

Law & Society

The Law and Society major is cross-disciplinary, offering courses that explore the philosophical, political, economic, religious, and sociological issues and methods of inquiry that are central for understanding legal reasoning and the place of law and legal institutions in society. While some core Law and Society courses center on law and legal institutions directly, other courses explore the ethical, historical, economic, sociological, and philosophical underpinnings of the development of law, thought, and institutions or provide the analytic skills necessary to understand the nature of legal thinking and rhetoric, and the place of law, legal institutions, and the profession of law in broader society. Core Law and Society seminars and private reading/research courses provide students with venues to undertake research under close faculty supervision on a wide range of scholarly issues relating to legal institutions, thought, and the logic of legal inquiry. Students also may do honors in Law and Society by piggy-backing on the honors programs of one of the departments or programs that offer courses within the Law and Society Major.

Due to the fact that we are committed to a liberal arts education and that law schools do not require any prescribed undergraduate program, Oberlin encourages students to select from a broad range of majors and courses – in the sciences, social sciences, and humanities – when considering a major while they prepare for the study of law. The objective is to develop strong writing, analytic, and logical reasoning skills, as well as understanding the place of law and legal institutions in our society. In many cases, Law and Society is chosen as a second major, in addition to a more disciplinary or cross-disciplinary major, by students interested in the study of law. In addition to preparing for the study of law, Law and Society majors attend graduate programs in the social sciences and humanities when they wish to center their work on law and legal institutions, and law-focused graduate programs in the social sciences and humanities, such as the Program in Jurisprudence and Social Policy at the University of California, Berkeley.

The Law and Society Curriculum Committee administers the Law and Society Major, hosts speakers and symposia on law-related topics, works with the Office of Career Services in sponsoring Winter Term legal internships in the federal

government, private law firms, state attorney's general offices, legal advocacy groups, and courts, and helps in pre-law advising. The Law and Society Curricular Committee is working with the College to initiate the Griswold Law Scholars Program; a central part of this will be the inaugural Griswold Moot Court, to be held in Winter Term, 2008.

For specific assistance in preparing for law school, students are urged to consult one of the designated pre-law advisors, members of the Law and Society Curricular Committee, or teachers of core Law and Society courses, which are to be found listed under the Law and Society section of the Course Catalogue. Students also should visit the Office of Career Services, which facilitates the law school application process by providing workshops and day-to-day guidance to students as they prepare for the Law School Aptitude Test and applying to law school, and maintains an e-mail list of all students interested in law school. To facilitate communication with Career Services, please place your name on this e-mail list as early as possible. (See Pre-Law Guide under at www.oberlin.edu/career and the Pre-Law information sheet available in Admissions Office)

Core Law and Society Courses

American Constitutional Law
American Political Theory
Anti-Trust Economics
Biomedical Ethics
Chemistry and Crime
Criminology, Delinquency, and Legal Policy
Criminal Law
Deductive Logic
Deviance, Discord, and Dismay
Intermediate Micro-economics
Introduction to the Talmud
Islamic Authorities: Law and Society
Issues of Medical Ethics
Law and Economics
Law and the Supreme Court in American Political Development
Law, Literature and Society
Moral Issues in Religious Perspective
Philosophy and Morality
Political Change in America

Reason and Argument
Revolutionary America and the Early Republic
Social, Legal and Political Philosophy
Sociology of Law and Legal Institutions
Topics in Applied Ethics
Torts, Trials, and Troubles

Core Law and Society Research Seminars

Contemporary Constitutional Theory
Democracy and Human Rights in China
Equal Protection and Implied Fundamental Rights
Ethical Issues in Death and Dying
The First Amendment
Gender and the State in the Middle East and North Africa
International Criminal Law
Moses Maimonides: Philosophy and Law
Sociology of Law Seminar

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