



# LAW SCHOOL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TOP 14



# LAW SCHOOL APPLICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR THE TOP 14

The top 14 law schools, also known as the T-14, are all highly competitive without a doubt. A big part of making sure you present the best version of yourself to admissions committees is, as simple as it sounds, to follow the instructions. If you don't send every single requirement on each school's checklist, applications missing required components may not be reviewed. While these requirements are similar, they aren't identical for all schools. There are specific things you need to take note of so that you can complete your file successfully. To make sure you've got every component ready on time, it's important to know what each school asks for in order to evaluate your application.

To help you plan ahead and figure out exactly what you need to prepare before you're ready to hit the submit button on the LSAC, we've outlined the requirements in the following table. The information is arranged according to school, and was gathered from official school websites. It also details which tests the institutions accept, protocols for letters of recommendation, prompts for the personal statement and additional essays such as diversity statements, as well as resumé requirements as specified by the top 14 law schools.



[Yale](#)



[Stanford](#)



[Harvard](#)



[University of Chicago](#)



[Columbia](#)



[New York University](#)



[University of Pennsylvania](#)



[University of Virginia](#)



[University of Michigan](#)



[Duke University](#)



[Northwestern Pritzker](#)



[Berkeley](#)



[Cornell](#)



[Georgetown](#)

When you look at all of them at once, the requirements might seem overwhelming. You have to take it one school at a time, one component at a time. Once you've figured out what you need, check in with your recommenders about their letters, and with your college registrar about your transcript. If you haven't started drafting your essays yet, get to them! Aim to submit your application as early as possible once all materials are complete. For optional essays, choose the prompt which conveys your interests and goals the best, and make sure each essay adds new information about yourself. Organization is key when you're applying to multiple top law schools. Good luck!

## Yale Law School

### Score Requirements

Transcript; GRE or LSAT Score

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### Letter of Recommendation

Yale Law School requires at least two letters of recommendation and strongly prefers letters from professors who know your academic performance and have had a chance to personally evaluate significant aspects of your academic work.

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### Personal Statement Prompt

Please submit a personal statement that will enable the admissions committee to make a fully informed judgment on your application. Many applicants include the personal statement they have prepared for other law school applications.

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### Additional Writing Prompts

The 250-word essay is an opportunity to explore an idea or issue from your academic, extracurricular, or professional work that is of particular interest to you. The idea or issue you choose does not have to be law-related; this is simply another opportunity for faculty readers to learn more about how you would engage in the law school community. You will have the opportunity to include optional addenda to your application if any are necessary for a full representation of your candidacy, for example: a diversity statement or explanations related to test scores or transcripts. It is not necessary to include any, and many applicants do not include addenda.

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### Resumé Requirements

You may include a resumé with your application.

## Stanford Law School

### Score Requirements

Transcript; LSAT score

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### Letter of Recommendation

Stanford requires that at least two and no more than four letters of recommendation submitted through the application process (LSAC/CAS).

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### Personal Statement Prompt

Please attach a statement of about two pages describing important or unusual aspects of yourself not otherwise apparent in your application.

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### Additional Writing Prompts

All optional (at least one strongly recommended) If you would like the committee to consider how your background, life and work experiences, advanced studies, extracurricular or community activities, culture, socio-economic status, sex, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, or other factors would contribute to the diversity of the entering class (and hence to your classmates' law school educational experience), you may describe these factors and their relevance in a separate diversity essay.

**Optional Short Essays:**

Applicants may respond to up to two short-answer questions (100–250 words each) selected from Stanford's current list.

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**Resumé Requirements**

Stanford requires a one-to-two page resumé describing your academic, extracurricular and professional activities. The resumé must be submitted electronically with your electronic application.

## Harvard Law School

**Score Requirements**

Transcript; GRE or LSAT Score

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**Letter of Recommendation**

Two letters of recommendation are required for application to the J.D. Program. Harvard strongly recommends that at least one letter of recommendation come from an academic source. However, letters from employers or others who have worked closely with you can be very helpful, particularly if you have been out of school for many years.

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**Personal Statement Prompt**

Please submit a brief personal statement. Limit your statement to two pages, typed, double-spaced, minimum 11-point font and 1-inch margins. In many instances, applicants have used the personal statement to provide more context on how their experiences and strengths could make them valuable contributors to the Harvard and legal communities, to illuminate their intellectual background and interests, or to clarify or elaborate on other information in their application.

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**Additional Writing Prompts**

The admissions committee makes every effort to understand your achievements in the context of your background and to build a diverse student body. If applicable, you may choose to submit an optional additional statement to elaborate on how you could contribute to the diversity of the Harvard Law School community. Have you produced a significant piece of writing under the direct supervision of a faculty member or employer? Examples include but are not limited to: a thesis, a peer-reviewed and/or published article, or a white paper. If yes, please briefly describe the piece of work and the nature of the supervision. (maximum characters: 300)

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**Resumé Requirements**

Harvard requires a resumé as part of the application.

## University of Chicago Law School

### Score Requirements

Transcript; GRE or LSAT Score

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### Letter of Recommendation

Two letters of recommendation are required, but UChicago will accept up to four.

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### Personal Statement Prompt

Please use the personal statement to introduce yourself to the admissions committee and to help the committee get to know you on a personal level. It should demonstrate your potential contribution to the law school community beyond simply academics and should demonstrate your ability to communicate your thoughts effectively. The admissions committee generally finds that a statement that focuses on a unique personal attribute or experience is usually the most informative (as opposed to a restatement of your qualifications or résumé).

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### Additional Writing Prompts

Please use the additional addendum options to provide any additional information that you believe is important to the admissions committee's evaluation of your application. For example, you may use an addendum to discuss how your background or experiences will enhance the diversity of the University of Chicago Law community, a disparity in multiple LSAT scores, any weaknesses or significant trends in your undergraduate record, a gap in education or work, or any other questions or issues that you believe may arise as the committee is reviewing your record.

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### Resumé Requirements

Your resumé should describe your educational history, academic honors and experiences, extracurricular and community activities, and any full or part-time work experience. Please indicate the number of hours per week spent on each activity or job, and include approximate dates for each activity. Make sure your resumé is current at the time you submit your application. If your work has been interrupted for more than a normal vacation period, describe your activities during that time either in your resumé or in a separate addendum. Your resumé may be more than one page.

## Columbia Law School

### Score Requirements

Transcript; GRE or LSAT Score

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### Letter of Recommendation

Columbia requires two original letters of recommendation from your professors, employers, supervisors, or other persons qualified to appraise your academic potential for graduate legal studies. One letter should come from a professor and one letter should come from a work supervisor. Letters from family, friends, and prominent persons who have not taught you or supervised your work are not helpful.

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### Personal Statement Prompt

Candidates to Columbia Law School are required to submit a personal statement supplementing required application materials. We are curious about your interests, goals, and aspirations and how the J.D. program at Columbia can help you achieve these. You are encouraged to think about the contributions you hope to make

to both the Columbia community and the legal profession while considering your personal, intellectual, and professional background and any relevant information that you may not have otherwise conveyed through your other application materials. Please note that the personal statement should be double-spaced and approximately two pages in length.

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### **Additional Writing Prompts**

Candidates may add brief supplementary statements they believe will enable the admissions committee to make a fully informed decision on the application. The committee especially welcomes addenda that allow it to understand the contribution the applicant's background (e.g., socioeconomic status, ethnic, religious, sexual orientation) would add to the Columbia Law School community. Should you have multiple addenda, please combine (on separate pages, if necessary) these into one document and upload here.

Short answer question: (Optional) In the space below, feel free to share any "fun facts" about yourself (hobbies, interests, special talents, and accomplishments, etc.) that the admissions committee may not be able to glean otherwise from your application. Please note that whether you choose to answer the question or not, there will be no impact on your admissions decision. (maximum characters: 1000)

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### **Resumé Requirements**

In addition to answering the preceding questions, please also submit a copy of your resumé via electronic attachment.

## **New York University School of Law**

### **Score Requirements**

Transcript; LSAT or GRE (and other tests as accepted by the school)

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### **Letter of Recommendation**

Two letters of recommendation are required to complete your application.

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### **Personal Statement Prompt**

Please clearly identify your personal statement. (NYU "leaves the content and length of your statement to your discretion.")

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### **Additional Writing Prompts**

Please attach a brief statement describing aspects of your identity, as indicated in section 7 (underrepresented group), that are relevant to your application.

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### **Resumé Requirements**

A resumé is required to complete your application. Please attach your resumé in this section.

# University of Pennsylvania Law School

## Score Requirements

Transcript; LSAT or GRE (and other tests as accepted by the school)

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## Letter of Recommendation

UPenn requires two letters of recommendation from individuals who have served as recent academic instructors or advisors. However, if you have been out of school for several years and obtaining academic references will present a hardship, letters from employers or others who have worked closely with you are sufficient.

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## Personal Statement Prompt

The admissions committee requires that every applicant submit an original example of written expression. The purpose of this personal statement is to provide you with as flexible an opportunity as possible to submit information that you deem important to your candidacy. You may wish to describe aspects of your background and interests—intellectual, personal or professional—and how you will uniquely contribute to the Penn Law community and/or the legal profession. Please limit your statement to two pages, double spaced.

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## Additional Writing Prompts

If you wish, you may write an additional essay on any of the following topics. These optional essays allow you an opportunity to provide the admissions committee with additional relevant information that you were not able to include in your personal statement. Please include the essay with your application by electronically attaching it to your application before submission through LSAC. You may answer more than one essay topic if you so choose. Include your name and LSAC account number on each page. Please limit any optional essay to one page, double spaced and title it appropriately.

Describe how your background or experiences will enhance the diversity of the Penn Law community (e.g., based on your culture, race, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, ideology, age, socioeconomic status, academic background, employment, or personal experience).

These are the core strengths that make Penn Law the best place to receive a rigorous and engaging legal education: genuine integration with associated disciplines; transformative, forward-looking faculty scholarship; highly-regarded experiential learning through urban clinics and our pro bono pledge; innovative, hands-on global engagement; and a manifest commitment to professional development and collegiality. These qualities define Penn Law. What defines you? How do your goals and values match Penn Law's core strengths?

Describe a time when, as a member of a team, you particularly excelled or were especially frustrated. What was your role within that team? What was the outcome?

If you do not think that your academic record or standardized test scores accurately reflect your ability to succeed in law school, please elaborate why.

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## Resumé Requirements

Please submit a resumé or CV as an electronic attachment with your application. In addition to your professional experiences, please include any academic and/or non-academic honors you have received as well as any extracurricular and/or community activities in college and since graduation. Please account for all time periods.

## University of Virginia School of Law

### Score Requirements

Transcript; LSAT or GRE (and other tests as accepted by the school)

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### Letter of Recommendation

Applicants must provide two letters of recommendation, but may provide no more than four such letters.

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### Personal Statement Prompt

Your personal statement should provide information, in your own words, you believe relevant to the admissions decision not elicited elsewhere in the application. The statement is your opportunity to tell us about yourself; it may address your intellectual interests, significant accomplishments or obstacles overcome, personal or professional goals, educational achievements, or any way in which your perspective or experiences will add to the richness of the educational environment at the law school.

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### Additional Writing Prompts

Should you wish to address topics (or other aspects of yourself or your application) that are not addressed elsewhere in your application, this section can be used to attach as many topics as you wish. If multiple topics are addressed, we prefer that you separate topics and upload each separately, and as descriptively labeled if possible.

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### Resumé Requirements

Attach a current and professional resumé.

## University of Michigan Law School

### Score Requirements

Transcript; LSAT score

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**Letter of Recommendation** Although Michigan requires only one letter of recommendation, applicants are encouraged to submit three. For most applicants, the most helpful recommendations are from undergraduate or graduate faculty. Applicants with significant work experience may also wish to submit letters from employers.

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### Personal Statement Prompt

A successful essay might involve writing directly about expansive themes such as your goals or philosophy or background or identity, or very differently, might be a vignette that reveals something significant about you. In other words, think broadly about what you might wish to convey and how you might best convey it. While the form and content of your personal statement are up to you, for ease of reading, please use double-spacing and at least an 11-point font.

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### Additional Writing Prompts

Each essay should be about one page (and no more than two). For ease of reading, please use double-spacing and at least an 11-point font. [You're strongly encouraged to respond to at least one of these essays; responding to two won't necessarily put you in a better position than responding to one.]

- **Essay One** - Say more about your interest in the University of Michigan law school. What do you believe Michigan has to offer to you and you to Michigan?
- **Essay Two** - Describe your current hopes for your career after completing law school. How will your education, experience, and development so far support those plans?
- **Essay Three** - If you do not think that your academic record or standardized test scores accurately reflect your ability to succeed in law school, please tell us why. [This is a GPA or LSAT addendum prompt.]
- **Essay Four** - Describe a failure or setback in your life. How did you overcome it? What, if anything, would you do differently if confronted with this situation again?
- **Essay Five** - Describe an experience that speaks to the problems and possibilities of diversity in an educational or work setting. [This is an opportunity for an applicant without any diversity factors to write about diversity.]
- **Essay Six** - What do you think are the skills and values of a good lawyer? Which do you already possess? Which do you hope to develop?
- **Essay Seven** - How might your perspectives and experiences enrich the quality and breadth of the intellectual life of our community or enhance the legal profession? [This is a diversity statement prompt.]
- **Essay Eight** - Describe your educational experiences so far. What kinds of learning environments, teaching methods, student cultures, and/or evaluation processes lead you to thrive, or contrariwise, thwart your success?

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### Resumé Requirements

Please provide a resumé showing: (A) full-time or significant part-time employment, paid or unpaid, beginning with your most recent, including the name and location of your employer, your job title, and the dates you held the position, along with any other information you think will be useful; (B) significant extracurricular/non-work-related activities; (C) academic and non-academic honors and awards received, including fellowships, prizes, and memberships in honor societies; and (D) hobbies or special areas of interest or academic pursuits.

If you are not presently enrolled in an educational institution, it would be particularly helpful to know what you are doing now; whether you are working, volunteering, traveling, seeking employment, or anything else, please be sure to mention your current and planned activities prior to enrolling in law school.

## Duke University School of Law

### Score Requirements

Transcript; LSAT score

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### Letter of Recommendation

You must submit two required recommendation letters. Unless you have been out of school for some time, at least one letter should come from an academic instructor who has personal knowledge of your performance and potential. A second letter should come from someone who can address your interpersonal skills, leadership, and involvement, such as a supervisor or advisor from a job, internship, or student organization.

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### Personal Statement Prompt

You must submit a personal statement with the application. The statement is your opportunity to introduce yourself to the admissions committee and should include (1) what you think have been your significant personal experiences beyond what may be reflected in your academic transcripts and on your resumé, and (2) your personal and career ambitions.

## Additional Writing Prompts

- **Optional Essay 1:** You may submit an essay providing additional information about why you have chosen to apply to law school in general and Duke in particular. We are interested in the factors that have prompted your interest in a legal career and the ways in which you think Duke can further that interest. [This is a “why law” and “why Duke” essay.]
  - **Optional Essay 2:** You are invited to submit an essay that describes your particular life experiences with an emphasis on how the perspectives that you have acquired would contribute to Duke Law School’s intellectual community and enhance the diversity of the student body.
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## Resumé Requirements

You must submit a current resumé with the application. Please provide complete information and include your significant work experience, educational history, college and community activities, honors and awards you have received, any prior Duke affiliation, and dates for all items listed. There is no required length or page limit.

## Northwestern Pritzker School of Law

### Score Requirements

Transcript; GRE or LSAT Score

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### Letter of Recommendation

You must submit at least one letter of recommendation or evaluation.

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### Personal Statement Prompt

Include a typed personal statement (recommended length: one to three pages, double-spaced). Please look upon this essay as an opportunity to introduce yourself to members of the admissions committee. We encourage you to discuss personal and professional goals that are important to you and to include information about your achievements. Feel free to comment further about your education, background, community involvement, and strengths and weaknesses in certain courses or activities.

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### Additional Writing Prompts

**Optional Essay:** The students at Northwestern Pritzker School of Law come from many different backgrounds. Please describe any aspects of your background that you feel would allow you to contribute uniquely to the school and/or your classmates.

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### Resumé Requirements

Please submit a copy of your current resumé.

## Berkeley Law

### Score Requirements

Transcript; LSAT score

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### Letter of Recommendation

You may submit up to 4 recommendations letters. Most applicants submit 2-3. They should be from academic sources who know you and your classroom work well.

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### Personal Statement Prompt

Please provide more information about yourself in a written personal statement. The subject matter of the essay is up to you, but keep in mind that the reader will be seeking a sense of you as a person and as a potential student and graduate of Berkeley Law. Your personal statement should be limited to four double-spaced pages.

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### Additional Writing Prompts

- **Optional:** How will you (your perspective, experience, voice) contribute diversity in our classrooms and community? Feel free to address any factors or attributes you consider important and relevant. In the past, applicants have included information about characteristics such as: race/ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, socio-economic background, first generation college or professional school student, student parent, re-entry student, geographic diversity, ideological diversity, and others. (350 words maximum)
  - **Recommended:** Tell us more about your interest in Berkeley Law. What makes our school a good fit for you in terms of academic interests, programmatic offerings, and learning environment? (350 word maximum)
  - **Optional:** If you do not believe that your standardized test score(s) or academic record accurately reflect your ability to succeed in law school, then you may tell us why and share what you believe indicates your potential. (250 word maximum). Optional addenda may be submitted per current application instructions.
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### Resumé Requirements

You are encouraged to include a resumé of any length. If necessary, you may also provide an addendum that focuses on any particular aspect(s) of your application that you wish to highlight. Please provide the following information on a separate attachment or provide a resumé which includes this information:

- List academic and non-academic honors and awards received, including fellowships, prizes, and memberships in honor societies.
- List your extracurricular activities since entering undergraduate school, the hours per week devoted to such activities, and the dates of the activities.
- List your positions of employment since high school (either full- or part-time), the number of hours per week devoted to each position, and the dates of employment.
- List your care of dependents (children and adults) while in undergraduate, graduate, or professional school, the number of hours per week devoted to dependent care, and the dates of such care.

## Cornell Law School

### Score Requirements

Transcript; LSAT or GRE (and other tests as accepted by the school)

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### Letter of Recommendation

Two letters of recommendation are required. Applicants may submit more, but often additional letters of recommendation are repetitious and add little value to an applicant's file.

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### Personal Statement Prompt

The personal statement is your opportunity to discuss anything that you believe will be relevant to your admission to Cornell Law School.

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### Additional Writing Prompts

#### Required:

- Why have you chosen to apply to Cornell Law School? This section does not preclude you from submitting a separate Why Cornell Law statement. (maximum characters 600)
  - Who, if anyone, has influenced your decision to apply to Cornell Law School? (maximum characters 600)
  - **Optional:** In making admissions decisions we give consideration, among other things, to diversity factors (including but not limited to racial or ethnic group identification; cultural, linguistic or economic group identification; sexual orientation; or other factors), obstacles that you have overcome, and/or discrimination that you have experienced. If you choose to submit a diversity statement (in addition to the required personal statement), discuss any or all of these issues to the extent they apply to you.
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### Resumé Requirements

If there is anything additional you believe would be helpful when reviewing your application, you may include it here. If you are providing multiple addenda, provide a separate description header for each statement. Has your attendance in college, university, graduate school, or professional school been interrupted for one or more terms for any reason? If you attended another law school and did not leave in good standing, explain the details of your departure.

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## Georgetown Law

### Score Requirements

Transcript; LSAT or GRE (and other tests as accepted by the school)

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### Letter of Recommendation

Georgetown Law requires only one letter of recommendation, but additional letters or evaluations are welcome. If at all possible, the letter of recommendation should come from a professor who is able to speak to your academic work.

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### Personal Statement Prompt

You may write your personal statement on any subject of importance that you feel will assist the admissions committee in their decision. Please double-space.

### **Additional Writing Prompts**

Georgetown prides itself on actively recruiting students from diverse backgrounds. We encourage you to attach a brief statement to help the admissions committee understand the contribution your personal background would make to our community.

Optional: Georgetown may allow a brief video submission. Follow current application instructions for format and submission.

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### **Optional Essay**

Choose one prompt from Georgetown's current list (250 words max).

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### **Resumé Requirements**

Please prepare a resumé describing: 1) schools attended, dates of attendance, and degree(s) awarded; 2) work experience, including employer, position, nature of work, and dates of employment; 3) extracurricular/community activities, including nature and length of involvement; and 4) scholastic honors, including academic awards, scholarships, or fellowships.