

# Completing the J.D. Application: Tips and Advice

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**TAKE YOUR TIME.** Do not rush through completing your application.

**READ EACH QUESTION CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU RESPOND** and take time to be sure you understand what information is sought. If you're not clear, read below. If you're still unclear, call us. At 954.262.6117, or email us at [law-admissions@nova.edu](mailto:law-admissions@nova.edu). Each law school asks different questions, typically on the same topics. A proper answer for one school's application might not suffice for another school's question on the same topic. *Your response may have to be adjusted from one school's application to another.* Annoying? Yes. Worth the time and effort to do it right? Totally!

**USE UPPER AND LOWER CASE PROPERLY.** All caps are hard to read and, because it's done on a computer, come across as shouting. All lower case makes me think of the poet e.e. cummings and is equally hard to read. Proper sentences and punctuation make you look better and indicate professionalism and appropriate care.

**DO YOUR HOMEWORK AND RESEARCH.** You may need to check your college transcripts to see if you were warned or on probation or to determine the dates of actions. You may need to consult police records to properly answer character and fitness questions. You might have to contact your Aunt Suzie to learn when she attended the College of Law. Accurate answers are important and "I didn't remember" is not an acceptable response for why information was omitted.

**BE THOROUGH IN YOUR ANSWERS.** Let's say you were placed on probation one semester. You could get clinical and technical and say, *"Early in my college career I was placed on probation because my GPA was 1.9 and the college's rule states that any student with a GPA between 1.75 and 1.99 is on probation."* OR you could provide the following answer that provides us with better and more helpful information, *"University of the Atlantic Ocean placed me on academic probation following the fall semester of 2009. I was diagnosed with mononucleosis in early October and missed many classes. Despite my doctor's advice, I chose to remain in school; a decision that only prolonged my illness. Although I was quite ill, I took my mid-term exams and did not do well. By the end of the semester, I was better but not fully recuperated. I improved on my final exams, but the damage from missing classes and doing poorly on mid-terms caused my GPA to drop to a 1.9 and place me on academic probation. Restored to full health in the spring semester of 2010, my grades increased significantly and my probation was removed after that term."* A slightly longer answer jam-packed with useful information is always better. You don't need to supply a dissertation-length explanation for everything; keep it on point.

**PROOFREAD EVERYTHING BEFORE YOU SUBMIT IT.** Read through the application and all attachments a few times before submitting and transmitting it. Get someone who is real good with English grammar and spelling to be another set of eyes. Carelessness gives an impression you don't want. It's better to take a little extra time to get it right and have it polished.

**DON'T PROCRASTINATE.** A deadline or priority consideration date is a date by which it should be done, not the date to get it done. The LSAC Electronic Application is set up so that you can work on your application, stop, save what you've done, and come back to work on it some more later on. Take advantage of that and start early. If you're rushing at the deadline or rushing to be first, you will make mistakes. *You're better than that!*

## COMPLETING THE NSU LAW J.D. APPLICATION FOR ADMISSION

Application Section	Question	Tips & Advice
<b>Program</b>	<i>Program preference</i>	You must choose <i>either Full Time or Part Time</i> . You can't choose "both" or "either one" or "whichever will accept me" or "whichever has room." The process and standards are the same, so the admission decision would not be different. If you plan to focus exclusively on school then you would choose Full Time. If you plan to work full time or you're caring for children or family members during the day, you would choose Part Time.
	<i>Foreign Attorney</i>	If you earned a law degree in another country or you are licensed to practice law in another country, you would check "yes." Usually, a foreign attorney is seeking to become licensed to practice in Florida and we need to know this so that proper advising can be done.
<b>Biographical</b>	<i>All</i>	These questions are all self-explanatory, but a few are often omitted or misunderstood.
	<i>Previous name</i>	Means a <i>different</i> name than the one you now have. Usually this is a maiden name or a version of a name you changed when you became a naturalized citizen.
	<i>Preferred first name</i>	My given name is William and I use it professionally, but my family and friends call me Bill (for now, you can call me Dean Perez or Mr. Perez; we can get familiar later on). We'd like you to be comfortable when dealing with us, and referring to you by your version of Bill might just do that.
	<i>Social Security Number</i>	A double-check to make sure we're always dealing with the right applicant. It's also needed to match your FAFSA later on when we package financial aid. It's also a back-up identifier. Canadians, please use your Social Insurance Number. <i>We regard this information as confidential and keep it secure!</i>
	<i>All</i>	Self-explanatory, but the following need some detail.
<b>Contact Information</b>	<i>Current mailing address good until</i>	We need to stay in contact with you, so if you know you will be leaving an address, let us know when. If your current and permanent addresses are the same, leave this blank. Keep us updated on changes not indicated on your application.
	<i>Zip/postal code</i>	Please provide it.
	<i>E-mail addresses</i>	Enter only one per field please.
	<i>Cell phone</i>	We don't call often and we don't provide your number outside of the College of Law; so you won't be hassled. If you indicate it's OK to text, we can communicate with you that way.
	<i>Permission to text messages</i>	Some of our communication is done by text. Because some people still have mobile phone plans that charge per text message, we want your permission to contact you this way. You don't have to agree to it. Most people seem to prefer text messaging these days.
	<i>All</i>	Self-explanatory, but the following need some detail.
<b>Demographics</b>	<i>Citizenship</i>	We love everyone regardless of citizenship. We need to know who will need help with a visa later on and the Financial Aid Office needs to determine if you are eligible for federal aid programs.
	<i>Native Language</i>	Knowing whether or not English is your main language can assist us in our review.

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	<i>Ethnicity</i>	These data are collected for reporting to various agencies and organizations as well as on-line and print guides applicants use to learn about schools.
		Neither admissions nor financial aid differs based on your response to this question. Please first answer whether you are Hispanic or Latino, then also answer the race or races you consider yourself to be. Please indicate a racial identity in the second part (and third, if applicable).
	<i>Tribal Affiliation</i>	If you identify as American Indian, Native American or Alaskan Native, provide your tribal affiliation or village name and your enrollment number. If you do not have an enrollment number, you may attach a statement describing your identity as American Indian, Native American or Alaskan Native.
<b>Family</b>	<i>Next of kin/emergency contact</i>	Sometimes an applicant moves and we lose contact; this helps us stay in touch with you.
	<i>Parent/Guardian</i>	<p>There are myriad variations on family and we don't want to hold applicants to one standard. We don't use "mother" or "father" here because your parents might be different than that. If you are estranged from a parent, chances are you know enough of this information to include it. <i>Many applicants do themselves a disservice by leaving out this information; don't.</i> Some applicants think that providing this information will make them lose out on scholarships or financial aid. <b><i>That's NOT why we're asking and it's not a consideration anyway.</i></b></p> <p>This information helps us understand the support, or lack of it, you may have had and the pressures and stresses you coped with or obstacles you might have had to overcome. Modestly educated parents often want the best for their children but have difficulty understanding what college is about. Similarly, highly educated parents may place unrealistic demands on children.</p> <p><b><i>Again, money is not, I repeat NOT, the purpose of this question.</i></b> Having information on who one regards as parents, their level of education, and how they have earned a living helps us understand <i>you</i> better. If a parent is retired, please indicate the line of work from which she or he retired. If a parent is deceased, please let us know about her or his education and work history. Not having this information can impede a decision.</p>
	<i>Relative who attended school</i>	We are primarily interested in those who attended the College of Law, but list all divisions of NSU. Please let us know division, degree, and date of graduation. If you don't know, ask your relative!
<b>Education</b>	<i>List all institutions attended</i>	List <b>all schools</b> you have attended from high school (secondary school) to the present. Include your high school, and colleges and universities attended where you earned credits while in high school, took summer courses, studied abroad, completed post-baccalaureate studies, and where you earned degrees. Have all post-secondary institutions send official transcripts directly to LSAC for inclusion with your Credential Assembly Service (CAS) report. Do not omit a school for any reason, including the fact that courses or credits from that school might appear on a later school's transcript. All means ALL.
	<i>Have you ever attended any law school?</i>	Answer yes if you attended even one day of law school or you were enrolled in a law school conditional admission program.

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	<i>Did you leave the law school under less than good standing?</i>	This question refers to your law school academic standing. If you were dismissed or academically disqualified from law school or placed on probation or other warning status before leaving law school, you must answer yes, even if they will permit you to reapply there. If you answer yes you must also attach a supplemental statement providing information on the circumstances and giving us insight into why you had academic difficulties there.
	<i>Educational interruption</i>	If you have had any breaks between the start of and completion of your degree(s) then answer yes and provide us with an explanation that accounts for your activities in that break. This does not refer to breaks between degrees.
<b>Standardized Tests</b>	<i>LSAT</i>	Indicate dates you have taken or plan to take the LSAT. Include your score for past tests. If your plans change for a future test registration, please notify us by email or we will be waiting for a score that won't be coming or we'll be making an admission decision prematurely. We will wait for a future test score, even if you ask us not to, as we believe it is in your best interests for us to wait.
	<i>TOEFL and IELTS</i>	Applicants whose prior education was not in English are required to present a score from one of these English proficiency tests in addition to an LSAT score. Only one of these tests is required, not both.
<b>Law School Interest</b>	<i>What prompted you to apply</i>	OK, this is a marketing question to help us assess how applicants learn about us.
	<i>Recruiting events</i>	This information aids us in remembering you if we met at an event and provides us with guidance as to where we should spend our time recruiting potential students.
	<i>Prior application &amp; decision</i>	So we know to look for information in a prior application that might help your case
	<i>Where else are you applying</i>	OK, it's a marketing question. It helps us to know which schools we're competing with.
<b>Military</b>	<i>All</i>	These questions are self-explanatory. If you are a veteran or currently on active-duty, we thank you for your service and we are honored that you are applying to NSU Law.
<b>Background &amp; Interests</b>	<i>Current resume or curriculum vitae</i>	Include this as an attachment. We advise using a more thorough resume than you would submit for employment and we ask that you include the following information: 1) relevant employment; 2) scholastic or academic honors, including scholarships, fellowships, prizes, honor societies, and other honors; 3) community and school service and volunteer activities; and 4) any skills and experiences relevant to law study. NOTE: we do not use an application question to list employment, only this resume or CV.
	<i>Areas of interest</i>	Choose up to three areas of interest. If you're offered admission, faculty often follows up with those interested in the areas in which they teach.
	<i>Law school conditional admission program participation</i>	Reply yes if you have participated in a law school conditional admission program whether or not you finished the program or were successful. Indicate the law school.

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<b>Character and Fitness</b>	<i>About this section</i>	<p>Because you are seeking admission to law school so you can enter a profession that has high ethical standards, character and fitness is an issue of consideration. Before you answer <b>any</b> of these questions, check transcripts and school records, check police records and court records, ask parents about these issues (they often remember every detail), and check your state driving record. If you're embarrassed or afraid that disclosure will prevent you from being admitted to law school, be totally forthcoming anyway. If you don't properly disclose matters, you might not be admitted to the bar even if you completed law school and passed the bar exam. An answer of "YES" to any of these questions must be accompanied by a written statement from you providing details of the matter including dates, location, description of or cause of the matter or action, course of the matter and the outcome.</p> <p>If a matter was expunged or records sealed by a court, you may opt to answer "no," but are then required to submit a copy of the court order expunging or sealing the record.</p>
	<i>ACADEMIC: academic warning</i>	Many schools provide a written or verbal warning before more serious actions are imposed. Whether or not it's recorded on your transcript, you must disclose an academic warning.
	<i>ACADEMIC: academic probation</i>	If you were placed on academic probation at any point in postsecondary studies for any length of time, you must disclose each placement, whether or not the transcript still reflects so.
	<i>ACADEMIC: academic suspension or dismissal</i>	You must disclose all incidences of academic suspension or dismissal, even if you were later reinstated. If you left a school but knew your performance was poor, you must check with that school to learn if you were placed on suspension or dismissal
	<i>ACADEMIC: Requested or advised to discontinue</i>	Some schools will advise or counsel a student to voluntarily leave the institution to spare the student from being dismissed or terminated. If this happened to you, the answer is yes and a written explanation is needed.
	<i>ACADEMIC: Dropped, expelled, requested or advised to withdraw</i>	Just in case you did not understand the previous questions, we are covering this again in different words. Call it clarification, call it jogging one's memory, call it what you want, we call it covering all ground.
	<i>CONDUCT: Accused of a violation of student conduct code or honor code</i>	An accusation of such a violation mandates answering yes and disclosure. Even if there was no finding, penalty, or process or review, the accusation alone requires disclosure. Similarly, disclosure is required if there is no record or the record was expunged, destroyed, or vacated.
	<i>CONDUCT: Dropped, expelled, suspended, required to withdraw, or otherwise disciplined</i>	If any of these outcomes, or similarly worded outcomes, occurred, a response of yes and a full disclosure is required. This is true even if there is no record or the record was expunged, destroyed, or vacated.
	<i>CONDUCT: Warning or probation</i>	If any of these outcomes, or similarly worded outcomes, occurred, a response of yes and a full disclosure is required. This is true even if there is no record or the record was expunged, destroyed, or vacated.

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	<i>CONDUCT: Request or advised to discontinue</i>	If any of these outcomes, or similarly worded outcomes, occurred, a response of yes and a full disclosure is required. This is true even if there is no record or the record was expunged, destroyed, or vacated.
	<i>LEGAL: Conviction, plea of guilty or nolo contendere, adjudication of guilt withheld, participation in first-offender or pre-trial diversion program, or commission of criminal offense where records have been sealed or expunged</i>	If any of this has occurred to you in a criminal matter, you must answer yes and fully disclose. In the case of records being sealed or expunged, you are not required to disclose the facts but you must provide us with a copy of the court order that seals or expunges those records. NOTE: driving under the influence or a traffic matter involving drugs or alcohol is not a minor traffic offense.
	<i>LEGAL: Charge resulting in probation, community service or jail sentence</i>	If any of these outcomes occurred in your past, or an outcome that is similarly worded, you must respond yes and provide a full disclosure.
	<i>LEGAL: Pending criminal charges</i>	A case that is pending without final resolution must be disclosed.
	<i>LEGAL: Driver's license restricted, revoked, suspended</i>	If any of these outcomes have occurred or the result of a traffic violation was a fine (or fine and court fees) of \$200 or more, you must disclose.
	<i>LICENSURE: Denial, revocation or suspension of professional license</i>	Has this ever happened to you? If yes, disclosure is mandated. Note, this is not being fired from a job unless a professional license was impacted.
<b>Certification</b>	<i>All</i>	Read the statement carefully and be sure you understand it. You are certifying that you have responded truthfully and completely, not to the best of your recollection or memory. You are also acknowledging that you have a continuing obligation to inform us of changes to your application, including legal matters that occur from the time you apply through your graduation from our law school. You are providing an electronic signature that has the same effect of a manual signature.