

So You Want to Be a Lawyer?

USCDornsife

Applying to Law School

Applying to law school can be overwhelming. Our pre-law advisors help you with all aspects of the application process, including selecting law schools, writing an effective personal statement, and requesting appropriate letters of recommendation. They also provide guidance in finding law-related academic and co-curricular opportunities. Each semester, they host a variety of workshops and events, including a Law Fair where students engage with admission counselors from various law schools in an informal college fair setting.

Gaining Experience

At USC Dornsife, we encourage you to apply your understanding of theory to real-world problems or situations by taking advantage of opportunities for mentorship, networking, legal research, study abroad, and community service. Through the *Journal of Law and Society*, you review, edit, and publish papers on law and its effect on today's society. USC sponsors an active, award-winning Mock Trial team, through which you portray a lawyer or witness in simulated trials and even work with public interest firms on actual cases. You can also participate in service-learning through the Joint Educational Project's Pre-Law Project, which provides real-world legal experience in Los Angeles to undergraduates interested in the field of public interest law.

Crafting Your Own Path

Careers in the legal field are dynamic and evolving. As a pre-law student, you are encouraged to take courses that teach you how to analyze and think critically in the context of society's historical, philosophical, economic, and political traditions, as well as courses that dissect how and why people behave and interact. These courses can be found among a variety of majors and across several academic disciplines. Our pre-law advisors assist you in designing your own unique undergraduate academic program while incorporating courses and experiences that will benefit you as you prepare for and enter law school.

Law-Related USC Dornsife Majors

Economics
English
History
International Relations
Law, History and Culture
Philosophy
Philosophy, Politics and Economics
Philosophy, Politics and Law
Political Science
Psychology
Sociology

Want to Know More?

Reach out to us at
admission@dornsife.usc.edu
We're happy to help!

Office of Admission and Student Success

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Mudd Hall of Philosophy (MHP) 106
Los Angeles, CA 90089

dornsife.usc.edu/admission

Sample Law-Related Minors

Business Law

This minor provides students with practical knowledge of business law and current legal issues. It exposes students to topics such as commercial transactions, online commerce, intellectual property and entertainment law, securities law, and law of non-profit organizations.

Forensics and Criminality

This minor is designed for students interested in the study of law and deviant behavior or in careers in the criminal justice system. Students study psychological and/or ethical issues related to criminal behavior, consider criminality in the context of social class analysis, and learn about the American system of criminal justice.

Human Rights

This minor covers the theoretical foundations of human rights, historical and current developments, case studies, and policies. Students are required to take their learning outside the classroom by taking on an internship or teaching human rights in the community.

Law and Public Policy

This minor draws upon four fields of study: public policy and management, law, economics, and political science. It develops an understanding of the political and economic contexts in which laws are made, as well as institutional policy formulation.

Law and Social Justice

This minor provides foundational knowledge of current legal systems of justice and encourages critical analysis to recognize where and how changes can be made.

Law and Society

This minor focuses on the effect of law on society as well as the ways in which social forces influence the legal system. Students study key legal institutions such as the legal profession, the judiciary, juries, the police, legislatures, and administrative agencies.

Practical Politics

This minor provides students a unique opportunity to study the theory and practice of American democracy. Students develop a multitude of skills applicable to the job market, such as problem-solving, polling, social media analytics, micro-targeting, research, writing, and public speaking. Students also complete an internship that will provide them with professional training and exposure to different careers.

Psychology and Law

This minor brings together psychology courses that focus on the social, clinical, cognitive, and societal aspects of psychology, and courses from the Gould School of Law that identify the relationship between mental health, social psychology, and law.

Race, Ethnicity, and Politics

The role of race and ethnicity in the U.S. political sphere has become even more complex with large-scale immigration and socioeconomic changes that have fostered multiple overlapping identities, unique policy challenges, and new possibilities of coalition building among racial and ethnic groups. This minor helps students understand contemporary race relations and critically evaluate how race and ethnicity matter in today's politics.

Sample Law-Related Courses

Civil and Political Rights and Liberties (LAW 444)

Examination of debate and controversies surrounding the nature and scope of civil rights and civil liberties.

Economic Analysis of Law (ECON 434)

Investigation of common law and property, rationing of justice, resource allocation between prevention and enforcement, and division of decision making between public and private sectors.

Environmental Law (POSC 347)

Introduction to central concepts and theories in environmental law and regulation, along with analysis of current environmental laws and regulations.

International Law (POSC 345)

Study of the nature, origin, and development of international law, with basic principles analyzed and illustrated with cases.

Philosophy of Law (PHIL 430)

Exploration of philosophical theories about the nature of law and the relationship between law and morality, and analysis of normative concepts central to law, such as responsibility, punishment, and negligence.

Politics, Social Organization, and Law (ANTH 345)

Overview of legal systems embedded in political, social, and historical contexts, including a comparative study of legal systems throughout history and around the world.