

FIRST-YEAR COURSE DESCRIPTIONS

Day Program

The required first-year curriculum consists of:

First Semester

Civil procedure (4 credits)
Contracts I (3 credits)
Legal Methods (2 credits)
Property I (3 credits)
Torts I (3 credits)

Second Semester

Constitutional Law (4 credits)
Contracts II (2 credits)
Criminal Law (3 credits)
Legal Research and Writing (2 credits)
Property II (3 credits)
Torts II (2 credits)

Constitutional Law (4 credits Spring)

This course introduces students to the United States Constitution. Topics include: the power of courts to interpret and apply the Constitution; the distribution of powers in the federal system, including the division of power among the three federal branches (separation of powers), and the division of power between the federal and state governments (federalism); and the protection of an individual's liberties from governmental interference. The individual liberty topic includes: state action; congressional enforcement of civil rights; substantive rights emanating from specific provisions of the Constitution, including the freedom of speech, religion and association; equal protection of the laws; and those rights not expressly mentioned in, the Constitution.

Contracts I and II (3 credits Fall and 2 credits Spring)

Contracts is the foundation commercial law course that examines the law of voluntary exchange. Major themes include enforceable and unenforceable promises, remedies for broken promises, and interpretation of agreements. Topics include: consideration; contract information; capacity; duress; unconscionability and illegality; damages; conditions; mistake; impracticability and frustration; third party beneficiaries; assignment and delegation; the Parole Evidence Rule; and the Statute of Frauds. Attention is devoted to Article II of the Uniform Commercial Code.

Criminal Law (3 credits Spring)

Criminal Law is the basic course on public offenses. Students study the requisites of criminal responsibility, defenses to liability, and inchoate and group crimes.

Legal Research and Writing (2 credits Fall and 2 credits Spring)

In these courses, students are introduced to the processes of case analysis, legal research, and legal writing. Written exercises are required, including the drafting of legal memoranda and an appellate brief. Students participate in oral argument on the subject of the appellate brief.

Civil Procedure (4 credits Fall)

This course introduces students to constitutional limits on judicial power and to the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure. Topics include: jurisdiction to adjudicate the liabilities of nonresident defendants, the structure and limited power of federal courts; and the stages of litigation (including pleading; motion practice, and the pretrial disposition of cases; formal discovery; and the trial process).

Property I and II (3 credits Fall and 3 credits Spring)

Property I and II introduce students to the legal concept of property. Basic concepts of entitlement and transfer of rights are explored in detail. Topics include: possession; estates and future interests; landlord and tenant; public regulation of land use and ownership (as in zoning and eminent domain); non-possessory interests in and regulation of land (including easements, real covenants and servitudes); and transfer of property by gift or sale.

Torts I and II (3 credits Fall and 2 credits Spring)

Torts I and II focus on the legal principles and public policies governing compensation for personal injuries, property damage, emotional distress, and other forms of serious harm. Topics include: the concepts of intent, negligence, and strict liability; defenses based on the plaintiff's conduct; causation and damages; vicarious liability; privileges; immunities; and statutes of limitations.