We hope you have had a successful 2014-15 academic year at Northern Arizona University. As we end the semester and academic year, we want to share information pertinent to Pre-Law students and faculty and staff involved with Pre-Law advising at NAU. Our goal is to provide an overview of Pre-Law advising and services offered at the Gateway Student Success Center, in addition to other resources across campus. For information on Pre-Law advising at GSSC or to make an appointment, contact us anytime.

Welcome to the Pre-Law Community!

The Gateway Student Success Center offers Pre-Law advising for all NAU students and alumni. We can assist with the following:

- Exploring and choosing a major, and creating a timeline for each academic year
- Selecting appropriate classes to help prepare you for law school
- Referring students to Pre-Law faculty advisors
- Developing skills and gaining experience recommended in preparation to apply to law school
- Researching law schools and current trends
- Preparing for the LSAT (Law School Admission Test)
- Giving feedback and guidance on your law school personal statements

To make a Pre-Law advising appointment, call (928) 523-4772.
Joining a student organization is a great opportunity to gain leadership experience. We encourage all students planning on attending law school to join the NAU student chapter of **Phi Alpha Delta** (PAD), the International Law Fraternity. PAD offers a variety of opportunities for pre-law students to network internationally and plans campus events, hosts the mock LSAT and connects students with resources and networking opportunities. Past events have included a Regional Pre-Law Leadership symposia, an annual Pre-Law Conference, Mock Trial and Law School Expo.

**Check out TrueBlue Connects for information on meeting times and contact information.**

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### Phi Alpha Delta: International Law Fraternity

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### Where Are NAU Students Attending Law School?

[Map showing law schools attended by NAU alumni]
Financial Aid

Law school is an expensive commitment that requires many students to rely solely on student loans while in school. The amount of debt that many students face after graduation can exceed $150,000, not including any debt that may have been accrued during a student’s undergraduate career. To help students make sense of the financial obligation of law school, the Law School Admissions Council (LSAC) has published important information about determining what type of financial aid students may qualify for. Most law schools provide scholarships for students, which may be merit- or need-based. A recent survey of law schools revealed that most schools are looking more at GPA and LSAT scores to determine scholarship eligibility in an attempt to attract high quality students. While GPA and LSAT score have always been a large determining factor for getting into law school, they are now just as important for securing financial aid.

Regardless of the type of aid students may receive while in law school, it is very important for students to research all opportunities for financial aid and understand what the renewal criteria is for each type of funding. Schools are required to report information on financial aid on their website, and students will also want to work with the financial aid office at their law school to maximize opportunities for scholarships. For more information on financial aid during law school, students can visit the LSAC website.

In addition to receiving funding while attending law school, students can also look for funding opportunities while at NAU to help finance their undergraduate career. The Gateway Student Success Center offers the Laurance T. Wren Memorial Scholarship each year to a junior or senior at NAU who is planning to attend law school. Check the NAU Pre-law webpage January 2016 for more information.

When to Retake the LSAT

Taking the Law School Admissions Test (LSAT) is costly and requires arduous study time in preparation. The Law School Admissions Council (LSAC) restricts the number of times a student can take the LSAT to no more than three times in a two-year period. Accordingly, you should plan to take the test only once; however, should you feel that your score does not accurately reflect your abilities you can choose to retake the test. Law schools will see all attempts at the LSAT, and each individual school has their own policy when looking at multiple attempts. While the majority of law schools will look at only the highest LSAT score, some schools will average your scores together, and some schools will take into account all attempts when reviewing applications.

If you are unsure as to whether you should retake the LSAT, it is a good idea to discuss your concerns and options with a pre-law advisor. The decision to retake the test will depend on the schools to which you are applying, as well as your honest evaluation of whether or not you believe you can improve your test score. For more information on the LSAT, please visit the LSAC website.
Trends in Legal Hiring

- According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, there will be a 10% increase in employment for lawyers from 2012 to 2022
- There will continue to be strong job competition since there are still more law school graduates than available jobs for lawyers
- The fastest-growing legal job markets are in the Mountain States with Utah, Colorado and Nevada in the lead
- According to the American Bar Association, hot practice areas include Intellectual Property Law, Environmental Law, Immigration Law, Elder Law, and Animal Law

Focus On: Environmental Law

Environmental law involves the enforcement of environmental laws and regulations and the defense of clients (usually industries such as refining and manufacturing) accused of violating those laws and regulations. This might include issues involving air, water or soil quality; waste management; contaminant cleanup (such as after an oil spill); and chemical safety. The effect of climate change on the environment is a new and growing focus of environmental law.

More and more, lawyers who practice environmental law do so on an international scale since pollution issues are often widespread and cross international boundaries by both water and air.

If you care about the environment and balancing the rights of businesses to exist and grow with the rights of all people to live in a healthy environment, environmental law might be the career for you.

Tips for Surviving the First Week of Law School

Some of you may be starting your first semester of law school in just a few short months, so keep these tips in mind as you prepare to make this transition into a new and challenging environment. This information can also be of use for those of you who are still some years out from beginning your legal education; law school is an enormous commitment so it is never too early to begin preparing yourself or success!

- Focus on the present moment rather than dwelling on the future
- Develop your own study process before joining study groups
- Make friends with your classmates
- Don’t be intimidated by instructors
- Take thorough notes in class
- Prepare yourself to be bewildered!

Adapted from a US News & World Report article outlining several tips for surviving the first week of law school. Click here to read this article in its entirety.
Bachelor/Juris Doctor 3+3 program for Environmental Studies Majors

The Environmental Studies majors are eligible for NAU’s 3+3 program offered in conjunction with the University of Arizona’s James E. Rogers College of Law. This program allows outstanding students to substitute their final year of undergraduate studies with their first year of law school and earn an undergraduate (BS or BA) and law degree (JD) in six years instead of seven years. Please refer to the Bachelor/Juris Doctor 3+3 Program catalog page for more information.

Faculty Spotlight

This semester, we will be spotlighting Dr. Robert Sanford, professor in the School of Earth Sciences and Environmental Sustainability. Dr. Sanford will be the faculty advisor for the 3+3 program, which is a collaboration between the Environmental Studies department at NAU and the James E. Rogers College of Law at the University of Arizona. Prior to his work at NAU, Dr. Sanford served as a Program Director for the National Science Foundation, a professor at the University of Denver, and a research scientist at both Colorado State University and North Carolina State University.

How did you get involved in pre-law advising, and how long have you been a pre-law advisor?
I am just starting as a pre-law advisor for the new 3+3 program shared between Environmental Studies at NAU and the James E. Rogers College of Law at University of Arizona.

What is your goal as a pre-law advisor?
My goal as a pre-law advisor is to provide timely and useful information to students who are interested in working on environmental questions and are passionate about law as the venue for doing so.

What advice do you have for students thinking about law school?
My advice for students thinking about law school is ‘before the gates of excellence, the high gods have placed sweat’ (Hesiod).

In other words, if you are planning on going to law school, be prepared to work hard to achieve success. A career in law takes extensive and rigorous preparation, but it will all be worth it once you finish!