



Law and the Liberal Arts

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Introduction to Law and Liberal Arts

Students with long-term goals of the practice of law need to develop three basic skills:

- **Language and communication skills:** In seeking to convince, in drafting legal instruments and legislation, and in oral and written arguments, lawyers must communicate with clarity, precision, and persuasiveness. Lawyers must be able to accurately comprehend the meaning of others.
- **Critical understanding of and interest in human institutions and values:** Since lawyers can be influential in the shaping and operation of institutions and values and in establishing the policies that guide society, courses that develop an awareness of social concerns by exposing students to historical, ethical, political, environmental, and societal issues provide an important foundation for a career in law.
- **Ability in logical and analytical reasoning:** Problem solving and analysis is a central part of a lawyer's work. This requires creative thinking. Effective creative thinking depends on skillful deductive and inductive reasoning, reasoning by analogy, and critical analysis. Courses that focus on the study of logic, persuasion, research, and writing are critical for future legal careers.

Learning Experience

Students planning to attend law school have a wide choice of undergraduate majors, minors, and electives. No one set of courses is required for law school, and no one set is the best. Various areas of study are beneficial for pre-law study, with an overall emphasis on a well-rounded education.

This interdisciplinary minor allows students to complete a broad-based curriculum that reinforces the key components of a law school education and a life in the law. The minor takes law in its broadest sense and channels students into its constituent fields:

- The history and economics which provide its context
- Public speaking and debating skills used in many aspects of the practice of law
- Development of the writing skills that pervade law school and law practice
- Testing and expansion of the logical reasoning abilities that are essential to navigating the complexities of law and legal language
- The ethical foundations necessary for a life in the law.

Curriculum Requirements for Minor

Students must take one course in Area 1 and one course each from five of the remaining areas (see below). No more than three courses can be applied toward the minor from the same department. No more than two 100-level courses may count toward the minor. Law and Liberal Arts minors must complete at least two 300-level classes and are responsible for satisfying the prerequisites for upper level classes.

1. Law
2. American History
3. Economics
4. Ethics
5. Legal System
6. Logical Reasoning
7. Public Speaking and Debate
8. Writing

Faculty

Faculty members from across the University community are involved in the Law and Liberal Arts Program. Please visit prelaw.richmond.edu for more information on resources available to students who want to pursue legal studies.



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