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 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 education, 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 national-state actors, data breaches, and privacy and civil liberties matters, among other things.

Cross-listed Courses: PSC 253

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 education, 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 national-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 the U.S.
Constitution; 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 the 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