

LAW AND SOCIETY: REQUIREMENTS

Interdisciplinary

Kenyon's concentration in law and society is an acknowledgment of the increasing importance within the best liberal arts institutions of programs that emphasize the study of law, legal institutions, and the legal profession. This program is designed to provide students with a comprehensive, coherent curricular structure within which to examine a plethora of law-related issues that emerge across disciplines and for which these various disciplines seek, if not to find the correct answers about law, to ask appropriate questions.

Students pursuing an area of study will ponder the relationship between law and human behavior and the role of law in society. They will focus their work in three primary areas: philosophies of law, law as a social institution, and law and government. The program prepares students to undertake directed research in socio-legal studies under the mentorship of Kenyon faculty.

The Curriculum

Students will begin their exploration of law in society with the Introduction to Legal Studies and conclude it with a Senior Seminar in Legal Studies, which will encompass a directed research project within a selected theme or topic.

Introduction to Legal Studies is a survey course that exposes students to a variety of disciplinary approaches to the study of law and legal phenomena. It is intended ordinarily for students who have attained at least sophomore standing and have had some exposure to the social sciences, usually through an introductory course. The Senior Seminar in Legal Studies is open to juniors and seniors who have taken Introduction to Legal Studies and at least two other courses counting toward fulfillment of the concentration requirements (or to students with permission of the director).

Concentration Requirements

The concentration in law and society requires students to complete 2.5 units of specified "law and society" coursework. These units comprise the following: Introduction to Legal Studies (LGLS 110, .5 unit); a semester's work in a philosophy-of-law subject area (philosophy, political science, or history offerings, .5 unit); two courses in two different departments examining law as a social institution (1 unit); and the Senior Seminar in Legal Studies (.5 unit).

COURSES:

LGLS 110 — Introduction to Legal Studies

This course examines the law, legal profession, and legal institutions from a variety of traditional social-science perspectives. The primary frame of reference will be sociological and social psychological. The objective of the course is to expose students to a variety of interdisciplinary perspectives on law and to encourage the examination of law-related phenomena through the

literature of multiple disciplines. Topics to be covered include law as a social institution; law as a social-control mechanism; a history of law in the United States; the U.S. criminal justice system; philosophies of law; law and psychology; comparative legal cultures; and law and social change. This survey course is intended to encourage and facilitate a critical study of law in society and serve as a foundation from which to pursue the study of law and legal issues in other curricular offerings. This course is required for those students who intend to complete a Law and Society Concentration. Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

LGLS 220 — Media and the Law

This is a mid-level lecture/discussion course intended to expose students to the intersection of media and the law within various social institutions and cultural contexts. Students enrolled in this course will examine the significant role that the media play in the American justice system as well as the critical socio-legal issues that journalists and other media figures face in pursuing their craft. Central to the course is an exploration of the meaning of the speech and press clauses of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution. Topics to be explored include government censorship, libel, invasion of privacy, obscenity, the impact of press coverage upon the right to a fair trial, and law and linguistics. A portion of this course will focus upon understanding the media in relation to crime and criminal justice, particularly through the advent of new technologies. Given pervasive depictions and representations of law in popular culture, students will research and examine society's perception of law and justice in both traditional and modern art forms (e.g. literature, film, humor, etc.). Prerequisite: sophomore standing.

LGLS 371 — Exploring Law: Understanding Socio-legal Methods

This course has been designed as a discussion course with a series of mini-research assignments. The course focuses on the role and contributions of sociology and the social sciences to the conceptualization of law and legal policymaking. Course materials will draw upon research performed primarily within the context of the American civil and criminal justice system. We will also examine some prevalent notions about what law is or should be, legal behavior and practices, and justifications for resorting to law to solve social problems. Through the use of mini-research assignments, it is hoped that students will gain an appreciation for the complexity and far-reaching impact that the social sciences have upon social policy-making and legal policy-making as well as the difficulty of determining or measuring law and its impact. This course is highly recommended for students participating in the Summer Scholars Program in Socio-Legal Studies. Prerequisite: permission of instructor.

LGLS 391 — Special Topic

LGLS 410 — Senior Seminar Legal Studies

This is an upper-level seminar that offers students in the concentration an opportunity to integrate the various topics and approaches to which they were exposed in the law-related courses they have taken. Each year, the senior seminar will be designed around a specific substantive theme or topic; the themes as well as the format and approach to the course will

change from year to year, depending upon the faculty members teaching the course and their interests. Prerequisite: permission of instructor.

LGLS 493 — Individual Study

Individual study is an exceptional, not a routine, option, with details to be negotiated between the student(s) and the faculty member, along with the program director. The course may involve investigation of a topic engaging the interest of both student and professor. In some cases, a faculty member may agree to oversee an individual study as a way of exploring the development of a regular curricular offering. In others, the faculty member may guide one or two advanced students through a focused topic drawing on his or her expertise, with the course culminating in a substantial paper. The individual study should involve regular meetings at which the student and professor discuss assigned material. The professor has final authority over the material to be covered and the pace of work. The student is expected to devote time to the individual study equivalent to that for a regular course. Individual studies will typically run for no more than one semester and award .5 unit of credit. In rare cases when the course must be halted mid-semester, .25 unit may be awarded.

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