

School of Public Affairs

Department of Justice, Law and Society

B.A. in Justice

Admission to the Program

New freshman and transfer students are admitted through the Office of Admissions. Current students who wish to transfer into the department or develop a double major should have a grade point average of 2.50 or higher and the approval of the undergraduate academic advisor.

University Requirements

- A total of 120 credit hours
- 6 credit hours of college writing
- 3 credit hours of college mathematics or the equivalent by examination

General Education Requirements

- A total of ten courses, consisting of one foundation course and one second-level course in an approved sequence from each of the five curricular areas
- No more than 6 credit hours may be taken in the same discipline

Major Requirements

- 51 credit hours with grades of C or better

Course Requirements

- JLS-103 Critical Issues in Justice (3)
- JLS-104 Introduction to Systems of Justice (3)
- JLS-205 History and Philosophy of Criminology (3)
- JLS-280 Introduction to Justice Research (3)
- JLS-307 Justice, Law, and the Constitution (3)
- JLS-309 Justice and Public Policy (3)
- JLS-402 Comparative Systems of Law and Justice
- 3 credit hours from the Law and Society cluster:
 - JLS-101 Introduction to Law (3)
 - JLS-110 Western Legal Tradition 2:1 (3)
 - JLS-202 History of International Thought and Law (3)
 - JLS-203 Law and Social Theory (3)
 - JLS-225 American Legal Culture 2:2 (3)
 - JLS-308 Justice, Morality and Law (3)
 - JLS-352 Psychiatry and Law (3)
- 15 credit hours with 12 credit hours in one of following concentrations, Criminal Justice or Criminology, and 3 credit hours from the other concentration:

Criminal Justice Concentration

- JLS-200 Deprivation of Liberty 4:2 (3)
- JLS-210 Policing in America (3)
- JLS-211 Contemporary Issues in American Law Enforcement (3)

- JLS-230 Corrections in America (3)
- JLS-311 Introduction to Forensic Science (3)
- JLS-332 Corrections and the Constitution (3)
- JLS-342 Judicial Administration (3)
- JLS-382 Juvenile Justice (3)
- JLS-431 The Prison Community (3)
- JLS-444 Topics in Criminal Justice (3)
- JLS-530 Concepts of Punishment (3)

Criminology Concentration

- JLS-206 Justice and Deviant Behavior (3)
- JLS-215 Violence and Institutions 4:2 (3)
- JLS-245 Cities and Crime 4:2 (3)
- JLS-253 Juvenile Delinquency: Causes, Prevention and Treatment (3)
- JLS-303 Drugs, Alcohol and Society (3)
- JLS-313 Organized Crime (3)
- JLS-315 White Collar and Commercial Crime (3)
- JLS-401 Criminal Behavior: A Psychosocial Analysis (3)
- JLS-445 Topics in Criminology (3)
- JLS-458 The Juvenile and the Law (3)
- JLS-454 Violence in America (3)
- JLS-517 Victimology (3)
- JLS-526 Domestic Violence (3)
- JLS-550 Drugs, Crime, and Public Policy (3)

Electives

- 12 additional credit hours selected from other offerings in the Department of Justice, Law and Society

University Honors Program

All University Honors students must complete at least 12 credit hours of advanced-level (300-level and above) Honors courses including a 3 to 6 credit hour Honors Senior Capstone Project. Students may graduate with University Honors in the major if they complete at least 12 advanced-level Honors courses including the Senior Capstone Project in the department. Each department has three levels of University Honors requirements: Level I Options (100-200-level Honors classes); Level II Options (300-level and above Honors classes); and Level III Options (Honors Senior Capstone). The department Honors coordinator advises students in the University Honors Program regarding departmental options. For more information, go to www.american.edu/academic.depts/honors/.

B.A. in Law and Society

Admission to the Program

New freshman and transfer students are admitted through the Office of Admissions. Current students who wish to transfer into the department or develop a double major should have a grade point average of 2.50 or higher and the approval of the undergraduate academic advisor.

University Requirements

- A total of 120 credit hours
- 6 credit hours of college writing
- 3 credit hours of college mathematics or the equivalent by examination

General Education Requirements

- A total of ten courses, consisting of one foundation course and one second-level course in an approved sequence from each of the five curricular areas

- No more than 6 credit hours may be taken in the same discipline

Major Requirements

- 54 credit hours with grades of C or better

Course Requirements

- JLS-101 Introduction to Law (3)
- JLS-201 Philosophical Problems in the Law (3)
- JLS-110 Western Legal Tradition 2:1 (3)
or
JLS-202 History of International Thought and Law (3)
- JLS-203 Law and Social Theory (3)
- JLS-307 Justice, Law, and the Constitution (3)
- JLS-402 Comparative Systems of Law and Justice (3)
or
JLS-411 Topics in Legal History (3)
- one of the following courses in Legal Process:
JLS-104 Intro to Systems of Justice (3)
JLS-200 Deprivation of Liberty 4:2 (3)
JLS-225 American Legal Culture 2:2 (3)
JLS-310 The Legal Profession (3)
JLS-342 Judicial Administration (3)
JLS-343 Issues in Civil Justice (3)
- one of the following courses in Justice and Public Policy:
JLS-103 Critical Issues in Justice (3)
JLS-205 Introduction to Criminology (3)
JLS-215 Violence and Institutions (3)
JLS-245 Cities and Crime 4:2 (3)
JLS 309 Justice and Public Policy (3)
- 15 credit hours in either the Humanities or Social Science concentration:

Humanities Concentration (15 credit hours)

- three courses from the Legal Theory cluster; one course from the Law and Social Science cluster; and one additional course from either area:

Legal Theory Cluster

JLS-308 Justice, Morality, and the Law (3)

JLS-410 Topics in Legal Theory (3)

JLS-530 Concepts of Punishment (3)

Law and Social Science Cluster

JLS-333 Law, Psychology and Justice (3)

JLS-352 Psychiatry and the Law (3)

JLS-412 Topics in Law and Social Science (3)

JLS-535 Gender and the Law (3)

Social Science Concentration (15 credit hours)

- JLS-280 Introduction to Justice Research (3)
- two courses from the Law and Social Science cluster; one course from the Legal Theory cluster; and one additional course from either area:

Law and Social Science Cluster

JLS-333 Law, Psychology and Justice (3)

JLS-352 Psychiatry and the Law (3)

JLS-412 Topics in Law and Social Science (3)

JLS-535 Gender and the Law (3)

Legal Theory Cluster

JLS-308 Justice, Morality, and the Law (3)

JLS-410 Topics in Legal Theory (3)

JLS-530 Concepts of Punishment (3)

Electives

- 15 additional credits from courses offered by the Department of Justice, Law and Society, or from the following courses offered by other departments:

ANTH-215 Sex, Gender and Culture 3:2 (3)
ANTH-431 Taboos (3)
ECON-100 Macroeconomics 4:1 (3)
ECON-200 Microeconomics 4:2 (3)
ECON-317 Political Economy (3)
ECON-320 History of Economic Ideas (3)
ECON-325 Social Choice and Economic Justice (3)
GOVT-303 Ancient Political Thought (3)
GOVT-305 Modern Political Thought (3)
GOVT-321 Congress and Legislative Behavior (3)
GOVT-335 Democratization, Participation, and Social Movements (3)
GOVT-352 Law and the Political System (3)
GOVT-455 Equal Protection (3)
HIST-351 Era of Revolution and Constitution (3)
PHIL-105 Western Philosophy 2:1 (3)
PHIL-221 Philosophy, Politics, and Society (3)
PSYC-205 Social Psychology 4:2 (3)
PSYC-215 Abnormal Psychology and Society 4:2 (3)

PSYC-240 Drugs and Behavior 5:2 (3)
SIS-308 Introduction to Peace and Peace and Conflict Resolution (3)
SIS-321 International Law (3)
SOCY-350 Social Problems in a Changing World (3)
SOCY-351 Race and Ethnic Conflict: Global Perspective (3)

University Honors Program

All University Honors students must complete at least 12 credit hours of advanced-level (300-level and above) Honors courses including a 3 to 6 credit hour Honors Senior Capstone Project. Students may graduate with University Honors in the major if they complete at least 12 advanced-level Honors courses including the Senior Capstone Project in the department. Each department has three levels of University Honors requirements: Level I Options (100-200-level Honors classes); Level II Options (300-level and above Honors classes); and Level III Options (Honors Senior Capstone). The department Honors coordinator advises students in the University Honors Program regarding departmental options. For more information, go to www.american.edu/academic.depts/honors/.

Minor in Justice

- 18 credit hours with grades of C or better and at least 12 credit hours unique to the minor

Course Requirements

- JLS-103 Critical Issues in Justice (3)
- JLS-104 Introduction to Systems of Justice (3)
- 12 credit hours in justice (JLS-xxx) at the 300 level or above approved by advisor.

Combined B.A. and M.S. in Justice, Law and Society

Admission to the Program

This program allows students to complete the B.A. and the M.S. in five years of full-time study. Undergraduate students with majors in justice, law and society, or related disciplines at American University apply to this program through formal application no later than the last undergraduate semester. Admissions decisions are based on the normal M.S. standards and procedures of the school.

Course Requirements

- All requirements for the B.A. in Justice, B.A. in Law and Society, or related discipline
Undergraduate students may apply up to 9 credit hours of approved graduate-level course work to satisfy the requirements for both degrees.
- All requirements for the M.S. in Justice, Law and Society, including a minimum of 18 credit hours completed in residence in graduate status after the undergraduate degree has been awarded.

M.S. in Justice, Law and Society

The M.S. in Justice, Law and Society is an interdisciplinary program focusing on the foundations and structure of institutions of justice and law. Students receive a thorough grounding in both empirical and theoretical approaches to public policy issues and take a concentration in either justice and public policy, law and society, or jurisprudence and social thought.

The concentration in justice and public policy provides a theoretical grounding in criminology and course work in criminal justice, including corrections and policing. This concentration prepares students for a variety of practitioner and research positions in criminal justice, or for advanced graduate work in criminology or criminal justice.

The concentration in jurisprudence and social thought emphasizes philosophical and comparative perspectives on law, providing students with an appreciation of the nature and structural foundations of law and a firm grounding in analytical thought. This concentration serves students who have a background in either the liberal arts or law and are interested in combining the two.

The concentration in law and society provides an interdisciplinary perspective on the role of law in society, including the theoretical foundations of law, the relationship between law and the social sciences, and broad issues of social justice. This concentration prepares students for positions in policy research and analysis or for advanced graduate work in law and society.

Admission to the Program

In addition to meeting the minimum university requirements for graduate study, applicants must submit Graduate Record Examination (GRE) test scores. Applicants are evaluated on the basis of scholastic achievement in their last 60 credit hours of undergraduate work, test scores and two letters of recommendation.

Concentrations

Justice and Public Policy, Jurisprudence and Social Thought, or Law and Society

Degree Requirements

- 33 credit hours of approved graduate work with at least 18 credit hours at the 600 level
- Written comprehensive examination in one of the concentration areas, justice and public policy, jurisprudence and social thought, or law and society. Students must complete foundational seminars and electives in the relevant area before taking the examination.
- Research requirement:
Justice and Public Policy: JLS-680 Introduction to Justice Research I and JLS-681 Introduction to Justice Research II with grades of B or better
Jurisprudence and Social Thought: JLS-603 The Rule of Law and Due Process and JLS-604 Foundations of Knowledge with grades of B or better
Law and Society: JLS-680 Introduction to Justice Research I and JLS-681 Introduction to Justice Research II; or JLS-797 Master's Thesis Research, with grades of B or better

Course Requirements

- Two foundational courses from the following:
JLS-601 Law and Social Sciences (3)
JLS-602 Legal Theory (3)
JLS-607 Concept of Justice (3)
JLS-609 Criminological Theory (3)
JLS-610 Justice and Public Policy: Controversial Issues (3)
- JLS-680 Introduction to Justice Research I (3) *and*
JLS-681 Introduction to Justice Research II (3)
or
JLS-603 The Rule of Law and Due Process (3) *and*
JLS-604 Foundations of Knowledge (3)
or
JLS-797 Master's Thesis Research (6)
Justice and Public Policy (21 credit hours)
- 12 credit hours from the following:
JLS-504 Comparative Criminology and Criminal Justice (3)
JLS-517 Victimology (3)
JLS-526 Domestic Violence (3)
JLS-550 Drugs, Crime, and Public Policy (3)
JLS-596 Selected Topic: Nonrecurring with permission of advisor
JLS-607 Concept of Justice (3) (if not used for requirement above)
JLS-608 The Constitution and Criminal Procedure (3)
JLS-609 Criminological Theory (3) (if not used for requirement above)
JLS-610 Justice and Public Policy: Controversial Issues (3) (if not used for requirement above)
JLS-638 Race and Justice in America (3)
JLS-643 Advanced Seminar in Policing (3)
JLS-672 Terrorism, Crime, and Public Policy (3)
JLS-676 Theories of Punishment (3)
JLS-686 Advanced Seminar in Corrections (3)
JLS-687 Law, Deviance, and the Mental Health System (3)
- 9 additional credit hours from the following or other approved justice, law and society courses:
PUAD-606 Foundations of Policy Analysis (3)
PUAD-610 Management Analysis (3)
PUAD-616 Legal Basis of Public Management (3)
PUAD-633 Financial Aspects of Public Management (3)
PUAD-654 Organizational Diagnosis and Change (3)
Jurisprudence and Social Thought (21 credit hours)
- 12 credit hours from the following or other approved law and society electives:
JLS-535 Gender and the Law (3)
JLS-596 Selected Topic: Nonrecurring with permission of advisor
JLS-601 Law and Social Sciences (3) (if not used for requirement above)
JLS-602 Legal Theory (3) (if not used for requirement above)

- JLS-603 The Rule of Law and Due Process (3) (if not used for requirement above)
- JLS-604 Foundations of Knowledge (3) (if not used for requirement above)
- JLS-606 Legal History Seminar (3)
- JLS-607 Concept of Justice (3) (if not used for requirement above)
- JLS-608 The Constitution and Criminal Procedure (3)
- JLS-610 Justice and Public Policy: Controversial Issues (3) (if not used for requirement above)
- JLS-615 Law and Human Rights (3)
- JLS-630 Advanced Seminar in Legal Theory (3)
- JLS-631 Advanced Seminar in Social and Political Theory (3)
- JLS-638 Race and Justice in America (3)
- JLS-648 Law and Religion (3)
- JLS-650 Constitutionalism in Historical Perspective (3)
- JLS-676 Theories of Punishment (3)
- 9 additional credit hours from the following or other approved justice, law and society courses:
 - GOVT-674 Constitutional Law and Politics (3)
 - HIST-651 Era of the Revolution and Constitution (3)
 - PHIL-520 Seminar on Ethical Theory (3)
 - PHIL-525 Seminar on Modern Moral Problems (3)
 - PHIL-641 Philosophy of the Social Sciences (3)
 - SIS-621 International Law and the Legal Order (3)

Law and Society (21 credit hours)

- 12 credit hours from the following:
 - JLS-535 Gender and the Law (3)
 - JLS-596 Selected Topic: Nonrecurring with permission of advisor
 - JLS-601 Law and Social Sciences (3) (if not used for requirement above)
 - JLS-602 Legal Theory (3) (if not used for requirement above)
 - JLS-603 The Rule of Law and Due Process (3) (if not used for requirement above)
 - JLS-604 Foundations of Knowledge (3) (if not used for requirement above)
 - JLS-606 Legal History Seminar (3)
 - JLS-607 Concept of Justice (3) (if not used for requirement above)
 - JLS-608 The Constitution and Criminal Procedure (3)
 - JLS-610 Justice and Public Policy: Controversial Issues (3) (if not used for requirement above)
 - JLS-615 Law and Human Rights (3)
 - JLS-630 Advanced Seminar in Legal Theory (3)
 - JLS-631 Advanced Seminar in Social and Political Theory (3)
 - JLS-638 Race and Justice in America (3)

- JLS-648 Law and Religion (3)
- JLS-650 Constitutionalism in Historical Perspective (3)
- JLS-676 Theories of Punishment (3)

- 9 additional credit hours from the following or other approved justice, law and society courses:
 - GOVT-523 The Art and Craft of Lobbying (1–4)
 - GOVT-540 Political Parties, Interest Groups and Lobbying (3)
 - GOVT-541 The Politics of Mass Communication (3)
 - GOVT-674 Constitutional Law and Politics (3)
 - HIST-651 Era of the Revolution and Constitution (3)
 - PHIL-520 Seminar on Ethical Theory (3)
 - PHIL-525 Seminar on Modern Moral Problems (3)
 - PHIL-641 Philosophy of the Social Sciences (3)
 - SIS-621 International Law and the Legal Order (3)

M.S. in Justice, Law and Society and J.D.

Admission to the Program

The program enables students to complete the J.D. and M.S. degrees in approximately four years. Students must apply to and be accepted by both the Washington College of Law and the Department of Justice, Law and Society. Admission to either the M.S. or J.D. program in no way implies that admission to both programs will be granted.

Students may apply to both programs simultaneously or begin either program separately and then apply to the other program. However, once the study of law has begun, no justice courses can be taken until one full year of full-time law study has been completed.

Admission criteria are the same as those for the M.S. in Justice, Law and Society. If application is made initially to the Washington College of Law (WCL), LSAT scores are accepted in place of GRE general scores and application materials submitted to the WCL are reviewed for admission to the Department of Justice, Law and Society.

Requirements

- All requirements for the J.D. in the Washington College of Law
- All requirements for the M.S. in Justice, Law and Society
 - Students may apply 6 credit hours of justice courses to the J.D. degree and 6 credit hours of law courses to the M.S. in Justice, Law and Society. The law advisor must approve the justice courses and the justice advisor must approve the law courses in advance of taking the courses to be applied toward both degrees.

Ph.D. in Justice, Law and Society

Admission to the Program

Applicants are considered and admitted for the fall semester only. February 1 is the deadline for application for admission. All applicants must submit scores from the Graduate Record Examination (GRE). The normal minimum for consideration is a grade point average of 3.20 (on a 4.00 scale) in all previous academic work. Preference will be given to applicants for full-time study, although highly qualified students may be admitted for part-time study.

Major Fields

Justice, Law and Society, Policy Analysis, Public Administration, American Politics, Comparative Politics, and Methods

Degree Requirements

- 72 credit hours of approved graduate work is required for students entering the program with a bachelor's degree; a minimum of 48 credit hours is required of students who have completed an approved master's degree.

A minimum grade point average of 3.2 in all course work is required to remain in good standing and to earn the degree.

- Advancement to candidacy is accomplished by successfully completing a written qualifying examination at the end of the second semester of study.
- Students take written comprehensive examinations in justice, law and society and one of the remaining major areas. They master the subject matter of the third field through formal course work. Following completion of the written examinations, all students take an oral examination on their entire program of study before a committee of faculty members, and defend their dissertation proposal.

The remaining major field areas include American politics, comparative politics, public administration, policy analysis, methods, and any Ph.D. field offered at American University, subject to the approval of the SPA director of doctoral programs. Methods is offered only as a third, non-comprehensive field. Two of the three major field areas must be offered by the School of Public Affairs. Under special circumstances, students may take a field outside American University, subject to the approval of the SPA director of doctoral programs.

- The Ph.D. is fundamentally a research degree. Understanding scientific inquiry and correctly using research techniques require extensive preparation. All students in the program take three courses designed to help doctoral students comprehend the nature of science and master tools of research (see Course Requirements, below).

Each student selects a specialization in which to complete an original research project under the direction of program faculty and write a dissertation. Students may choose research projects within one of the major areas or select a research specialization from one of the other graduate fields within the school.

Each student prepares a research proposal for the dissertation project. It is the responsibility of the student to secure the agreement of a School of Public Affairs full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty member to serve as the chair of the dissertation committee. One of the two other members of the committee may be from outside SPA. As part of this process, each student must publicly defend the research proposal before the dissertation committee and other interested faculty. The committee and the SPA director of doctoral programs (acting for the dean) must approve the defense and the research proposal. The topic covered by the proposal must be related to ongoing research or publications of the supervising faculty.

As work on the dissertation project progresses, students register for 6–12 credit hours of directed study. Substantive course work may be used as part of this requirement where it contributes directly to the research specialization and is specifically recommended by the dissertation committee chair.

Upon completion of the research and the written dissertation, the candidate submits the manuscript to the dissertation committee for review. If the committee members approve the manuscript, the candidate must complete an oral defense of the dissertation and the general field in which it lies before the committee and other interested faculty. The committee determines conclusively at this point whether the dissertation and examination are acceptable.

The dissertation must consist of high quality original research directly relevant to the student's doctoral program. A dissertation proposal may be rejected if the topic does not address a major research issue in justice, law and society, the research design is inadequate, the methodology is inappropriate, or because no full-time tenured or tenure-track faculty member in the School of Public Affairs is academically competent or available to supervise the project. If the candidate fails to maintain satisfactory progress toward completion of the dissertation, his or her candidacy may be terminated.

Course Requirements

- JLS-710 Seminar in Justice, Law and Society (3)
 - Additional advanced courses in justice, law and society, proseminars and additional advanced courses in the two remaining major field areas, including American politics, comparative politics, policy analysis, public administration, methods, and any Ph.D. field offered at American University, subject to the approval of the SPA director of doctoral programs. Proseminars are selected from:
 - GOVT-710 Seminar in American Politics (3)
 - GOVT-720 Seminar in Policy Analysis (3)
 - GOVT-730 Seminar in Comparative Politics (3)
 - PUAD-710 Seminar in Public Administration (3)
- Three courses in research design and methodology:
- GOVT-612 Conduct of Inquiry I (3)
 - GOVT-613 Conduct of Inquiry II (3)
 - GOVT-614 Research in Political and Administrative Behavior (3) *or*
 - GOVT-615 Qualitative Research Methods (3) *or*
 - GOVT-704 Approaches to Political Understanding
 - GOVT-799 Doctoral Dissertation Seminar (6–12)