

## Legal Studies

### Office of Interdisciplinary Degree Programs

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### University at Buffalo Law School

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### 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 (2010-2011): 53  
Total number of majors currently enrolled: 105

#### 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:

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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' concentrations offer an opportunity to focus studies on a particular topic whose breadth and diversity overlap several departments in the College of Arts and Sciences faculty.

#### Undergraduate Research and Practical Experience

##### *Internships*

The interdisciplinary degree program in Legal Studies includes an opportunity for practical fieldwork in an internship experience. The primary 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 and Reynolds and Henehan
- Office Manager at Advantage Professionals
- Court Assistant with the New York State Court System
- Import/Export Analyst with Ciena Corp.
- Service Representative with Geico Insurance Co.
- Paralegal at the Law Offices of Wayne Felle
- Legal Secretary with David Feldman, Esq.
- Legal Assistant with the Law Offices of Kenneth Hiller

#### Post-undergraduate opportunities:

- Law School at the University of Baltimore
- Law School at Thomas Jefferson School of Law

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- Law School at Case Western Reserve
- Law School at Cooley Law School
- Public Relations at SUNY College at Buffalo
- Law School at Loyola University
- Law School at Brooklyn College
- Law School 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?**

25-30%

### Degrees Offered

**Undergraduate:** BA in Social Sciences Interdisciplinary

**Concentration:** Legal Studies

See [Social Sciences Interdisciplinary](#) for degree requirements.

### 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

Analyzes the American jury trial by examining its various phases. Reveals the practical aspects of civil and criminal litigation. A major portion of the syllabus is devoted to pre- and post-trial strategies that may profoundly affect a case's judicial disposition, and to understanding how and why the legal system resolves a surprisingly small percentage of controversies by jury trials. Guest lecturers lend their expertise to the course.

#### **JLS 131: The Family and the Law**

**Credits:** 3

**Semester(s):** Fall, Spring

**Type:** LEC

Law as it affects daily life through the regulation of the family. Examines such issues as child custody, adoption, state regulation of marriage, divorce, and domestic violence through use of historical, sociological, and anthropological materials, in addition to analyzing case law and statutes.

#### **JLS 132: Local Government Law and Politics**

**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 133: Law and the Consumer**

**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 145: Urban Development, Law, and Policy**

**Credits:** 3

**Semester(s):** Spring

**Type:** LEC

Acquaints students with the developmental patterns of cities, gives them a basic understanding of city government forms and how

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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.