

HEALTH PROFESSIONS AND PRELAW CENTER

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Resumes for Law School Applications:

We recommend including a resume with all of your applications. Most admissions people find one useful, and it is a chance for you to present your qualifications and experiences on your terms. [However, note that unless the application states otherwise, or you call the admissions office and ask, do not answer a question on your application with “see resume!”]

A resume for law schools need not be as formal as a “job-search” resume. For example, you do not need an “objective” or references (recommendation letters serve that latter purpose). If you are short on space, you can also eliminate your contact information—but do include your name and ID number on every page. Unless a length is specified by the law school, resumes can be more than one page, and you can go into more detail in your descriptions than you might in a job-search resume. Organize it in the way that maximizes your strengths. Consider listing your GPA in the major, or, if you have an upward trend, for the last 3 or 4 semesters if it is significantly different from your cumulative GPA [e.g., “GPA since fall 2006:”]. List minors and honors; consider mentioning areas that you have studied in some depth even if you did not get a minor (e.g., “relevant coursework includes 18 credits at the Kelley School of Business, including...”) as these are NOT reported on the LSAC analysis of your transcript. Use common sense in deciding what to include. A HPPLC Prelaw Advisor would be happy to review your resume.

Anything that you have done in life outside the classroom is fair game for the resume. Remember, after they decide that you could succeed *academically* at their school [and about 70% of applicants to a given school fall into this category], they then look for *interesting people* who have done a variety of *interesting things* in life as well as academically. If something you’ve done is NOT listed somewhere in your application material, it’s as if IT NEVER HAPPENED. Keep in mind that law schools know that even most people they deny would in fact succeed there. You do need more than numbers. You need an interesting, personal, memorable, unique, admirable story. The personal statement and resume work together as vehicles to convey this aspect of what you would bring to a law school class. Show that you are a well-rounded, renaissance person. Even seemingly mundane activities may attract the attention of a like-minded admissions official (e.g., bowling, cooking, reading mystery novels).

Format the resume for the official who may only take 15 seconds to skim it—that is, err on the side of having more categories [e.g., “Student Leadership,” “Volunteer Activities,” “Internships,” “Professional Employment,” “Other Employment,” “Athletics,” “Honors,” “Publications,” “Skills,” “Interests,” etc.], as opposed to simply having one or two giant categories for “Activities” or “Employment”. Make sure the most important and impressive points stand out and are easy to read quickly.

With the above caveats in mind, here are a few websites with guides for creating a resume. Each is different in their approach. IUB’s Career Development Center will give you an individual appointment for creating a resume. See their website at www.indiana.edu/~career/, email iucareer@indiana.edu, or call 812-855-5234. We urge you to take advantage of their services.

IUB’s CDC guide to resumes: http://www.indiana.edu/~career/students/job_search/resumes.php.

University of Minnesota’s Resume Tutor: <http://www1.umn.edu/ohr/careerdev/resources/resume/>.

University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee Career Center’s “Resume Writing Guide”
https://www4.uwm.edu/cdc/prepare/resumes_letters_references.cfm.

[This document has been prepared for Indiana University - Bloomington students by the Health Professions and Prelaw Center. Please note that specific requirements and policies can change at any time without notice. Students are responsible for obtaining the most current information directly from the application services, schools, and programs in which they have an interest.]