

# SPECIAL PROGRAMS AND PRE-PROFESSIONAL PROGRAMS

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## Pre-Law Program

Advising Center, McMullen First Floor West  
(406) 657-2240

Most accredited law schools require that a Bachelor's degree be completed prior to registration. Additionally, admission is based upon the applicant's score on the Law School Admission Test (LSAT), ethical character, professional promise, academic achievements, and letters of recommendation. Because admission to law school is highly competitive, a student should attempt to achieve a cumulative grade point average of at least 3.00 and a LSAT score of at least 150 within a range of 120 to 180.

Law schools do not prescribe a specific undergraduate course of study. Students should seek out specific requirements of the law schools to which they are applying.

Individuals with baccalaureate degrees in every subject area have been admitted to law schools and have become successful lawyers. The best background, however, is a program that provides a broad liberal arts education. Useful majors include English, Communication Arts, Foreign Languages, History, Psychology, and Sociology.

As the practice of law becomes increasingly technical, a specialized background in business or science may prove valuable. A major should be chosen on the basis of the interest and challenge it offers, not because it might guarantee admission to a law school.

Montana State University Billings offers a minor in Political Science with a pre-law emphasis. The Political Science minor includes courses in United States Government, Constitutional Law, Civil Liberties, and Juvenile Delinquency—areas directly related to the law.

Certain academic skills are essential: the ability to read effectively with speed and comprehension; the ability to write clearly, including a good command of grammar; and the ability to think logically. These basic skills can be acquired by carefully selecting courses and instructors, regardless of the specific subject. Communication skills can also be developed through drama, creative writing, and the like. The ability to type and computer skills are invaluable.

Law schools require applicants to take the LSAT, a half-day standardized test. It consists of three sections which evaluate a student's reading comprehension, analytical reasoning, logical reasoning, and other skills. A 30-minute writing session is also included. The writing sample is not scored; rather, copies of the essay are sent to all schools to which candidates request their LSAT score sent. Most law schools also require candidates to register for the Law School Data Assembly Service (LSDAS), a biographical and academic information clearinghouse. The LSAT should be taken in June following the junior year or in October of the senior year.

Most law schools operate on a semester basis; they begin the year of study in September and only allow admission at that time. Pre-law students should begin to consider possible law schools during the spring of their junior year and complete their applications by the end of the fall semester of their senior year. The Pre-Law Handbook provides information about all accredited law schools; it may be consulted in the pre-law advisor's office.

Montana State University Billings provides the basis for an excellent pre-law education. While admission to law school ultimately depends upon the student's abilities, MSU Billings offers challenging courses and instructors who help individuals develop the skills needed for admission into law school and a successful legal career.

This information is general and only serves as a beginning. More detailed information, including a suggested pre-law curriculum and particular law school admission standards, is available on request from the faculty pre-law advisor.

## Pre-Nursing

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The Pre-Nursing curriculum at MSU Billings is designed in conjunction with the College of Nursing at Montana State University-Bozeman. This two year pre-nursing program fulfills the basic undergraduate General Education requirements and the College of Nursing requirements **with the exception of five (5) lower division nursing courses**. One of these five lower division courses is available online through MSU-Bozeman. The remaining four (4) lower division nursing courses are taught at the Bozeman Campus and are offered on a limited basis at the Billings campus.

Upper Division placement is competitive and based strictly on a "selected" Grade Point Average (GPA) calculation. Due to occasional changes in the curriculum, it is essential to contact the pre-nursing advisor before course selection.

Students interested in details of the complete MSU-Bozeman program may write directly to MSU-Bozeman College of Nursing or contact the director at the Billings extended campus of the MSU-Bozeman College of Nursing located on the MSU Billings campus, Apsaruke Hall 212, 657-1775.

Students are reminded that a Practical Nursing Program is available at City College at MSU Billings. The chairperson of the Health Occupations Department may be reached at (406) 247-3000.

## Pre-Physical Therapy

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Students interested in Physical Therapy should see an advisor for information. Forms outlining the curricula for transfer to the University of Montana program are available from the from the Advising Center on McMullen first floor west. Students planning to transfer to any other school will need to obtain a catalog from the college and, in consultation with their advisor, develop a plan of study to meet the specific requirements of the college of their choice. Because competition for acceptance into the professional schools is intense, the student should maintain a strong grade point average, have experience in the field, be knowledgeable of the application deadlines for the schools of choice, and apply to several schools.