

An interdepartmental program

Courses of Study:
Minor

Legal Studies

Objectives

The law, one of the most significant institutions in the life of any society, is an important subject of study for all students—especially so in the United States, where our lives are so critically affected by the legal system, and where citizen knowledge and participation are vitally needed.

The law also represents a body of ideas, values, and functions of serious concern to scholars in the various fields of the social sciences and humanities. The legal studies minor is interdisciplinary, designed to offer students the opportunity of studying law not as a subject of professional practice, but as one worthy of liberal inquiry. It examines law from many perspectives: historical, anthropological, sociological, philosophical, political, economic, psychological, and literary.

Through classroom courses and internships in public-service law, the minor combines “real world” experiential education with academic methods and insights. Students considering careers in law may find the minor a useful way to test their interest in working with legal materials, but the minor is not intended as a preprofessional course of study. Individual courses are open to all Brandeis students.

The law and society approach examines the role of law in broad aspects of social life: the public policy process, economic development, and cultural expression. Seminars give students an opportunity to explore, in depth, such fields as international and comparative law, sex discrimination, civil liberties, and environmental safety.

How to Become a Minor

The legal studies program is open to all Brandeis undergraduates. To enroll in the program, students fill out declaration forms in the legal studies program office (Brown 325) and bring the completed forms to the Office of the University Registrar. Students who complete the requirements for the minor receive certificates from the program and a notation on their official transcripts.

Students do not need to declare a legal studies minor, however, to take legal studies courses.

Committee

Richard Gaskins, Director
(American Studies)

Jeffrey Abramson
(Politics)

Gila Hayim
(Sociology)

Anita Hill
(The Heller School)

Melissa Stimell
(Legal Studies)

Andreas Teuber
(Philosophy)

Michael Willrich
(History)

Peter Woll
(Politics)

Faculty

Richard Gaskins, Director
American legal culture. Legal rhetoric.
Environmental policy.

Melissa Stimell, Internship Director
Social welfare law. Conflict resolution.

Requirements for the Minor

A. Core Course: LGLS 10a (Introduction to Law), preferably no later than the student’s junior year.

B. One LGLS course numbered 100 or higher, or one of the following: AMST 187a, AMST 188b, AMST 189a, PHIL 13b, PHIL 74b.

C. Three additional courses, which may include any course listed in B above, and elective courses listed below. Students may count no more than two courses from the same department.

D. Either of the following:

1. A senior thesis in the student’s major, supervised by the major department, which includes some aspect of law.

2. An internship arranged through the program office and the correlative seminar, LGLS 89a.

E. A passing letter grade must be obtained in each course taken for program credit. (Pass/fail courses are not allowed.) Students must achieve a GPA of at least 2.00 in program courses.

Courses of Instruction

(1–99) Primarily for Undergraduate Students

LGLS 10a Introduction to Law

[ss]

Surveys the nature, process, and institutions of law: the reasoning of lawyers and judges, the interplay of cases and policies, the impact of history and culture, and the ideals of justice and responsibility. Usually offered every year.

Mr. Gaskins

LGLS 89a Law and Society Internship and Seminar

Prerequisites: LGLS 10a and one other LGLS course or permission of the instructor. To obtain an internship, students must discuss their placements with the LGLS program administrator by March 15 for fall-term internships or by October 15 for spring-term internships. This course may not be repeated for credit. Biweekly class and a supervised law-related internship in a public agency or nonprofit organization. Examples of internship activities include investigating discrimination cases, negotiating between consumers and small business, and researching victim assistance policies. Internships must be arranged through the program administrator. Usually offered every semester.

Ms. Stimell

LGLS 98a Independent Research

Usually offered every year.

Staff

LGLS 98b Independent Research

Usually offered every year.

Staff

(100–199) For Both Undergraduate and Graduate Students

All LGLS courses may be limited in enrollment, with preference given to legal studies minors.

LGLS 114a American Health Care: Law and Policy

[ss]

Not recommended for freshmen.

Highlights issues of access, quality, and cost. Introduces laws and regulations that affect every aspect of American health care from planning and finance to patient treatment. Traces development of Medicare and Medicaid. Discusses malpractice, "birth of the Blues," expansion of HMOs, and influence of employer-purchased insurance on cost and delivery of health care. Portrays the important role courts, Congress, and administrative agencies play in organization and delivery of health services. Usually offered every year.

Staff

LGLS 120a Sex Discrimination and the Law

[ss]

Traces the evolution of women's rights in the family, in employment, and in the reproductive process, as well as constitutional doctrines. Examines gender inequalities and assesses if and how the law should address them. Legal cases studied emphasize how law reflects society. Usually offered every third year.

Staff

LGLS 121b Law and Social Welfare: Citizen Rights and Government Responsibilities

[ss oc]

Should the U.S. welfare policy protect those in need and should the government have the responsibility to do so? Explores the legal implications of recent debates and changes in social welfare policy at federal and state levels, concentrating on welfare reform, child welfare, and disability welfare. Examines statutes, landmark cases, historical literature, and their practical effect on the individual in order to challenge the assumptions underlying our policy and to create better solutions. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Stimell

LGLS 124b International Law and Development

[nw ss]

Surveys public and private forms of international law with special application to developing countries and to political and social development in the global economy. Examines basic legal concepts of property, contract and rule of law in the context of national and cultural transformations. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

LGLS 125b International Law and Organizations

[ss]

Introduction to international law, its nature, sources, and application, e.g., its role in the management of international conflicts. Topics may include international agreements, international organizations including the United Nations and the International Court of Justice, states and recognition, nationality and alien rights, territorial and maritime jurisdiction, international claims, and the laws of war and human rights. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

LGLS 126b Marriage, Divorce, and Parenthood

[ss]

Examines recent developments in family law concerning cohabitation, open adoption, no-fault divorce, joint custody, and same-sex marriage. Explores social and political developments that bring about changes in law and impact of new law. Usually offered every third year.

Staff

LGLS 128b Comparative Law

[ss]

Compares constitutional practices in the United States, the reformed communist nations of Eastern Europe, and the modernizing nations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. Focuses on the creation and evolution of constitutional structures, problems of federation and ethnicity, and protection of fundamental rights. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

LGLS 129b Law, Technology, and Innovation

[ss]

Study of interaction of the law and technology, including how law encourages and restrains the processes of technological innovation and change, and how technological innovation and change affect the law. Topics include such issues as intellectual property rights and new information technologies, biotechnology engineering, and reproductive technologies. Shows how law balances personal, social, and economic interests. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

LGLS 130a Conflict Analysis and Intervention

[ss oc]

Examines alternatives to litigation, including negotiation and mediation. Through simulations and court observations, students assess their own attitudes about and skills in conflict resolution. Analyzes underlying theories in criminal justice system, divorce, adoption, and international arena. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Stimell

LGLS 131b Patient Autonomy: Law, Medicine, and Ethics

[ss]

Examines how decisions are made to treat critically ill patients. Ethical and philosophical aspects of the physician-patient relationship, the doctrine of informed consent, "medical futility," "physician-assisted suicide," and "right-to-die" cases will be explored. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

LGLS 132b Environmental Law and Policy

[ss wi oc]

Examines public health and environmental problems, including regulation of harmful substances in our environment, wilderness preservation, and protection of wetlands and endangered species. Explores use of risk assessment and cost-benefit analysis; also considers the impact of political ideologies on legislation and adjudication. Evaluates law's efforts and limitations in protecting public health and the environment. Usually offered every second year.

Ms. Goldin

LGLS 133b Criminal Law

[ss]

Topics may vary from year to year. Students may repeat the course for credit, with permission of the program administrator, if the focus is different each time.

For fall 2007, the emphasis will be on international perspectives. In alternate years, the course focuses on American criminal law: the criminal justice process and changing roles of prosecution, defense, judges, and juries. Reviews statutory powers and constitutional restraints on officials; analyzes discretion in arrest, prosecution, and punishment. Explores the mutual impact of crime and community structure. Usually offered every second year.

Mr. Leahy

LGLS 137a Libel and Defamation, Privacy and Publicity

[ss]

Consideration of the historical, cultural, and constitutional roots—and judicial application—of laws defining libel and defamation. Part of the course will be devoted to “privacy rights” as they apply to issues of artistic freedom and integrity. Usually offered every fourth year.

Staff

LGLS 138b Science on Trial

[qr ss]

Surveys the procedures and analytic methods by which scientific data enter into litigation and regulation/policymaking. Introduces basic tools of risk analysis and legal rules of evidence. Case studies of tobacco litigation and regulation; use of DNA and other forensic evidence in the criminal justice system; the Woburn ground-water contamination case; and other topics to be selected, such as genetics in the courtroom, court-ordered cesarean sections, polygraph testing, alternative medicine, and genetically modified foods. Usually offered every second year.

Staff

LGLS 150a Law and Society in Cyberspace

[ss]

Examines how legal practices expand and restrain the digital revolution, how legal authority itself is challenged by the Internet, forcing new strategies of response, and how social/political forces shape legal policy on copyright, privacy, harassment, libel, and free speech. Usually offered every third year.

Staff

Cross-Listed Courses**AMST 187a**

The Legal Boundaries of Public and Private Life

AMST 188b

Justice Brandeis and Progressive Jurisprudence

AMST 189a

Legal Foundations of American Capitalism

PHIL 13b

The Idea of the Market: Economic Philosophies

PHIL 74b

Foundations of American Pragmatism

Electives**AMST 102a**

Women, the Environment, and Social Justice

AMST 160a

U.S. Immigration History and Policy

AMST 170a

The Idea of Conspiracy in American Culture

AMST 191b

Greening the Ivory Tower: Researching and Improving the Brandeis Environment

ANTH 156a

Power and Violence: The Anthropology of Political Systems

ANTH 163b

Production, Consumption, and Exchange

CHSC 6a

Forensic Science: Col. Mustard, Candlestick, Billiard Room

ECON 29a

The Economy and Legal System of China

ECON 57a

Environmental Economics

ECON 60b

The Economics of International Trade Disputes

ECON 177b

Economic Regulation and Deregulation

HIST 160a

American Legal History I

HIST 160b

American Legal History II

HIST 161b

American Political History

HS 120a

Race and the Law

NEJS 25a

Introduction to Talmud

NEJS 59b

The Philosophy of Jewish Law

NEJS 113b

Law in the Bible and the Ancient Near East

NEJS 126a

Intermediate Talmud

NEJS 186a

Introduction to the Qur'an

NEJS 196a

Marriage, Divorce, and Sexual Ethics in Islamic Law

PHIL 19a

Human Rights

PHIL 20a

Social and Political Philosophy: Democracy and Disobedience

PHIL 22b

Philosophy of Law

PHIL 111a

What Is Justice?

PHIL 117b

Topics in the Philosophy of Law

POL 110a

Media, Politics, and Society

POL 112a

National Government of the United States

POL 115a

Constitutional Law

POL 115b

Seminar: Constitutional Law and Theory

POL 116b

Civil Liberties in America

POL 117a

Administrative Law

POL 118b

Courts, Politics, and Public Policy

POL 158b

Comparative Perspectives on the Law and Politics of Group Rights

POL 192b

Seminar: Topics in Law and Political Theory

PSYC 145b

Aging in a Changing World

SOC 106a

Issues in Law and Society