

LEGAL STUDIES

legalstudies.northwestern.edu

The Legal Studies program promotes the interdisciplinary study of law, legal institutions, and legal processes from social science and humanities perspectives. It is not a “prelaw” program; instead, it examines how legal institutions, actors, and processes fit within a broader social context. In this conception, the law is a social institution that warrants study in its own right and provides an excellent lens through which students may critically examine a variety of themes central to other disciplines (such as race and ethnicity, class, gender, inequality, social change, governance, politics, and culture). The program also prepares students to conduct empirical research and theoretical inquiries across a broad range of contemporary and historical subjects that implicate law.

Programs of Study

- Legal Studies Major (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/legal-studies/legal-studies-major/>)
- Legal Studies Minor (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/legal-studies/legal-studies-minor/>)

Learning Objectives

Upon completion of the program, Legal Studies majors and minors will:

- Have broad knowledge of the distinct roles played by different actors (judges, legislatures, lawyers, reporters, litigants, voters, etc.) within legal systems.
- Have broad knowledge of social science theories of law, and of the way different disciplines understand and approach the study of law.
- Have broad knowledge of the reciprocal relationship between law and society.
- Have a clear understanding of the difference between the profession of law and the empirical study of law.
- Be familiar with legal research methods and best practices regarding qualitative and quantitative data, written materials, and electronic databases.
- Be able to read and analyze primary legal and political sources carefully and accurately, with attention to the author’s perspective, position, and credibility, and to the source’s general context.
- Be able to read, evaluate, summarize, and engage with sociolegal books and articles; analyze authors’ arguments for evidence, context, strength, and credibility; and understand how to work with and situate one’s own work within existing scholarship.

Legal Studies Courses

LEGAL_ST 101-7 College Seminar (1 Unit) Small, writing and discussion-oriented course exploring a specific topic or theme, and introducing skills necessary to thriving at Northwestern. Not eligible to be applied towards a WCAS major or minor except where specifically indicated.

LEGAL_ST 101-8 First-Year Writing Seminar (1 Unit) Small, writing and discussion-oriented course exploring a specific topic or theme, and focused on the fundamentals of effective, college-level written communication. Not eligible to be applied towards a WCAS major or minor except where specifically indicated.

LEGAL_ST 206-0 Law and Society (1 Unit) Introduction to the role of law in American society and the influence of society on law. Courts, the legal

profession, law enforcement, inequality, and social change. Taught with SOCIOL 206-0; may not receive credit for both courses. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 207-0 Legal Studies Research Methods (1 Unit) Introduction to research methodologies used in interdisciplinary legal studies, including jurisprudence and legal reasoning, qualitative and quantitative social science methods, and historical and textual analysis. Taught with SOCIOL 227-0 ; may not receive credit for both courses. Prerequisite: LEGAL_ST 206-0 or SOCIOL 206-0. *Advanced Expression Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

LEGAL_ST 211-0 Law and Popular Culture (1 Unit) The law is everywhere in our popular culture, even when we don't see it. In this course, we explore how the law is represented in popular cultures, how people think about the law in their everyday life, and how the law shapes popular cultures. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 221-0 Famous American Trials (1 Unit) Course explores several famous American trials to examine key themes in American political, legal, social, economic, and cultural history. We will focus largely on the twentieth century—a period of multiple “Trials of the Century” —to see how each trial crystallized broader political and social tensions over ethnicity, gender, race, religion, politics, sexuality, and social status. Taught with HISTORY 221-0 ; may not receive credit for both. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 235-0 Crime, Punishment, and Social Control (1 Unit) This course offers a sociological introduction to the topics of crime, punishment, and social control with a focus on the United States. Students will examine various perspectives on crime and social control with particular attention to how society defines criminality, how we as a society decide how to deal with crime, and what effects those decisions have. No Prerequisites. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 245-0 Undocumented America (1 Unit) How does legal status shape the lives of the 11 million Americans who are undocumented? This course develops the necessary historical context, as well as the conceptual tools to make sense of why people migrate, what shapes their incorporation, how does legal status intersect with other social differences, and how does legal status shape people’s lived experiences with social institutions. LEGAL_ST 245-0 and SOCIOL 245-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 248-0 Global Legal History (1 Unit) This course examines four aspects of global legal history: 1) the imperial roots of international legal regimes and global governance; 2) the transnational history of laws on corporations and intellectual property; 3) the evolution of ideas about personhood and citizenship, including slavery, indigeneity, and artificial intelligence; and 4) the role of state borders and military monopolies. Taught with HISTORY 248-0 ; may not receive credit for both. *Global Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

LEGAL_ST 276-0 Introductory Topics in Legal Studies (1 Unit) May be repeated for credit with different topics.

LEGAL_ST 305-0 American Immigration (1 Unit) Themes in history of immigration, especially from Europe, Latin America, and Asia. Law,

racial formation, acculturation, transnational and international contexts, competing notions of citizenship. Taught with HISTORY 305-0; may not receive credit for both courses. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 308-0 Sociology of Law (1 Unit) Sociological analysis of legal institutions such as courts, the police, and lawyers. Law, inequality, and social change. Taught with SOCIOL 318-0; may not receive credit for both courses. *Advanced Expression Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 309-0 Political Theories of the Rule of Law (1 Unit) Key documents and debates in the development of theories of law and jurisprudence. From Aeschylus to contemporary democratic and legal theories and major court cases on topics ranging from torture to Title IX. Taught with POLI_SCI 309-0; may not receive credit for both courses. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area*

LEGAL_ST 310-0 Moral Panics (1 Unit) This course explores what moral panics are, how they occur, and how we respond to them via legislation and policing. Topics may include Satanic Panic, Drug Scares, Teen Sexuality, Crime, and Immigration. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 312-0 Surveillance, Policing, & Law (1 Unit) Building on the interdisciplinary field of surveillance studies, this course explores the intersection of policing, surveillance, and the law and raises questions about (in)security, civil liberties, control, and privacy. Topics may include The Patriot Act, biometrics, algorithm and predictive policing, and citizen surveillance. No Prerequisites. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 315-0 Corporation in US Law and Culture (1 Unit) Tracing the evolution of the corporate person in the United States from the colonial era to the present: both the evolving legal rights and responsibilities of the corporation and the role that corporations have played in the American cultural imagination. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

LEGAL_ST 318-1 Legal and Constitutional History of the United States: Colonial Period to 1850 (1 Unit) Colonial period - 1850. Development of legal institutions, constitutionalism, law and social change, law and economic development. Taught with HISTORY 318-1; may not receive credit for both courses. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 318-2 Legal and Constitutional History of the United States: Since 1850 (1 Unit) 1850 - present. Law in industrial society: administration, race relations, corporations, environmental protection, civil liberties. Taught with HISTORY 318-2; may not receive credit for both courses. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 320-0 The Fourteenth Amendment (1 Unit) The Fourteenth Amendment's role in defining and protecting citizenship, privileges and immunities, due process, and equal protection from its nineteenth-century origins to the present. Taught with HISTORY 320-0; may not receive credit for both courses. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 331-0 Politics of the Supreme Court (1 Unit) Operation of appellate courts, with emphasis on the US Supreme Court. Decision making by appellate courts and the development of public policy. Taught with POLI_SCI 331-0; may not receive credit for both courses. Prerequisite: POLI_SCI 220-0 or POLI_SCI 230-0.

LEGAL_ST 332-0 Constitutional Law I (1 Unit) Introduction to interpretation of the US Constitution by the Supreme Court. Judicial review, federalism, congressional and executive authority, separation of powers. Taught with POLI_SCI 332-0; may not receive credit for both courses. Prerequisite: POLI_SCI 220-0 or POLI_SCI 230-0. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

LEGAL_ST 333-0 Constitutional Law II: Civil and Political Rights (1 Unit) Consideration of US Supreme Court decisions dealing with civil and political rights, including equality, freedom of speech, and freedom of religion. LEGAL_ST 333-0 and POLI_SCI 333-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. Prerequisite: POLI_SCI 220-0 or POLI_SCI 230-0. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 340-0 Gender, Sexuality, and the Law (1 Unit) Examination of the changing role of law in governing gender and sexual relations in America. Legal definitions of gender and sexuality in the household, the marketplace, and the state. GNDR_ST 340-0 and LEGAL_ST 340-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. *Historical Studies Distro Area Interdisciplinary Distro - See Rules (<https://catalogs.northwestern.edu/undergraduate/arts-sciences/#schoolrequirementstext>) Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 342-0 International Organizations (1 Unit) An examination of the politics, law, and history of international organizations from the 20th century to the present. Emphasis on the main inter-governmental organizations including the United Nations, the WTO, the WHO, and international courts. Taught with POLI_SCI 342-0; may not receive credit for both courses. Prerequisite: POLI_SCI 240-0 or consent of instructor. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area*

LEGAL_ST 345-0 Policing Protest (1 Unit) This course will introduce students to the historical and contemporary relationship between the law, law enforcement, and protesters within the United States. The course will address broad and important questions about public order, constitutionality, the role of the courts and the police, democracy and the rule of law, and legal guidelines related to public assembly, speech, and protest. No Prerequisites. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 347-0 Comparative Race & Ethnicity (1 Unit) Comparative history of Latinos, Asian Americans, African Americans, and white ethnics in the 20th century United States; role of law, politics, and society in shaping and being shaped by racial and ethnic categories. *Historical Studies Distro Area Historical Studies Foundational Discipline U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 348-0 Race, Politics, and the Law (1 Unit) Current role of race and racism from multiple disciplinary perspectives. Application to contemporary legal and political issues. How law deals with racial inequality. LEGAL_ST 348-0 and SOCIOL 348-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. Prerequisite: LEGAL_ST 206-0, SOCIOL 206-0, SOCIOL 208-0, LEGAL_ST 308-0, or SOCIOL 318-0. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 350-0 Psychology and the Law (1 Unit) Examines the application of psychology to law, including topics such as the insanity defense, criminal profiling, eyewitness testimony, and interrogation. Taught with PSYCH 340-0; may not receive credit for both courses. Prerequisite: PSYCH 110-0. *Ethical and Evaluative Thinking Foundational Disci Ethics Values Distro Area Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 356-0 Constitutional Challenges in Comparative Perspective (1 Unit) Constitutional controversies and resolutions in liberal democracies. Constitutional traditions and governance, rule of law, legitimacy and authority in diverse societies, human rights, social transformation. POLI_SCI 356-0 and LEGAL_ST 356-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. *Global Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

LEGAL_ST 360-0 Animal Law (1 Unit) Survey of laws, regulations, and cultural norms regarding nonhuman animals and animal ownership in the United States. History of animal protection movement, wildlife regulation, hunting and fishing rights, livestock care and slaughter, animal experimentation, anti-cruelty legislation, and companion animal law. ENVR_POL 360-0 and LEGAL_ST 360-0 are taught together; may not receive credit for both courses. Prerequisite: LEGAL_ST 206-0 or POLI_SCI 230-0, or instructor approval. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

LEGAL_ST 370-0 Law and Social Movements (1 Unit) How does “the law” inhibit and facilitate social change? How do movement actors navigate laws and legal institutions? This course develops the necessary conceptual tools and examine key modern US social movements. This class focuses on developing your ability to work with social science data and historical sources. The main components of the course are in-class participation and short papers. LEGAL_ST 206-0 or SOCIOL 206-0 (Law and Society) recommended before this course. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl*

LEGAL_ST 376-0 Topics in Legal Studies (1 Unit) May be repeated for credit with different topics.

LEGAL_ST 381-0 Children and the Law (1 Unit) Examines from a developmental perspective research on children's involvement in the legal system as decision makers, witnesses, victims, and perpetrators. Taught with PSYCH 381-0; may not receive credit for both courses. Prerequisites: PSYCH 205-0, PSYCH 244-0. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area*

LEGAL_ST 383-0 Gender, Sexuality and The Carceral State (1 Unit) Traces the rise of the carceral state in the United States from the 1970s to the present through the lens of gender and sexuality. Topics include policing, incarceration, social services, criminal law, and social change. No Prerequisites. *Social Behavioral Sciences Distro Area Social and Behavioral Science Foundational Discipl U.S. Perspectives on Power, Justice, and Equity*

LEGAL_ST 394-LK Professional Linkage Seminar (1 Unit) Varied legal topics taught by practitioners. May be repeated for credit with different topics.

LEGAL_ST 398-1 Advanced Research Seminar 1 (1 Unit) Exposure to theoretical and empirical approaches to the study of law and legal institutions in society; preparation of original thesis. Consecutive enrollment required in LEGAL_ST 398-2. Prerequisites: LEGAL_ST 206, LEGAL_ST 207-0 and acceptance to program as major. *Advanced Expression*

LEGAL_ST 398-2 Advanced Research Seminar 2 (1 Unit) Preparation and presentation of original thesis. Prerequisite: LEGAL_ST 398-1 within the same academic year. *Advanced Expression*

LEGAL_ST 399-0 Independent Study (1 Unit) Readings and conferences on special subjects for students pursuing a specific area of interest in legal studies.