LEGAL STUDIES, CERTIFICATE

Requirements for an undergraduate certificate may be completed at any campus location offering the specified courses for the certificate.

**Program Description**

The Legal Studies certificate is intended for students who want to learn about some of the cases and legal processes they will study in law school. It is also intended for students who might wish to work as legal assistants or paralegals and wish to get some background in law and legal processes without attending law school. The certificate requires that students take three political science courses (nine credits) about law or the legal process and two more political science courses (six credits) in which court cases or legal processes are a significant component of course materials. Students can also take 12 credits from the law or legal process courses and 3 credits from the court cases or legal processes courses.

**What is Legal Studies?**

Legal studies is an examination of the institutions and practices of our legal system. Penn State Behrend’s certificate in Legal Studies is intended for the undergraduate student who plans to pursue a post-baccalaureate law degree or work in a law-related career field.

**You Might Like This Program If...**

- You are fascinated by the American judicial system.
- You envision a career as a lawyer, legal assistant, or law enforcement professional.
- You are exploring law as a possible career and want to determine if it’s a good fit for you.

**Program Requirements**

To earn an undergraduate certificate in Legal Studies, a minimum of 15 credits is required.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Code</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Credits</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Legal Studies Core Courses</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select 9 credits in core courses</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 471</td>
<td>American Constitutional Law</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 472</td>
<td>The American Legal Process</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 473</td>
<td>American Judicial Behavior</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 487</td>
<td>International Law and Organizations</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Legal Studies Supplementary Courses</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Select 6 credits in supplementary</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 110</td>
<td>Rights in America</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 123</td>
<td>Ethnic and Racial Politics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 178</td>
<td>Organized Crime, Law, and Politics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 419</td>
<td>The Bureaucratic State</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 480</td>
<td>Congress and the Presidency</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PLSC 482</td>
<td>American State and Urban Politics</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 Students can also take 12 credits from the core courses and 3 credits from the list of supplementary courses.

**Academic Advising**

The objectives of the university’s academic advising program are to help advisees identify and achieve their academic goals, to promote their intellectual discovery, and to encourage students to take advantage of both in-and out-of class educational opportunities in order that they become self-directed learners and decision makers.

Both advisers and advisees share responsibility for making the advising relationship succeed. By encouraging their advisees to become engaged in their education, to meet their educational goals, and to develop the habit of learning, advisers assume a significant educational role. The advisee’s unit of enrollment will provide each advisee with a primary academic adviser, the information needed to plan the chosen program of study, and referrals to other specialized resources.

READ SENATE POLICY 32-00: ADVISING POLICY (http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy)

**Erie**

Robert Speel, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Political Science
159 Kochel
Erie, PA 16563
814-898-6206
rws15@psu.edu

**Career Paths**

The certificate in Legal Studies can be pursued by students in most Penn State Behrend degree programs and as a stand-alone credential for nondegree students. Penn State Behrend has a comprehensive support system to help you identify and achieve your goals for college and beyond. Meet with your academic adviser often and take advantage of the services offered by the Academic and Career Planning Center beginning in your first semester.

**Careers**

The certificate in Legal Studies is a useful degree addition for students who would like to work as legal assistants or in a law firm. It offers a valuable background in law and legal processes.

**Contacts**

Robert Speel, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Political Science
159 Kochel
Erie, PA 16563
814-898-6206
rws15@psu.edu

**Contact**

Erie
SCHOOL OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
170 Irvin Kochel Center
4951 College Drive
Erie, PA 16563
814-898-6108
HumSocSci@psu.edu

http://behrend.psu.edu/school-of-humanities-social-sciences