will not accept assignments submitted in any other way. You must save a copy of the electronic notification you receive when you successfully upload an assignment to BeachBoard. In the event of a discrepancy as to whether or when you submitted the assignment, this electronic notification is the only proof I will accept. You must also keep an electronic or paper copy of your assignment.

**Excuses for Absences and Late Assignments.** It is your responsibility to arrange your schedule around your academic responsibilities. In general, **exceptions will only be made for the following reasons, for which satisfactory documentation must be provided:** (1) Illness or injury to the student; (2) Death, injury, or serious illness of an immediate family member or the like; (3) Religious reasons (listed in California Education Code section 89320); (4) Jury duty or government obligation; or (5) University sanctioned or approved activities, such as artistic performances, forensics competitions, participation in research conferences, intercollegiate athletic activities, student government, required class field trips, etc.. **To be excused under #1 or 2, you must provide BOTH satisfactory documentation as soon as possible AND evidence of work completed on the assignment at the time of sickness or illness. To be excused under #s 3-5, however, you must provide me with satisfactory documentation at least 1 week prior to the class or deadline.** If you have a legitimate excuse for missing an assignment deadline, we will work out an appropriate alternative deadline AS LONG AS you can demonstrate that you have already completed an appropriate amount of work on the assignment.

**No Credit for Unexcused Late Assignments.** Written assignments are due at the date and time listed in the syllabus and assignment instructions. **Students will not receive any credit for unexcused late assignments.** Make the most of the time you have to complete written assignments; no allowances will be made for last-minute problems with computers, networks, etc..

**Cheating and Plagiarism.** It is my policy to deal with any form of cheating and/or plagiarism by immediately giving a failing grade on the assignment and reporting you to the department and other administrative authorities for other possible sanctions. If you are having problems with the course material, please come and see me before doing something that could put your academic career in jeopardy. Please note that “plagiarism” includes *any use* of the ideas or work of others as if they were one’s own, without giving appropriate credit.

**Students with Disabilities.** I am completely committed to providing reasonable accommodations for any student with a verifiable physical or other disability. This may include alternative testing or note-taking arranged through Disabled Student Services. However, it is your responsibility to notify me in advance of the need for such an accommodation.