Application Instructions
for the Juris Doctor
and Dual J.D./LL.M. Programs

Please submit your application file no later than November 1, 2013 and to be completed by November 15, 2013 for our Binding Early Decision Round I process and January 6, 2014 for Round II and February 1, 2014 for Regular Decision. If you do so, we will return a decision by January 1, 2014. If you apply via Early Decision Round I or II, if admitted, you will be required to attend Cornell Law School in the fall of 2014 and withdraw all other applications to law schools.

Binding Early Decision – Round I. Your application must be submitted by November 1, 2013. The Law School’s Admissions Office must receive all required documents, including the LSAC Credential Assembly Service (CAS) report (which may be delivered as late as two weeks after we request it) by November 15, 2013. Application files completed after November 15, 2013, will still be considered for Early Decision; however, we cannot guarantee a decision date. Applicants whose files are complete by November 15 will receive a decision (admit, hold, or deny) by mid- to late December and no later than January 1, 2014. Those admitted under Early Decision will be required to withdraw all other applications to law schools and pay the full deposit of $900 within 5 business days after notification of admission.

Binding Early Decision – Round II. Your application must be submitted by January 6, 2014. The Law School’s Admissions Office must receive all required documents, including the LSAC Credential Assembly Service (CAS) report (which may be delivered as late as two weeks after we request it) by January 15, 2014. Application files completed after January 15, 2014, will be considered for Early Decision; however, we cannot guarantee a decision date. Applicants whose files are complete by January 15 will receive a decision (admit, hold, or deny) by mid- to late February and no later than March 1, 2014. Those admitted under Early Decision will be required to withdraw all other applications to law schools and pay the full deposit of $900 within 5 business days after notification of admission.

Regular Decision. Please complete your application file no later than February 1, 2014. If you do so, we will do our best to notify you of a decision by mid- to late April. We advise you to aim for completion no later than January 1, 2014, since we notify applicants of decisions on a rolling basis. There is no universal acceptance date.

Prerequisites. In general, you need a baccalaureate degree from a regionally accredited college or university. On rare occasions, we admit exceptionally well-qualified applicants who have completed only three years of undergraduate education, provided they receive a baccalaureate degree before beginning their second year at the Law School. If you have questions about prerequisites or need more details, please contact the Admissions Office.

Personal statement. Part of your application is the separate personal statement in which you may discuss any matter you feel is relevant to our admission decision. The choice of subject is left to you, but our desire is to learn something about you that we may not be able to learn from the other elements of the application. Try to limit your statement to two pages and use double spacing and at least 11 point font.

Credential Assembly Service (CAS) Law School Report. If you haven’t already done so, you will need to take the LSAT and register with LSAC’s Credential Assembly Service (CAS). Your transcripts will need to be sent to LSAC for analysis and ultimate distribution to law schools.

Letters of recommendations. You should give recommendation forms to two people who can provide detailed comments about your academic abilities compared with those of other students who are applying to law schools. While we do not require that you have faculty members complete your recommendation forms, we’re primarily interested in the recommender’s judgment about your academic abilities and potential for success in the legal profession. Moreover, we have found that faculty members are often in the best position to provide such judgment about your academic abilities and potential for success.

If you graduated from school several years ago (two years or more), we would expect you to ask a current or recent employer who knows your academic abilities to fill out one of the recommendation forms. Remember, however, that we’re interested primarily in the recommender’s judgment about your academic abilities and potential for success in the legal profession. Prelaw Committee composite letters, or letters submitted separately from the LSAC form, are acceptable. Cornell Law School strongly prefers to receive recommendations through the LSAC Letter of Recommendation Service that is a part of the Credential Assembly Service (CAS) registration.

LSAC Evaluation Service. Evaluators can use this online tool to rate specific non-cognitive factors that will help law schools assess applicants. The Evaluation Service includes ratings of thirty individual attributes and skills in six categories. The evaluations are an adjunct to LSAC’s current letter of recommendation service and will function in a similar way, except that the evaluation service is entirely online.

Please note, you are required to submit two letters of recommendation or evaluations. Accordingly, you can submit two letters of recommendation or two evaluations or one letter of recommendation and one evaluation. The same person should not submit both a letter of recommendation and an evaluation on your behalf.
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The Dean's Certification Form. A Dean's Certification Form is not required as part of your application for admission unless you answered “yes” to question 17 using the FlexApp. If you answered “yes” to this question, please give this form to the dean of students (or a comparable official with access to the school’s official records) at the institution from where the infraction occurred or is pending.

The function of this form is to supply the Admissions Committee of Cornell Law School with information relevant to our admission process for the applicant, from any institution from which they have received or will receive a degree. Cornell Law School requires that the institution certify that the applicant is in good standing and to disclose any infraction(s) and/or disciplinary proceedings that have occurred or are pending (if applicable).

Access to recommendations/evaluations. Federal legislation gives registered students the right of access to appraisals/evaluations submitted in support of their applications. If you choose to waive this right, you should check the appropriate box on the recommendation/evaluation/certification forms. Your decision about the option will not influence the Admissions Committee’s decision, but it might be important to your recommenders/evaluators. You should discuss the matter with them.

Applicants with foreign credentials and/or nonimmigrant visas. If your undergraduate training was at a foreign university, you should follow the regular admissions procedure. Foreign credentials do not exempt you from the LSAT requirement. If all undergraduate work was completed at institutions outside the United States (including its territories) and/or Canada, we require that your foreign transcripts be submitted through the Credential Assembly Service (CAS). If you completed any postsecondary work outside the U.S. (including its territories) or Canada, you must use this service for transcript evaluation and authentication of your foreign transcripts. The one exception to this requirement is if you completed the foreign work through a study-abroad, consortium, or exchange program sponsored by a U.S. or Canadian institution, and the work is clearly indicated as such on the home campus transcript. This service is included in the Credential Assembly Service (CAS) registration fee. A Foreign Credential Evaluation will be completed by the American Association of Collegiate Registrars and Admissions Officers (AACRAO), and will be incorporated into your law school report.

To use the Credential Assembly Service (CAS), log in to your online account with LSAC and follow the instructions to register for the service. To use the authentication and evaluation feature, you must register for the Credential Assembly Service (CAS) and you must request that the appropriate documents (e.g., mark sheets, academic records, diplomas, degree certifications, transcripts) be sent directly to LSAC from the institution(s) you attended. Remember you must print out a Transcript Request Form and send it promptly to each institution that possesses a transcript for you. Foreign transcripts usually require more time to process than U.S. transcripts.

Questions about the Credential Assembly Service can be directed to LSAC at 215-968-1001 or LSACinfo@LSAC.org.

Interviews. Although in some cases the Admissions Committee may request an evaluative interview, we generally are not able to conduct interviews. Applicants who are placed on the waiting list can request an interview. If applicants who are placed on the waiting list can request an interview with a member of the Admissions Committee.

Visiting the school. You’re invited to visit us whenever it’s convenient for you. Arrangements can usually be made for a student-guided tour and a visit to a class; just call the Admissions Office several days before you plan to arrive. If a personal visit to Cornell Law School is not possible, we suggest you visit our website, www.lawschool.cornell.edu.

Application Checklist

A complete application contains the following:

- the completed application form, personal statement, resume, & Credential Assembly Service (CAS) Law School report
- the completed Dean’s Certification Form (when applicable)
- two letters of recommendation or completed LSAC evaluations
- the US$80 application fee (via online charge to a major credit card, or by check or money order payable to Cornell University)

These materials must be received by Cornell Law School no later than the deadline specified by the application process for which you are applying.

Complete accuracy is required in all statements made on any portion of the application. To ensure that decisions are based on factual information, we audit some applications at random each year. In addition, you are required to update us about any changes that take place after submission of the application. Inaccurate, incomplete, or misleading statements, or failure to update, can result in withdrawal of admission offers, honor code proceedings, dismissal from Cornell Law School, rescission or cancellation of any degrees you may have received from Cornell Law School, or other disciplinary sanctions.

Note: In some states, you must register with the board of bar examiners before beginning the study of law. Make sure you check the requirements in the state(s) where you want to practice. All applicants are advised that there are character, fitness, and other qualifications for admission to the bar. Prior to your matriculation at Cornell Law School, you are encouraged to determine what those bar admission requirements are in the state(s) in which you intend to practice.

Special note to applicants for financial aid:

Please visit the Tuition and Financial Aid portion of our web site: http://www.lawschool.cornell.edu/admissions/tuition/