

# Legal Studies Minor

## Interdisciplinary curriculum focused on skill development

**Goal Description:**

The department's Minor in Legal Studies provides alternative approaches to the study of law by exposing the undergraduate to an interdisciplinary curriculum composed of classes in the social sciences, humanities, business, and education. The minor aims to help develop graduates who possess strong thinking, analytical, writing, and research skills.

**Providing Department:** Legal Studies Minor

RELATED ITEMS/ELEMENTS -----

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

**Understand principles of the legal and judicial system**

**Learning Objective Description:**

Students completing the Legal Studies minor will understand the philosophy and principles that form the foundation of the legal and judicial system.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

**Core courses**

**Indicator Description:**

All students in the legal studies minor must take the following core courses:

- POLS 3334 Judicial Systems
- POLS 4334 Constitutional Law I: Civil Rights and Liberties
- POLS 4335 Constitutional Law II: Government Power / State-Federal Relations

Each of these courses has an objective of introducing students to the philosophical, legal and political contexts in which constitutional questions have been addressed in the United States.

Student performance in these courses is an indicator that they have achieved this objective.

**Criterion Description:**

We expect that 85% or more of students will pass these courses with a grade of C or better.

**Findings Description:**

Between Summer 2022 and Spring 2023 (inclusive), 38 students completed POLS 3334. Of these, 79% (30 students) passed with a grade of C or better.

Between Summer 2022 and Spring 2023 (inclusive), 67 students completed POLS 4334. Of these, 88% (59 students) passed with a grade of C or better.

Between Summer 2022 and Spring 2023 (inclusive), 46 students completed POLS 4335. Of these, 91% (42 students) passed with a grade of C or better.

RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

**Course Offerings**

**Action Description:**

The political science department will continue to emphasize the core classes and concepts within the Legal Studies Minor. Some of the discrepancy between the outcomes in POLS 3334 and POLS 4334/4335 may be to do the inadequacy of the measurements. In the 2023-2024 academic year, political science faculty teaching within the legal studies minor will meet and, in conjunction with the department chair, develop a plan to assess student learning outcomes for the three required courses in the minor: POLS 3334, POLS 4334 and POLS 4335.

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 1

### **Plan to assess SLOs in POLS 3334, 4334, and POLS 4335**

#### **Performance Objective Description:**

Judicial Systems (POLS 3334), Constitutional Law I (POLS 4334), and Constitutional Law II (POLS4335) are the three required courses in the minor. In 2022-2023, the legal studies faculty within the department will work to develop a means of assessing student progress on development of thinking, analytical, writing, and research skills in these courses.

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 2

### **SLO assessment plan**

#### **KPI Description:**

Political science faculty teaching within the legal studies minor will meet and, in conjunction with the department chair, develop a plan to assess student learning outcomes for POLS 3334, POLS 4334, and POLS 4335.

#### **Target Description:**

Success will be defined as (1) meeting to discuss assessment options for the three courses above and (2) if it is determined that a better measure of SLO is appropriate, developing that measure.

#### **Results Description:**

This was not completed in the 2022-2023 academic year.

#### RELATED ITEM LEVEL 3

### **SLO assessment plan**

#### **Action Description:**

In the 2023-2024 academic year, political science faculty teaching within the legal studies minor will meet and, in conjunction with the department chair, develop a plan to assess student learning outcomes for the three required courses in the minor: POLS 3334, POLS 4334 and POLS 4335.

## **Update to Previous Cycle's Plan for Continuous Improvement Item**

### **Previous Cycle's Plan For Continuous Improvement (Do Not Modify):**

#### **Closing Summary**

Heading into the next assessment cycle (2022-2023) the Legal Studies Minor program has two major goals:

1. Develop a plan to assess student learning outcomes for the three required courses in the minor: POLS 3334, POLS 4334 and POLS 4335.
2. Keep an eye on the balance of demand for face-to-face versus online for LGST minors. In 2021-2022, we began to offer a mix of modalities for the required courses. Our plan is to watch to see if there remains an even split -- initial face-to-face and online have filled at equal rates -- or if demand starts to lean in one way or another.

#### **Update of Progress to the Previous Cycle's PCI:**

Both of these remain ongoing initiatives for the department in AY 2023-2024. Not enough progress has been made on goal #1. Goal #2 is ongoing and continuously affected by enrollment in the program and the mix of students who are completing the minor 100% online versus face-to-face.

## **New Plan for Continuous Improvement Item**

#### **Closing Summary:**

Heading into the next assessment cycle (2023-2024) the Legal Studies Minor program has three major goals:

1. Develop a plan to assess student learning outcomes for the three required courses in the minor: POLS 3334, POLS 4334 and POLS 4335.
2. Keep an eye on the balance of demand for face-to-face versus online for LGST minors. In 2021-2022, we began to offer a mix of modalities for the required courses. Our plan is to watch to see if there remains an even split -- initial face-to-face and online have filled at equal rates -- or if demand starts to lean in one way or another.
3. Find new instructors who can teach in the program, particularly the required courses, in order to ease some of the pressure on current program instructors.