

Legal Studies

Coordinator: Alexandria Zylstra, J.D., LL.M.

Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies
Academic Partnership-MU
Legal Studies Minor

Bachelor of Arts in Legal Studies

The Legal Studies program at Stephens is a unique preparatory program designed to accomplish three goals: prepare students to work in the legal field upon graduation, ensure our graduates have a competitive advantage when applying to law school, and prepare our students to excel once in law school. The uniqueness of the program involves a skills-based approach. We teach the skills necessary for Stephens students to do well on the law school admission exam, such as critical and analytical thinking, as well as introduce students to the legal topics they will study during their first year of law school. For those students not pursuing law school upon graduation, the Legal Studies major equips students with the theoretical and substantive knowledge necessary to succeed in any law-related profession. A grade of C must be earned in each course listed below.

Required Courses

LGS/WST 110: Women, Law & Justice
LGS 220: Legal Analysis and Problem Solving
LGS 250: Conflict Resolution
LGS 260: Supreme Court and Constitutional Law
LGS 330 Philosophy and Law Seminar
LGS 492: Senior Essay and Oral Defense
BUS 362: Professional Communications
BUS/LGS 352: Business Law
ENG 340: Language: Use and Abuse
LGS/IME 362: Media Law
PHL 201: Logic and Critical Thinking

Choose one of the following:

LBA 142: Peacemaking in the Modern World
LGS 301: Internship
LGS 340 Terrorism: Perspectives on Acts of Violence

Academic Partnership: 3:3 Law Program

A joint program with the neighboring University of Missouri-Columbia, (MU) allows students to complete undergraduate coursework in three years and, with a successful GPA and required LSAT score, earn early admission to MU's Law School. Students earn a bachelor's degree from Stephens after the successful completion of the first year of law school. Thus, a student could earn a law degree in six year, instead of the normal seven years.

The program is a "succeed-sooner" opportunity for high-caliber, highly motivated students. Stephens' pre-law adviser ensures that you take the courses and obtain the skills you need for law school, in addition to offering up-to-date advice on the law school admission process.

Minor in Legal Studies

Students may earn a minor in Legal Studies by completing the one required course listed below with a total of 15 semester hours; 6 semester hours must be 300-400 level advanced coursework.

Required Course:

LGS 110: Women, Law and Justice (3 hrs.)

Legal Studies and Philosophy Courses

LGS 110: Women, Law and Justice

(3 hrs.)

(Open to all students; cross-listed as WST 110)

An introduction to the system and practice of law by focusing on areas of law impacting women's lives: family law, employment law and criminal law. Legal reasoning and research, text analysis and lawyers' lives are explored. Class panels and field trips.

PHL 201: Logic and Critical Thinking

(3 hrs.)

(Open to all students)

The course teaches the basic strategies for critical thinking, focusing on the structures of arguments as analyzed by traditional logic and analysis for fallacies. Topics include deductive and inductive reasoning, immediate inference, and argument proofs.

LGS 220: Legal Analysis and Problem Solving

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: LGS 110 or permission of the instructor)

This course explores legal research and writing. The course emphasizes effective writing methods and teaches students to analyze successfully various legal problems. Students will learn the skills and technology to be effective in today's legal environment, especially strategies for research and modes of legal writing.

LGS 250: Conflict Resolution: Personal and Community Negotiation

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: sophomore standing)

This course explores a variety of conflict resolution methods including: negotiation, mediation, arbitration, and judicial processes. By examining personal, community, and world conflicts, students will learn how to analyze, select and apply an appropriate conflict resolution.

LGS 260: The Supreme Court and Constitutional Law

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisites: LGS 110 *or* PSC 101, sophomore standing; or permission of instructor.)

Course explores the basic principles of American constitutional law through an examination of the United States Supreme Court. Focuses on the history of the Court, civil

liberties and individual rights and the development of social policy as understood through landmark Supreme Court decisions.

LGS 280: Topics in LGS

(1-3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: dependent on topic)

Check semester course schedule for current information. Taught at irregular intervals in response to current issues, student requests, themes, availability of key personnel or other special needs. Investigates content related to one of the interdisciplinary areas comprising the major.

LGS 301: Internship

(1-3 hrs.)

(May be taken twice for credit but counts only once in electives category)

(Prerequisite: permission of program chair)

Students will intern in a local law office, public interest group, or other agency under professional supervision.

BUS 362: Professional Communications

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisites: BUS 225 *or* permission of instructor.) This course teaches the theory and skills necessary for understanding and practicing effective professional communication. It emphasizes effective oral communication in professional settings and provides students opportunities to practice skills that allow them to communicate successfully in their professional careers.

LGS 352: Business Law

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: junior standing or permission of instructor; crosslisted as BUS 352.)

A study of the basic concepts of law as they relate to legal rights and remedies, with an emphasis on contracts and other facets of law relevant to business practice.

LGS 362: Media Law

(3 hrs)

(Prerequisites: junior standing or permission of instructor; cross-listed as MME 362.)

Mass communication-especially in the last 75+ years-has spawned volumes of regulations, statutes, and court decisions that affect broadcasters, the print media, the Internet, and consumers. Students will study the legal issues concerning media and individuals,

organizations and the mass media, including the development of First Amendment freedoms: free speech, free press, fair trial; privacy and access; libel, defamation, obscenity and indecency; advertising, and copyright and trademark.

LGS 380: Topics in Legal Studies

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: dependent on topic)

Check semester course schedule for current information. Taught at irregular intervals in response to current issues, student requests, themes, availability of key personnel or other special interdisciplinary areas comprising the major.

LGS 492: Senior Essay and Defense

(3 hrs.)

(Prerequisite: third-year standing; must be taken in the fall semester)

The student will write an essay that integrates and demonstrates competence in the fields of study that comprise the major. In addition, an oral defense of the essay is required, which will occur before an invited audience. A student may not write or defend the senior essay before the third year.

Independent Study

Independent study (special studies, tutorials, readings, projects) may be proposed by students who wish to investigate a subject not otherwise available. Information about independent study may be obtained in department offices or in the Office of the Registrar.