

The Application

With your CAS registration, you now receive electronic access to the application forms for all accredited law schools in the United States. It is possible to complete all your applications and submit them electronically. You may also complete the applications online, print them out, and send them to the respective law schools. Many schools now state that they prefer receiving applications electronically, and each year more and more students choose to apply that way. You may also download application forms from the various law school websites.

A law school application has four basic parts -- the forms, a personal statement (which may be part of the forms), perhaps a resume, and recommendations. The forms are generally self-explanatory. Remember that your law school application forms may become part of your record when you apply for bar admission. Accordingly, make sure everything on your application is correct. If you have had some problem -- academic, discipline, or otherwise-- **do not ignore the problem** on your application, as the law schools will assume the worst. Use the application form as an opportunity to explain, not excuse, whatever happened.

Recommendations are an important part of the application process. The CAS now offers a Letter of Recommendation Service which law schools generally accept. You may have your recommendations sent directly to the CAS and then select which letters are to be sent to which school. Once you have registered with the CAS, you will have access to the required Letter of Recommendation form.

Decide whom you will ask. In general, you should have at least two academic recommendations; you may also have another recommendation from an employer or someone who knows you well. Ideally, the academic recommendations should come from professors who actually know you; the professor will not have much to write about if all he/she knows about you is that you did well in his/her class. If you know in the spring of your junior year whom you want to ask, you should speak with them before the end of the semester to determine whether they will be here or away in the fall and, if they will be away, how to contact them. If you have not decided on your recommenders before the fall, do so early in the fall semester if at all possible. Again, your goal is to have a completed application in as early as possible. On each recommendation form, you will have the opportunity to waive your right to read the recommendation. In general, law schools treat recommendations more seriously if you waive your right to

read the recommendation. Once you have the law school/CAS recommendation forms, give them to the recommender along with your resume, transcript, personal statement, and any other information you wish the recommender to have.

Some schools require a **Dean's Certification or Dean's Letter**. At UNC-CH, those are processed by the Dean of Students Office located in the SASB. Take the form, provided by the law school requesting the certification, to Doris Martin in that office. The office telephone number is 919-966-4042.

Personal statements are often the hardest part of the application for a student to complete. The personal statement is your opportunity to distinguish yourself from all the other law school applicants. In addition, law schools look at your personal statement as an example of your writing skills. The Prelaw Advisor is willing to review your personal statement; it is generally best if you can leave the statement with the Advisor and allow him or her adequate time to review it. The Writing Center will also review personal statements.

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