

LAW AND SOCIETY, B.A.

Begin Campus: World Campus

End Campus: World Campus

Program Description

The College of the Liberal Arts Law and Society program is an undergraduate major that provides a comprehensive liberal arts education across multiple disciplines. The program focuses on understanding how social, cultural, economic, and political forces treat the law within the context of historical and contemporary trends. Socio-legal theory will provide a framework for understanding the increasing importance of programs that accentuate the study of law, and legal institutions.

The Law and Society program has six prescribed classes. In addition, a student will complete five supporting courses that incorporate the student's degree goals and can be tailored to his or her special interests. Students will consider the relationship between law, legal processes, human behavior, and legal and social institutions. The conventions of reading, argument, logic, and program solving will be used to explore issues.

Law and Society provides excellent preparation for higher schooling, such as law school or graduate study in sociology, criminology, or criminal justice. The major enhances career options in law enforcement, regulatory agencies, social service agencies, non-profit agencies, non-government agencies (NGO), and organizations that determine public policy. Law and Society also provides valuable knowledge for the small business owner.

What is Law and Society?

The 123-credit Bachelor of Arts in Law and Society is a multidisciplinary program intended to provide you with a greater understanding of law, legal principles, and the legal systems of the United States. Many occupations today require at least some legal knowledge and notion of the law. With a Bachelor of Arts in Law and Society, you will not only learn about the law, legal principles, legal institutions, and processes in the United States, but you can also become skillful in logic, rhetoric, research and legal writing.

Entrance to Major

In order to be eligible for entrance to this major, a student must:

1. attain at least a C (2.00) cumulative grade-point average for all courses taken at the University; and
2. have third-semester classification (<http://www.registrar.psu.edu/enrollment/semester-classification.cfm>).

READ SENATE POLICY 37-30: ENTRANCE TO AND CHANGES IN MAJOR PROGRAMS OF STUDY (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/37-00-entrance-to-a-college-or-major/>)

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Law and Society, a minimum of 123 credits is required:

Requirement	Credits
General Education	45
Electives	30-33
Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements	24
Requirements for the Major	36

12-15 of the 45 credits for General Education are included in the Requirements for the Major. This includes: 6 credits of GH courses; 0-3 credits of GQ courses; 6 credits of GS courses.

3 of the 24 credits for Bachelor of Arts Degree Requirements are included in the Requirements for the Major, General Education, or Electives and 0-12 credits are included in Electives if foreign language proficiency is demonstrated by examination.

Per Senate Policy 83-80.5, the college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of coursework in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

Requirements for the Major

A grade of C or better is required for all courses in the major. To graduate, a student enrolled in the major must earn at least a C grade in each course designated by the major as a C-required course, as specified by Senate Policy 82-44 (<http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#82-44>).

Code	Title	Credits
Prescribed Courses		
<i>Prescribed Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
HIST 20	American Civilization to 1877	3
HIST 21	American Civilization Since 1877	3
LA 100		3
PLSC 1	American Politics: Principles, Processes and Powers	3
PLSC 110		3
PLSC 472	The American Legal Process	3
Additional Courses		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select one or both of the following:		3-6
PHIL 10	Critical Thinking	
PHIL 12	Symbolic Logic	
Supporting Courses and Related Areas		
<i>Supporting Courses and Related Areas: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select 12 credits of the following:		12
CAS 404	Conflict Resolution and Negotiation	
CRIM/SOC 467	Law and Society	
LA 495	Undergraduate Field Experience or Practicum	
LA 496	Independent Studies	
LER 401		
LER 458Y		
PLSC 471	American Constitutional Law	
Select 0-3 credits of the following:		0-3
CAS 321	Rhetoric and Law	
CRIM 100	Introduction to Criminal Justice	

CRIM 113	Introduction to Law
LA 295	Undergraduate Field Experience or Practicum
LA 296	Independent Studies
LER 201	
LST 370	Research Methods for Law and Government Information Resources
PHIL 105	Philosophy of Law

General Education

Connecting career and curiosity, the General Education curriculum provides the opportunity for students to acquire transferable skills necessary to be successful in the future and to thrive while living in interconnected contexts. General Education aids students in developing intellectual curiosity, a strengthened ability to think, and a deeper sense of aesthetic appreciation. These are requirements for all baccalaureate students and are often partially incorporated into the requirements of a program. For additional information, see the General Education Requirements (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-education/baccalaureate-degree-general-education-program/>) section of the Bulletin and consult your academic adviser.

The keystone symbol appears next to the title of any course that is designated as a General Education course. Program requirements may also satisfy General Education requirements and vary for each program.

Foundations (grade of C or better is required.)

- **Quantification (GQ):** 6 credits
- **Writing and Speaking (GWS):** 9 credits

Knowledge Domains

- **Arts (GA):** 6 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 6 credits
- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 6 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 9 credits

Integrative Studies (may also complete a Knowledge Domain requirement)

- **Inter-Domain or Approved Linked Courses:** 6 credits

University Degree Requirements

First Year Engagement

All students enrolled in a college or the Division of Undergraduate Studies at University Park, and the World Campus are required to take 1 to 3 credits of the First-Year Seminar, as specified by their college First-Year Engagement Plan.

Other Penn State colleges and campuses may require the First-Year Seminar; colleges and campuses that do not require a First-Year Seminar provide students with a first-year engagement experience.

First-year baccalaureate students entering Penn State should consult their academic adviser for these requirements.

Cultures Requirement

6 credits are required and may satisfy other requirements

- United States Cultures: 3 credits
- International Cultures: 3 credits

Writing Across the Curriculum

3 credits required from the college of graduation and likely prescribed as part of major requirements.

Total Minimum Credits

A minimum of 120 degree credits must be earned for a baccalaureate degree. The requirements for some programs may exceed 120 credits. Students should consult with their college or department adviser for information on specific credit requirements.

Quality of Work

Candidates must complete the degree requirements for their major and earn at least a 2.00 grade-point average for all courses completed within their degree program.

Limitations on Source and Time for Credit Acquisition

The college dean or campus chancellor and program faculty may require up to 24 credits of course work in the major to be taken at the location or in the college or program where the degree is earned. Credit used toward degree programs may need to be earned from a particular source or within time constraints (see Senate Policy 83-80 (<http://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/#83-80>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

B.A. Degree Requirements

Foreign Language (0-12 credits): Student must attain 12th credit level of proficiency in one foreign language. See the Placement Policy for Penn State Foreign Language Courses (<https://bulletins.psu.edu/undergraduate/general-information/academic-information/advising-planning-degree-program/course-placements/placement-policy-world-language-courses/>).

B.A. Fields (9 credits): Humanities, Social and Behavioral Sciences, Arts, Foreign Languages, Natural Sciences, Quantification (may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major; foreign language credits in this category must be in a second foreign language or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the first language)

Other Cultures (0-3 credits): Select 3 credits from approved list. Students may count courses in this category in order to meet other major, minor, elective, or General Education requirements, except for the General Education US/IL requirement.

Program Learning Objectives

- **Career-Related Skills:**
 - Students will demonstrate the ability and desire to engage in lifelong learning.
 - Students will apply critical reasoning and asymmetrical approaches to complex career environments.
 - Students will develop an understanding in the rules of professional conduct that are inherent in the study and practice of law in related careers.
- **Communication Skills:**
 - Students will demonstrate appropriate writing strategies and conventions for legal writing; focusing on specific purpose, voice, and tone.
 - Students will develop written and oral communication skills to express informed opinions regarding sociolegal issues.
- **Content Knowledge:**

- Students will form a foundational base of how law and social structures intertwine.
- Students will articulate the distinction between jurisprudence and real law.
- Students will demonstrate the application of law through legal institutions with a focus on the relationship between political and social change.
- **Diversity Skills:**
 - Students will articulate the influence of race, gender, and economic status in law and social change.
 - Students will develop an appreciation for the role law plays in the emergence of a global society.
- **Research Skills:**
 - Students will articulate the applicability of sociological research to the construction, implementation, and evaluation of socialegal policy.
 - Students will demonstrate an understanding of commonly used methods of inquiry – historical, observation, experience, and survey.
 - Students will demonstrate digital fluency by navigating information resources in order to support their efforts to communicate their findings persuasively.
- **Thinking Skills:**
 - Students will identify the substance of an argument and evaluate it for soundness and validity.
 - Students will demonstrate a proficiency in legal analysis and critical reasoning.
 - Students will demonstrate how critical thinking is used as an instrument of law in the analysis of social change.

- Legal administration
- Human resources
- Nonprofit and NGO organization
- Law or graduate school

Contact

World Campus

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<https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/law-and-society-bachelors/overview> (<https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/law-and-society-bachelors/overview/>)

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 (<https://senate.psu.edu/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

World Campus

Undergraduate Academic Advising

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Career Paths

- Business
- Public service
- Social services