

LAW AND SOCIETY, B.A.

Begin Campus: World Campus

End Campus: World Campus

Program Description

The Bachelor of Arts in Law and Society provides an interdisciplinary approach to studying law and legal institutions that emphasizes the analytical and methodical aspects of law and society knowledge development. In addition to general coursework in disciplines foundational to the study of law and society, students will complete courses that will develop their analytical abilities, research methods fluency, and communication abilities. Students will also develop their interests and career-related skills through courses that employ substantive knowledge about law and society to better understand and address contemporary issues relevant to law and society. A Law and Society degree provides excellent preparation for additional educational programs such as law school or graduate study in criminology, history, political science, sociology, or human resources and employment relations (HRER). The major enhances career options in law, law enforcement, military service, regulatory agencies, social service agencies, non-profit organizations, and groups that determine public policy. A Law and Society degree also provides valuable knowledge for entrepreneurs or small business owners.

What is Law and Society?

The College of the Liberal Arts Law and Society program provides a comprehensive liberal arts education across multiple disciplines with a focus on understanding how social, cultural, economic, and political forces treat the law within the context of historical and contemporary trends. Students will study the interrelationships of social, political, and legal issues and learn how the law reflects and defines social values. The program stresses the importance of developing students' research, writing, analytical, and reasoning skills. The major offers coursework in disciplines related to law and society, including communication, English, history, philosophy, political science, and sociology. Students will consider the relationship between law, legal processes, human behavior, and legal and social institutions. The conventions of reading, argument, logic, and problem-solving will be used to explore issues. Beyond required courses, students will have the opportunity to select coursework that furthers their interests and career goals.

You Might Like This Program If...

You are interested in an interdisciplinary program intended to provide you with a greater understanding of the law, legal principles, and the legal systems of the United States. Many occupations today require at least some legal knowledge. With a Bachelor of Arts in Law and Society, you will not only learn about legal principles, institutions, and processes in the United States, but you can also become skillful in argumentation, logic, rhetoric, research, and writing. This program will empower you to develop a portfolio of critical and immediately deployable skills that are integral to careers in many areas related to law and society.

Direct Admission to the Major

Incoming first-year students who meet the program admission requirements are admitted directly into the major. Admission restrictions may apply for change-of-major and/or change-of-campus students.

For more information about the admission process for this major, please send a request to the college, campus, or program contact (listed in the Contact tab).

Degree Requirements

For the Bachelor of Arts degree in Law and Society, a minimum of 120 credits is required:

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

9-15 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; 3-6 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 world 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 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>).

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 201W	Experiential Learning Portfolio	3
PLSC 1	American Politics: Principles, Processes and Powers	3
PLSC 472	The American Legal Process	3
Additional Courses		
<i>Additional Courses: Require a grade of C or better</i>		
Select 6 credits from the following:		6
CAS 215	Argumentation	
CAS 321	Rhetoric and Law	
CAS 390	Qualitative Research Methods	
PHIL 10	Critical Thinking	
PHIL 12	Symbolic Logic	
PLSC 10	Scientific Study of Politics	
PLSC 309	Quantitative Political Analysis	
SOC 207	Research Methods in Sociology	
Courses from a department approved list		

Supporting Courses and Related Areas

Supporting Courses and Related Areas: Require a grade of C or better

Select 15 credits from the following, with at least 12 credits at the 400 level: 15

CAS 252	Business and Professional Communication
CAS 404	Conflict Resolution and Negotiation
CAS 426W	Communication Ethics
CAS 475	Studies in Public Address
CRIM/CRIMJ 12	Criminology
CRIM/CRIMJ 100	Introduction to Criminal Justice
CRIM 113	Introduction to Law
CRIM/SOC 467	Law and Society
CRIMJ 220	Courts and the Prosecution Process
CRIMJ 420	Criminal Law and Procedure
LA 402	Fundraising Leadership: Building a Strong Base
LA 404	Careers in Fundraising and Development
LA 496	Independent Studies
LHR 201	Employment Relationship: Law and Policy
LHR 401	The Law of Labor-Management Relations
LHR 458Y	History of Work in America
PHIL 103	Ethics
PHIL 105	Philosophy of Law
PHIL 119	Ethical Leadership
PLSC 210N	Rights in America
PLSC 471	American Constitutional Law
PLSC 473	American Judicial Behavior
Courses from a department approved list	

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 and Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

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

Breadth in the Knowledge Domains (Inter-Domain courses do not meet this requirement.)

- **Arts (GA):** 3 credits
- **Health and Wellness (GHW):** 3 credits
- **Humanities (GH):** 3 credits

- **Social and Behavioral Sciences (GS):** 3 credits
- **Natural Sciences (GN):** 3 credits

Integrative Studies

- **Inter-Domain Courses (Inter-Domain):** 6 credits

Exploration

- **GN**, may be completed with Inter-Domain courses: 3 credits
- **GA, GH, GN, GS, Inter-Domain courses.** This may include 3 credits of World Language course work beyond the 12th credit level or the requirements for the student's degree program, whichever is higher: 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 (<https://senate.psu.edu/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/82-00-and-83-00-degree-requirements/>)). For more information, check the Suggested Academic Plan for your intended program.

B.A. Degree Requirements

World Language (0-12 credits): Student must attain 12th credit level of proficiency in one world language in addition to English. This proficiency must be demonstrated by either examination or course work. See the Placement Policy for Penn State World 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, World Languages, Natural Sciences, Quantification (may not be taken in the area of the student's primary major; world language credits in this category must be in a second world language in addition to English or beyond the 12th credit level of proficiency in the first language). Credits must be selected from the list of approved courses.

World 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 University Cultural Diversity (US/IL) requirement.

Program Learning Objectives

- **Communication:** Students will be able to effectively communicate about law and society in both written and oral formats
- **Content Knowledge:** Students will be able to explain how law is embedded in social contexts and how it is socially and historically constructed
- **Professional Skills:** Students will be able to apply career related skills in law and society
- **Research Skills:** Students will show proficiency in commonly used research methods—including techniques from history, political science, and sociology—in law and society
- **Thinking Skills:** Students will utilize critical thinking in analyzing and applying law and society perspectives to society's problems

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/students/policies-and-rules-for-undergraduate-students/32-00-advising-policy/>)

University Park

Liberal Arts Academic Advising

814-865-2545

Use the Liberal Arts Meet the Academic Advisers web page (<https://la.psu.edu/student-services/academic-advising/meet-the-academic-advisers/>) to see the contact information for the specific adviser(s) of this program

World Campus

Undergraduate Academic Advising

100 Innovation Blvd

Suite 225

University Park, PA 16803

814-863-3283

advising@worldcampus.psu.edu

Career Paths

- Business
- Public service
- Social services
- Legal administration
- Human resources
- Nonprofit and NGO organization
- Law or graduate school

Contact

World Campus

FILIPPELLI INSTITUTE FOR E-EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

8 Thomas Building

University Park, PA 16802

814-863-5965

blm26@psu.edu

<https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/penn-state-online-law-and-society-bachelor-of-arts-degree> (<https://www.worldcampus.psu.edu/degrees-and-certificates/penn-state-online-law-and-society-bachelor-of-arts-degree/>)