

Writing in the Majors Plan for Law
 Comments from the University Writing Committee
 October 27, 2016

Criterion	Comments, Questions, Suggestions
<p>Principles 1 & 2: Provides opportunities for students to practice the kinds of communication (oral and written) most useful to the major</p>	<p>Yes. A range of writing activities and more than one opportunity to practice those kinds is included in the plan.</p>
<p>Principle 3: Provides opportunities for students to communicate to different purposes and audiences</p>	<p>Yes. They include the general public and scholarly/judicial audiences.</p>
<p>Principle 4: Provides feedback and opportunities for revision</p>	<p>Some classes do include revision but it seems to be limited to courses in Political Science and Philosophy. While we don't expect every course to include revision, we wonder if the faculty have considered the multiple ways that feedback and opportunities to revise can be incorporated without requiring an entire draft to be read by the instructor.</p>
<p>Principle 5: Has an assessment process directed towards continuous improvement</p>	<p>The plan affirms that there will be assessment, but includes no specifics. We appreciate that designing the assessment might be difficult at this stage, and encourage you to work with the Office of University Writing and/or the Office of Academic Assessment. The assessment will be easier, for example, if you can articulate more specific student learning outcomes related writing skills you expect students to develop.</p>
<p>Other comments:</p>	<p>In your implementation report in one year we ask that you provide details about how you will assess students for communication skills (especially writing).</p>

Plan is approved

Submit Implementation by November 1, 2017

Draft Writing Plan for the Proposed Law Major
September 30, 2016

The proposed law major is a joint effort of the departments of Political Science, Philosophy, Communications, and History – each of which values writing. The new major will reflect this interdisciplinary emphasis given how the classes in the proposed major are already taught in their respective departments and because students will be more successful with their writing in law school if they have already practiced the type of writing they will encounter there as undergraduates. The entire purpose of this major is not to prepare students to do well on the LSAT test for admission to law school, but to prepare them to succeed once they are admitted by developing the skills they will need for success. Many of these needed skills are intertwined with writing.

Five Principles of Writing for all Majors

- 1) Opportunities for students to practice writing:
POLI, PHIL, COMM, and HIST classes listed in the required and skills group categories for the proposed major emphasize writing. For example, the POLI 4000-level courses have a 12-15 legal research paper on a case currently pending before the United States Supreme Court. The introductory level philosophy courses (PHIL 1020, 1050, and 1090) included in the law major require students to write short critical papers. These tend to be papers in which students reconstruct and evaluate arguments from their readings. The 3000-level courses (PHIL 3100, 3500, 3550, 3600, 3620, 3640, and 3660) included in the law major typically require that students write critical analyses. These papers differ from papers written for introductory courses in various respects: they are longer; they place greater emphasis on evaluating arguments than on reconstructing them. COMM courses all focus on audience adaptation and critical thinking and analysis. For example, Legal COMM focuses on adapting to audiences such as the judge, public, and jury. Students typically write at least one individual paper analyzing group dynamics from a jury exercise they participate in. In Advanced Public Speaking, they work on outlines/organizational skills, supportive evidence, etc. Argumentation requires the ability to analyze, dissect and present one's own arguments as well as refute those of others. HIST courses in the proposed major typically see 10-12 pages of writing, with a combination of primary source analysis (critical thinking skills and practical writing skills), book or article reviews (writing for a particular audience), and a short research project.
- 2) Opportunities for more than one kind of writing
As noted above, students in the proposed major will write legal research papers, short critical papers, evaluative arguments, outlines, book and article reviews, etc.
- 3) Writing for different purposes and audiences: In the POLI 4000-level classes, students in the new major will write legal brief or judicial opinion type research papers as if they were counsel or justices on a current Supreme Court case with lower court judges, attorneys, and the general public as their audience. The intended audience for PHIL

writing is the educated public. Since the educated public is diverse, students are required to anticipate objections to any position they take from diverse points of view. The COMM classes are directly targeted to a variety of audiences in both oral and written fashion.

4) Opportunities for students to revise their writing

Students in the POLI 4000-level classes have the option of submitting a draft of their papers for review and subsequent revision. Because introductory philosophy courses are relatively large (35 students), and are generally taught by instructors with heavy teaching loads (4/4), they do not tend to provide as much opportunity for writing, or for revision, unlike the 3000-level PHIL courses included in the law major. Given the diversity of the intended audience, students in these courses are required to anticipate objections to their positions from diverse points of view. The 3000-level PHIL courses tend to require multiple critical analyses which undergo multiple revisions.

5) Writing assessment plan

In keeping with the university's emphasis, writing in the proposed major will be assessed at regular intervals. The details of such a plan are not currently known as it has not yet been determined if a common assessment will be applied to each of the courses in the new major or if each department will use its own criteria for assessing the courses it contributes to the proposed major.

However, there are several specific objectives to this major which will inform future assessment of the major broadly and the writing component specifically. These include, among others, familiarity with legal databases, the ability to conduct legal research, the ability to critically analyze information, the ability to understand and interpret legal writing, the ability to communicate in legal settings both orally and in writing and to diverse audiences, and the ability to craft, assess, and/or refute an argument both orally and in writing.

<u>Law Major in Brief (Fall 2016)</u>	
University Core Classes: (POLI and PA require 41; HADM requires 42)	41 credits
College of Liberal Arts Core Required Classes: (POLI and PA require 10; HADM requires 8)	10 credits
Free Electives: (POLI permits 33; PA 29-30; and HADM 6-7)	18 credits
The major would consist of	
1) Six required courses:	18-21 credits
2) Six courses in three skill areas of logic, communication , and legal research:	18 credits
3) Five courses from department and campus wide law-related electives:	15 credits
TOTAL	120-123 credits

A minimum of 120 hours is required for degree completion; hours may not be double-counted.

University Core (41 hours)
(Humanities 6/12 hrs in “other humanities”):

Require one of the following:
PHIL 1010, 1020, 1050, 1090 (or DE/honors)

(Social Science 3/12 hrs in “other S.S.”):
Require: POLI 1090 (or DE/honors version)

CLA Core (10 hours)
Language and LBAR

Free Electives (18 hours)

Required Courses (18-21 hours)

PHIL 3110: Symbolic Logic
PHIL 3640: Philosophy of Law
POLI 3360: Federal Jurisdiction
POLI 3380: Evidence and Legal Reasoning
POLI 4920: Internship (3-6 hours)
POLI 5570: Legal Profession (**will become new course: Intro to Legal Profession**)

Group 1: Ethics, Logic, and Theory (6 hours)

PHIL 3100: Intermediate Ethics
PHIL 3500: Epistemology
PHIL 3600: Political Philosophy OR
POLI 3020: Introduction to Political Theory
PHIL 3660: Applied Ethics
PHIL 4110: Advanced Logic

Group 2: Constitutional Law, Moot Court, and Legal Research (6 hours)

HIST future course: American Legal History
POLI 4010: Separation of Powers
POLI 4020: First Amendment
POLI 4030: Civil Rights
POLI 4040: Criminal Law

Group 3: Communication and Conflict Resolution (6 hours)

COMM 3100: Speaking Before Audiences
COMM 3110: Persuasion
COMM 3300: Communication and Conflict
COMM 3600: Rhetorical Theory
COMM 3700: Argumentation
COMM 4700: Legal Communication
PHIL 3550: Philosophy of Language
POLI 3340: Intro to Conflict Resolution
POLI 5340: Theory & Practice of Mediation
POLI 5570: Advanced Mediation

Recommended Electives (15 hours) – courses not taken in Groups 1,2, or 3 can serve as electives as well

Possible Electives from Dept

HADM 3700: Health Law
POLI 3300: Law and Society
POLI 3320: Judicial Process
POLI 3350: Controversies in Const. Law
POLI 3370: Federal Indian Law
POLI 4340: Contemporary Political Theory
POLI 5170: Election Law
POLI 5180: Administrative Law
POLI 5570: Mock Trial (**will become new course: Principles of Trial Advocacy**)

Future Dept Offerings:

POLI: Non-profit Law (undergraduate)
CPLN: Planning Law (undergraduate)
CPLN: Environmental Law (undergraduate)

Possible Electives Outside of Dept

ACCT 2700: Business Law
AGEC 4070: Agricultural Law
ANTH 4300: Anthropology of Law
AVMG 5090: Aviation Law and Policy
BSCI 4850: Construction Law
CIVL 5480: Legal Aspects of Civil Engineering
CMJN 4000: Mass Media Law and Regulations
ECON 3100: Law and Economics
ENGL 4150: Language and the Law
FORY 5540/5543: Environmental Law
FORY 5550/5553: Property Law
PHIL3620: Contemporary Political Philosophy
SOCY 5200: Sociology of Law

Future Programmatic Possibilities

Joint BA Law and POLI
Joint BA: Law and PA
ABM: Law and MPA
ABM: Law and MCP