Legal Studies

Office of Interdisciplinary Degree Programs

College of Arts and Sciences
203 Clemens Hall
North Campus
Buffalo, NY 14260-4670

PH: 716.645.2245 x0
Fax: 716.645.3640
Email: dryden@buffalo.edu
Web: www.ssc.buffalo.edu

University at Buffalo Law School

School of Law
304 OBrian Hall
North Campus
Buffalo, NY 14260

PH: 716.645.2060
Fax: 716.645.6378
Web: www.law.buffalo.edu/site/index.html

Overview

Legal Studies is one of six concentration areas in the Social Sciences Interdisciplinary major. The major is designed for students who are interested in studying the political, social and philosophical development of law and the legal process and in examining the law as an instrument of social order and a means of social change. The major has an academic rather than vocational emphasis. For more information please see the Social Sciences Interdisciplinary Degree Programs.

The University at Buffalo Law School is not directly affiliated with the Legal Studies concentration of the Social Sciences Interdisciplinary Programs. However, the Law School does offer undergraduate courses on the American legal system which students from across the disciplines find interesting, some of which are used in the Legal Studies curriculum.

About our Degrees

Acceptance Criteria

Minimum GPA of 2.0 overall.
Minimum grade of "C" in the following: HIS 161 or HIS 162, and PSC 101.

Acceptance Information

Deadlines: Rolling
Number of Accepted Majors (2009-2010): 62
Total number of majors currently enrolled: 113

Degree Requirements

Please see Degrees and Policies.

About our Courses

Each of the Interdisciplinary Degree Programs' concentrations offers a curriculum that allows students to combine coursework from three or more departments in the College of Arts and Sciences. In addition, a number of interdisciplinary and special-interest courses are offered through the IDP. There are also options to incorporate courses from other areas of the university allowing students to obtain a broad range of skills and education.

The typical class size for:
Legal Studies

Freshman/introductory courses is: 50-250
Sophomore/intermediate courses is: 30-50
Upper level/advanced courses is: 35-45

In the IDP, what do teaching assistants (TAs) do?

Many courses in the social sciences interdisciplinary program's curricula originate in other departments, where teaching assistants may be assigned instructional or grading duties.

Suggested Introductory Courses

- HIS 161 U.S. History I or HIS 162 U.S. History II
- PSC 101 Introduction to American Politics
- PHI 115 Critical Thinking or PHI 215 Introduction to Deductive Logic
- A statistics course

For course descriptions, please see Courses.

About our Faculty

The IDP faculty, though limited in number, not only teach courses applicable to the program's degree tracks, but are also involved in the advisement of IDP majors, a function that is vitally important for students selecting courses from a number of different departments.

Extracurricular Activities

See the UB Student Association.

Practical Experience and Special Academic Opportunities

The interdisciplinary degree programs offer an opportunity to focus studies on a particular topic whose breadth and diversity overlap several departments in the faculty.

Internships

The interdisciplinary degree program in Legal Studies includes an opportunity for practical fieldwork in an internship experience. The primarily academic emphases of the internships notwithstanding, many graduates have found the experience beneficial when seeking employment.

Career Information and Further Study

While the IDP tracks were not developed primarily to train students for specific careers, they are intended to provide an academic background relevant to a wide range of occupations and fields of graduate study.

Alumni have found employment in the following fields:

- Legal Secretary at Fusco, Brandstein and Rad, P.C.
- Police Officer with the Tonawanda Police Dept.
- Police Officer with the New York City Police Dept.
- Program Administrator at People, Inc.
- Court Clerk at Clarkstown Justice Court
- Legal aide with the City of Buffalo
- Administrative assistant at National Corporate Research
- Patrolman with Amherst Police Department
- Financial representative at Jacobi Hospital
- Legal assistant at Honen and Wood
- Paralegal assistant at Hurwitz and Fine
- Paralegal at Ziller, Marsh, and Lang, LLP
- State Trooper with New York State Police

Post-undergraduate opportunities:
Legal Studies

- Law School at Loyola University
- Law School at Brooklyn College
- Criminal Justice at John Jay College
- Law School at University at Buffalo
- Law school at New England School of Law
- Law school at Tulane University
- Urban Planning at University at Buffalo

What percentage of graduates goes on to graduate school?
30-35%

What percentage of graduates goes on to find related employment?
30-35%

Degrees Offered

Undergraduate: BA in Social Sciences Interdisciplinary
Concentration: Legal Studies

Links to Further Information About this Program

- Undergraduate Catalog
- Undergraduate Admissions
- Graduate Admissions
- Office of Interdisciplinary Degree Programs
- College of Arts and Sciences

JLS 130: American Jury Trials

Credits: 3
Semester(s): Fall, Spring
Type: LEC

Introduces the structure of local governments, theories of local political decision-making, and laws relating to local decision makers. Also examines a few specific areas of local concern as case studies to determine whether the decision-making models conform to reality. These areas include public libraries, property taxes, school boards, sewers, and zoning. When appropriate, local decision-makers are invited to speak.

JLS 131: The Family and the Law

Credits: 3
Semester(s): Fall, Spring
Type: LEC

Explores modern consumer trends and relevant legal doctrines; the nature of consumer transactions; credit practices, credit repair, debt collection, contract abuses, and statutory remedies.

JLS 132: Local Government Law and Politics

Credit: 3
Semester(s): Spring
Type: LEC

Introduces the structure of local governments, theories of local political decision-making, and laws relating to local decision makers. Also examines a few specific areas of local concern as case studies to determine whether the decision-making models conform to reality. These areas include public libraries, property taxes, school boards, sewers, and zoning. When appropriate, local decision-makers are invited to speak.

JLS 133: Law and the Consumer

Credit: 3
Semester(s): Fall, Spring
Type: LEC

Explores modern consumer trends and relevant legal doctrines; the nature of consumer transactions; credit practices, credit repair, debt collection, contract abuses, and statutory remedies.
Legal Studies

Acquaints students with the developmental patterns of cities, gives them a basic understanding of city government forms and how these fit into the state and national governmental systems, and focuses on cities from three perspectives: 1) spatial growth and development, 2) governmental structure and lawmaking authority, and (3) policies that shaped cities or were designed to change them in some way.

JLS 201: Introduction to Law and Legal Process

Credits: 3  
Semester(s): Fall, Spring  
Type: LEC

Examines the legal system and the relationships between the judiciary and other parts of our political order, as well as between federal and state governments. Also explores selected issues within the broader social policy areas of individual and civil rights and government regulations.