

LEGAL STUDIES MINOR

Legal Studies focuses on law as a social phenomenon, and legal systems as both cultural systems and institutional systems. Much of jurisprudential theory identifies justice both as the first value of law and as the standard against which legal systems are to be judged. Within this framework, special attention is focused on the role of law in the lives of society's least advantaged populations. Consistent both with this understanding of justice and with the College's mission of education for social justice, engaged citizenship and service in the interests of the disadvantaged, the legal studies minor will emphasize problem-solving, values identification and critical thinking skills.

Although housed within the political science department, the legal studies minor is an interdisciplinary course of study composed of five courses. It is designed for both law school-bound students and those who want to gain a credential that complements their major and future careers.

Minor Requirements

LGS 201	Introduction to Legal Studies	3
Select one of the following humanities courses:		3
PHL 350	Philosophy of Law	
HST 316	History of American Law	
LGS 230	Legal Research and Writing	
Select one of the following Madden School of Business courses:		3
LAW 200	Legal Environment of Business	
LAW 300	Law: Business & Financial Organizations	
LAW 310	Business Law for Accountants	
LAW 330	Consumer Law	
Select one of the following social science courses:		3
PSY 335	Psychology and the Law	
SOC 321	Law, Society and Social Science	
PSC 301	The U.S. Supreme Court	
PSC 362	International Law	
PSC 405	International Human Rights	
Select one capstone course: ¹		3
PSC 451	American Constitutional Law I	
PSC 452	American Constitutional Law II	
Internships from various disciplines		
Departmental honors/research projects from various disciplines		
Total Credit Hours		15

¹ The legal studies director will exercise flexibility in the development of capstone coursework in a manner that maximizes the educational benefit of the student.

Legal Studies

LGS 201. Introduction to Legal Studies. 3 Credit Hours.

This course is an introduction to the American legal system: its processes, institutions, actors, objectives, values, and impact. We will investigate not only how law affects society but also how it affects the attitudes and actions of individuals in everyday life. To study this, an interdisciplinary approach is adopted and theories that range from the mainstream to the critical will be examined. This course is required for the LGS minor; it may also be taken as a PSC offering. Cross-listed Courses: PSC 205

LGS 230. Legal Research and Writing. 3 Credit Hours.

Students will be introduced to the skills of legal analysis, legal research, and legal writing. The course will focus on building a basic legal vocabulary, issue recognition, effective organization, clear writing, and proper legal citation. Students will also have an opportunity to strengthen their speaking skills by participating in oral arguments. These skills form the essential building blocks of critical and logical thinking, and will serve any student interested in pursuing legal studies, advancing their undergraduate educations, entering graduate school, or working in science or business.

Cross-listed Courses: PSC 230

LGS 243. Law and Politics. 3 Credit Hours.

A study of the relationship between legal and political norms, actors and institutions. Through analysis of contemporary controversies the following questions are examined: How is law political? Can or should judging be value free? What are the alternatives to going to court? What values does the legal system maintain? Can law change an unwilling society?

Fulfills Core Requirement(s): Interdisciplinary Studies (IDS).

Cross-listed Courses: PSC 243

LGS 250. Legal Environment of Business. 3 Credit Hours.

This course provides an introduction to the various ways in which laws and the legal system affect the conduct of business. Students will be encouraged to use their understanding of law and the legal system as a tool in ethical business decision making. Some reference to the impact of law in the international sphere will be included.

Cross-listed Courses: LAW 200

LGS 253. Cybersecurity Law. 3 Credit Hours.

An introduction to the key legal and policy issues related to cybersecurity, including the legal authorities and obligations of both the government and the private sector with respect to protecting computer systems and networks, as well as the national security aspects of the cyber domain including authorities related to offensive activities in cyberspace. The course will include a survey of federal laws, executive orders, regulations, and cases related to surveillance, cyber intrusions by private and nation-state actors, data breaches, and privacy and civil liberties matters, among other things.

Cross-listed Courses: PSC 253

LGS 300. Law: Business & Financial Organizations. 3 Credit Hours.

The law governing business organizations is introduced by a study of the rules governing a complex business organization, the bank collection system and the instruments it handles. The legal environment of all business organizations is studied with an emphasis on the creation, operation and liability of the business organization through a study of agency, partnership and corporations along with securities and anti-trust law. A brief study of bankruptcy will address some of the legal problems created by the failure of a business.

Prerequisite: LAW 200 or permission of the instructor.

Cross-listed Courses: LAW 300

LGS 301. The U.S. Supreme Court. 3 Credit Hours.

An examination of the personalities, politics, processes, decision-making and impact of the United States Supreme Court.

Cross-listed Courses: PSC 301

LGS 310. Business Law for Accountants. 3 Credit Hours.

A continuation of LAW 200. This course will focus on the law of business organizations including partnerships, corporations, employer-employee relationships, principal-agency relationships and topics closely related to business organizations. Such topics will include commercial transactions, bankruptcy and suretyship. An emphasis will be placed on the role of the accountant with respect to all topics.

Prerequisite: LAW 200.

Cross-listed Courses: LAW 310

LGS 316. History of American Law. 3 Credit Hours.

This course will weave together the history of legal and constitutional thought with the history of law's part in social and political change and in everyday life. It will consider a wide variety of texts and events but will concentrate on: colonial antecedents; revolution and constitution making; the golden age of American law; courts and the rise of industrial capitalism; Black slavery and freedom; achievements and limits of liberal legal reform; the experience of women's labor and civil rights movements; and legal realism and the rise of the administrative state.

Cross-listed Courses: HST 316

LGS 320. Topics Law & Public Policy I. 3 Credit Hours.

Courses in this series offer an in-depth exploration of specific topics within the various fields of business law as well as topics of current interest to the instructor or students.

Prerequisite: LAW 200 or permission of the instructor.

Cross-listed Courses: LAW 320

LGS 321. Law, Society & Social Science. 3 Credit Hours.

The structure and functions of law as an institution are analyzed from the perspectives of classical and contemporary social scientific theories. The legal processes of the assignment of responsibility, the resolution of disputes, the distribution of social rewards and the imposition of sanctions are studied in cross-cultural perspective. Attention is also focused on the use of social scientific knowledge by legal institutions.

Cross-listed Courses: CJS 321, SOC 321

LGS 330. Consumer Law. 3 Credit Hours.

This course investigates the legal techniques-judicial, legislative and administrative-for controlling marketing and credit practices. Advertising, abusive sales practices such as bait and switch, the extension of credit, repossession and debt collection are among topics examined.

Prerequisite: LAW 200.

Cross-listed Courses: LAW 330

LGS 335. Psychology and the Law. 3 Credit Hours.

The legal system is a pervasive and important part of our lives. The goal of this course is to help students develop an understanding of the psychological aspects of the functioning of the system and the effects of the legal system on us. This course will address the social psychological aspects that impact and are impacted by the legal system. Students will develop an understanding of many issues, including how psychologists contribute to the law and the legal system, psychological theories of crime, psychological issues related to the selection and performance of police officers, the dynamics of eyewitness testimony, jury selection and performance and confessions.

Cross-listed Courses: PSY 335, CJS 335

LGS 340. International Business Law. 3 Credit Hours.

This course introduces the international legal environment of business through a study of differing legal systems and the methods of international trade regulation. Part One focuses on the economic, social and political forces that shape the development of international law and its related legal institutions including an overview of the public and private legal tools used to regulate business and settle disputes. Part Two will deal with the international commercial transaction with a focus on private law. Part Three will cover the public law aspects of international and US trade law including GATT, import and export regulations and NAFTA. Part Four deals with the legal risks associated with international trade, environmental concerns, nationalization and privatization. Students will be encouraged to use their knowledge of law and the legal system as a tool in business and policy decision making.

LGS 350. Philosophy of Law. 3 Credit Hours.

This is not a course in the study of law. It is a course designed to afford students who have an interest in the law (not necessarily professional) an opportunity to reflect on the philosophical presuppositions of the law and the philosophical problems that arise within the general domain of jurisprudence. Based on readings (historical and contemporary) written by both philosophers and jurists, the course typically addresses general theories of law, law and morality, judicial reasoning and crime and punishment. Students should expect to do a great deal of linguistic analysis as well as some case study.

Cross-listed Courses: PHL 350

LGS 362. International Law. 3 Credit Hours.

The course will examine the theory and practice of International Law (IL) with reference to various events, which shaped the development of international law in all its forms (norms, rules, principles, precedent, custom, treaties etc). The course will emphasize current international legal norms and possibilities for future development.

Cross-listed Courses: PSC 362, PGS 364

LGS 451. American Constitutional Law I. 3 Credit Hours.

A study of selected problems in constitutional law with emphasis on areas of current concern. Material consists of case studies, selected articles, commentaries and judicial biographies. The Supreme Court is viewed as a social, economic and cultural force in our political system as well as a source and arbiter of law and order. The interaction of the court and interest groups is examined in connection with the development of constitutional law.

Prerequisite: permission of the instructor or department chair.

Cross-listed Courses: PSC 451

LGS 452. American Constitutional Law II. 3 Credit Hours.

A study of selected problems in constitutional law with emphasis on areas of current concern. Material consists of case studies, selected articles, commentaries and judicial biographies. The Supreme Court is viewed as a social, economic and cultural force in our political system as well as a source and arbiter of law and order. The interaction of the court and interest groups is examined in connection with the development of constitutional law.

Prerequisite: permission of the instructor or department chair.

Cross-listed Courses: PSC 452