

**To: Academic Review Committee**

**Re: New Program and Programmatic Revisions to the Law and Society major**

The Law and Society major convening group seeks to offer students the option to concentrate in Social Justice or Criminal Justice and also, modify the existing major by adding a new core course, Law and the Legal System; revising the capstone category to require only one senior capstone course; revising the elective categories to remove courses that are no longer offered; and reorganizing the elective requirements and offerings to allow students more flexibility in selecting electives. The new program and the revisions will allow students the option to add a concentration to their Law and Society degree, and will provide students more flexibility to choose courses. The major would require 56 credits, 36 in core courses and the capstone, and 20 in concentrations and electives.

The existing Law and Society major currently offers nine required courses and four electives, each elective selected from one of four distribution categories. The proposed revision will provide students the opportunity to synthesize the knowledge, skills, and methodologies gained from across the courses they have taken for the major, and select elective courses that pertain to their academic goals and interests. The modified major will offer students the additional opportunity to concentrate in either Social Justice or Criminal Justice within the major, therefore offering both breadth and depth to the major.

The table below summarizes the proposed new program and the revisions:

Current Law and Society Major	Proposed revisions
<b>One option</b>	<b>I. <u>THREE OPTIONS:</u></b>
<b>BA Law and Society: 9 required courses and 1 elective from each of the 4 elective categories: Law and Social Justice, Law, Culture and Humanities, Law, Globalization and Sustainability, and Criminal Justice</b>	<b>1. BA: Law and Society</b>  9 required courses, 1 course from Law, Culture and Humanities, 1 course from Law, Globalization and Sustainability, 3 free electives
	<b>2. BA Law and Society with Social Justice Concentration</b>  9 required courses, 1 course from the Law, Culture and Humanities, 1 course from Law, Globalization and Sustainability, and 3 courses in Social Justice
	<b>3. BA Law and Society with Criminal Justice Concentration</b>

9 required courses, 1 course from Law, Culture and Humanities, 1 course from Law, Globalization and Sustainability, and 3 courses in Criminal Justice

**Reason:** The current major is rigid and students do not have as much choice in choosing electives.

To offer students more flexibility and more choices, as well as to respond to the social justice focus of SSHS, we removed the requirement of picking an elective from each of the elective categories. Instead, students have the option to choose three courses from either the criminal justice or social justice requirements, besides one elective from Law and Culture and one from the Law and Globalization category.

We have also added two concentrations to the major for students who may be interested in specializing in a particular area.

Concentrations will add to students' intellectual development by focusing their conceptual and methodological study within a specific area within the Law and Society major.

We are also adding a new course to the core on Law and the Legal System, and removing Senior Seminar. The new core course will further enhance students' foundational knowledge in law and the legal system and enrich their legal research skills.

We are further shortening the capstone requirement of two courses to one course; shortening the capstone will benefit our transfer students who sometimes find the three course sequence difficult to coordinate to graduate on time. Students will be able to choose between Senior Seminar and Senior Capstone.

The concentrations maintain the proposed structure of 14 courses in the Law and Society major, 9 required, 1 course from Law and

Culture, 1 from Law and Globalization, and three from the field of concentration. The concentration will increase the rigor and depth of knowledge within the field.

**Social Justice concentration:**

The Social Justice concentration will prepare students who are interested in the intersection of justice, law and policy, and human rights. It will provide students the opportunity to focus on various areas, including constitutional and human rights law, and issues relating to disability, health, elderly care and the implications for social justice.

**Criminal Justice concentration:**

The Criminal Justice concentration will provide students with the knowledge to understand the problem of crime in its broad societal context—social, cultural, political, and economic, both nationally and internationally, and the criminal justice system. It will provide students the opportunity to focus on various areas including juvenile justice, forensic genealogy, and transitional justice, and issues relating to death penalty and wrongful convictions.

**II. Remove the following courses**

LAWS 240 - LAW AND SEXUALITY  
LAWS 324 - CHILD, FAMILY AND THE STATE

LAWS 330 - MEDIA AND THE LAW

LAWS 220 - LAW AND ECONOMIC THOUGHT

LAWS 213 - LAW ENFORCEMENT, CRIME & COMMUNITY

**III. Change the name of the following course**

LAWS 431: SENIOR PROJECT (WI)(OLD)

LAWS 431: SENIOR CAPSTONE  
(WI)(Proposed)

**New: Law and Society Major**

**Choose one option:**

**Law and Society Major:** 9 required courses, 1 Law, Culture and Humanities, 1 Law, Globalization and Sustainability course, and 3 electives

**Law and Society Major with Social Justice Concentration:** 9 required courses, 1 Law, Culture and Humanities, 1 Law, Globalization and Sustainability course, and 3 courses in Social Justice

**Law and Society Major with Criminal Justice Concentration:** 9 required courses, 1 Law, Culture and Humanities, 1 Law, Globalization and Sustainability course, and 3 courses in Criminal Justice

**Required Courses**

LAWS 131 - LAW & SOCIETY

LAWS 201 - GLOBAL LEGAL ORDER

LAWS 210 - LAW, JUSTICE AND MORALITY

LAWS 233 - AMERICAN LEGAL HISTORY

LAWS 251 - LAW, POWER AND INEQUALITY (WI)

LAWS 2XX-LAW AND THE LEGAL SYSTEM

LAWS 321 - FIELD STUDIES: LAW AND SOCIETY

LAWS 353 - SOCIO-LEGAL RESEARCH & WRITING (WI)

LAWS 421-SENIOR SEMINAR

OR

LAWS 431 - SENIOR CAPSTONE (WI)

*Note: LAWS 353 and LAWS 421/LAWS 431 should be taken sequentially, when students have junior or senior status.*

**Law, Culture and Humanities: (1 course)**

LAWS 202 - FAMOUS TRIALS

LAWS 221 - LAW AND NARRATIVE

LAWS 315 - LAW AND CULTURE

LAWS 215 - MOOT COURT

LAWS 340 - CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE

LAWS 342 - LYRICS AND THE LAW

**Law, Globalization and Sustainability: (1 course)**

LAWS 250 - LAW AND SUSTAINABILITY

LAWS 328 - COMPARATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL LAW  
LAWS 329 - LAW AND GLOBALIZATION  
LAWS 331 - LAW AND DEVELOPMENT  
LAWS 355 - INTERNATIONAL LAW OR  
POLI 357 - INTERNATIONAL LAW  
LAWS 360 - LAW OF WAR

**Electives for each concentration: (Students would take 3 courses from each, depending on their concentration. Students with no concentration would have free choice of electives.)**

**Social Justice**

LAWS 206 - HUMAN RIGHTS OR  
INTL 250 - CONTEMPORARY INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS  
LAWS 214 - DISABILITY LAW & SOCIETY  
LAWS 224 - CONSTITUTIONAL LAW  
LAWS 310 - LAW AND THE ELDERLY  
LAWS 332 - PSYCHOLOGY AND THE LAW  
LAWS 341 - GENDER AND THE LAW  
LAWS 351 - CONSTITUTIONAL LIBERTIES  
LAWS 363 - HEALTH LAW  
LAWS 390-TOPICS

**Criminal Justice**

LAWS 203 - CRIMINAL INVESTIGATION  
LAWS 212 - ISSUES IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
LAWS 228 - CRIMINAL LAW  
LAWS 320 - TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE  
LAWS 334 - JUVENILE JUSTICE  
LAWS 337 - CRIMINAL COURT PROCESS  
LAWS 347 - DEATH PENALTY IN AMERICA  
LAWS 348 - DRUGS, CRIME AND SOCIETY  
LAWS 356 - WRONGFUL CONVICTIONS  
LAWS 365 - FORENSIC GENEALOGY INNOCENCE LAB I  
LAWS 390 - TOPICS

**Program's Anticipated Enrollment, Needs, and Impact on Other Programs**

The existing Law and Society major has 72 students enrolled in Fall 2023. We expect that adding concentrations will make the Law and Society major more attractive to prospective students. We expect the number of students declaring a concentration will grow as clear descriptions of each concentration are added to the catalog and the requirements of the concentrations are specified.

We do not anticipate the need for additional resources, since the restructuring works within the existing framework. We believe the reorganization of the major would have a positive impact not just on the major, but across SSHS and the college, as it offers more options in law for students.

Moreover, given the popularity of the Crime and Society minor (which is open to everyone), the addition of the Criminal Justice and Social Justice concentrations alongside Sociology's Criminology concentration will make our offerings more attractive to incoming students.

## **Program's needs**

**Student Demand and Opportunities:** Law and Society's self study (Fall 2022) and the External Reviewers report (Spring 2023) observe that students are interested in more elective choices. In addition, student surveys and focus group interviews conducted in Fall 2021, as part of our self study, clearly showed that our students were interested in delving deeper into Social Justice related issues, including civil rights, family courts, environmental justice and into Criminal Justice issues. Students are excited about the new IGG lab based courses, which is an excellent addition to our Criminal Justice offerings.

The new concentration and the program revisions will not only increase the rigor and depth of knowledge within the field, but also provide students the option to specialize in a particular area. Specialization in a particular area will also enhance internship and professional opportunities for our students, especially in the public and non-profit sector. External Reviewers have also recommended the addition of the concentrations in their report.

**Budget:** The new program and the revisions need no additional budget. We will be able to offer the electives and the concentrations easily. Further, Law and Society's three ongoing initiatives- The Investigative Genealogy Workshop, The World of Law Speaker Series, The Ramapo Journal of Law and Society will add to the growth of the program.

**Strategic Plan:** It is well aligned with the goals and objectives of the strategic plan and will bolster the goals of academic excellence and student success, and building and fostering an inclusive community. Through its experiential, interdisciplinary, international, and intercultural foci, the Law and Society program inherently promotes diversity, equity, and inclusion. The range of voices and perspectives encountered throughout the program provide students with a wide array of views from which to form their own perspectives on the world. The concentrations and the revisions to the elective offerings will further advance the strategic plan of the college.

**Similar Programs:** Interdisciplinary programs geared towards undergraduate education in Law and Society have a range of foci from Legal Studies, Law, History, and Culture, to Law, Justice, and Society, and Justice studies. We compared our Law and Society program to John Jay's Law and Society major and Montclair State University's Jurisprudence, Law and Society major, and Justice Studies.

John Jay's Law and Society major is a much larger program in the social sciences. The major, like ours, requires students to take thirteen courses: three introductory courses in Sociology, Political Science and Law and Society, a skill level course in Methods; four foundational courses in Legal Foundations (American Legal Foundations, International Legal Foundations, Sociological Foundations, Philosophy, Jurisprudence and Ethics, and Societal and Political Change), and Internship and a capstone course. The range of courses in each of the foundations and the internship options at John Jay is impressive.

Montclair State University's Jurisprudence, Law and Society and Justice programs also provide an interdisciplinary study of law in the liberal arts. It draws from a core of jurisprudence courses while building on social science and humanities courses, including Political History of the United States, Sociology of Law, and Public Policy. The program also provides students the option to enroll in a BA/MA program in Law and Governance. The Justice studies program provides students the option to add concentrations in Criminal Justice, International Justice, and Paralegal studies.

The curriculum structure of our program is similar in many respects and is representative of undergraduate legal studies curricula. Ramapo's Law and Society is also distinctive in many ways. Besides the relatively small size, our strong interdisciplinary core and experiential learning, including our IGG program, are our strength. The addition of a new core course, concentrations, and the proposed revisions to our elective offerings will further the growth of our program.

**Objectives and outcomes of the program:**

**The objectives and outcomes of the Law and Society program are as follows (same as before):**

**Goal 1:** Students will understand how law intersects with the larger social, historical, political, and economic world, develop an awareness of the historical and contemporary contexts for the study of law, and develop an appreciation of how various theories of jurisprudence have molded and continue to mold our understanding of law.

**Outcome 1.1:** Students will form a knowledge base in the foundational principles of law and justice.

**Outcome 1.2:** Students will understand the intersections between law, humanities, and social sciences.

**Goal 2:** Students will understand the role of the American legal system in American society and its place within the larger context of comparative traditions and in the current global legal order.

**Outcome 2.1:** Students will be able to compare legal systems using historical, cross-cultural, and interdisciplinary methods.

**Goal 3:** Students will improve their research, writing, and communication skills in a sociolegal context.

**Outcome 3.1:** Students will be able to demonstrate proficiency in researching and using primary and secondary legal and scholarly sources.

**Outcome 3.2:** Students will be able to present clear oral and written argumentation on socio legal issues.)

**Goal 4:** Students will gain an appreciation for the complex ways in which social issues interface with the law, and understand how law is created, interpreted, and implemented.

**Outcome 4.1:** Students will connect the law in action to course concepts.

**Curriculum map:**

**Modes of Learning: I = Introduction, P = Practice, M = Mastery**

Course number	Course name	Outcome 1.1: Law and justice	Outcome 1.2: Law, humanities, social sciences	Outcome 2.1: Comp. methods	Outcome 3.1: Research & critical skills	Outcome 3.2: Argum. skills	Outcome 4.1: Law in action
131	Law Society	[	[			[	
201	Global Legal Order	P	P	[	[	P	[
210	Law, Justice, and Morality	[	[			[	



233	American Legal History	P	P	[	[	P	[
251	Law, Power, and Inequality	P	P	[	[	P	[
2XX	Law and the Legal System	P	P	[	P	P	[
353	Sociological Research and Writing				P	P	
321	Field Studies						P, M
431	Senior Capstone			M	M	M	