

**THE UNIVERSITY SENATE OF MICHIGAN TECHNOLOGICAL UNIVERSITY**

**Proposal 14-08**

(Voting Units: Academic)

**MINOR IN LAW AND SOCIETY  
Department of Social Sciences**

**1. Introduction**

The Department of Social Sciences proposes a Minor in Law and Society designed to provide students from all majors with an opportunity to explore this field of study. A Law and Society concentration for Social Science majors already exists.

**2. Rationale**

Legal and policy-related issues affect many aspects of social and professional life and can be intriguing and puzzling to students from majors across the campus. A minor in law and society complements our curriculum by allowing students to explore their interests in this area and by stimulating further interest in their own major as they develop new ways to view the significant ethical, legal, and political issues in their profession as well as in society at large. Moreover, because post-graduate education in law is open to graduates from any field, students from all majors continually express interest in learning more about law in order to see if they wish to pursue post-graduate opportunities in the legal field. Indeed, many Michigan Tech alumni who are practicing attorneys have expressed the hope that students here might have opportunities to learn about law while undergraduates, especially since they face a rather steep learning curve in law school with only an engineering or science background. For example, the field of patent law is particularly attractive to Michigan Tech science and engineering majors as one cannot practice patent law without a degree in science or engineering. Due to this restriction, lawyers with engineering expertise face particularly good career options if they wish to pursue a legal degree.

In sum, this minor has been developed to fill a specific niche in Michigan Tech's curriculum, to satisfy requests by students interested in legal careers, and in response to alumni who are attorneys and who see the value in providing all students with this kind of opportunity.

**3. Catalog copy**

I. Title of Minor

Minor in Law and Society

II. Catalog Description

The Minor in Law and Society focuses on the nature, place, and meaning of law and policy in a changing society. This minor provides students with an opportunity to engage in legal reasoning and learn more about legal careers and the judicial system, while developing their understanding of how ethics, commerce, and culture impact legal and policy choices. This minor is open to all students except those majoring in Social Science with a concentration in Law and Society.

III. List of Courses

To receive a Minor in Law and Society, a student must earn at least 17 credit hours of minor-related courses, with no more than 6 credit hours at the 1000- or 2000-level and at least 6 credit hours of 3000-level or higher courses not required for their major degree except as free electives.

Introductory Topics in Legal Studies/Political Science (2 or 3 cr)

(Choose one of the following courses)

SS 1002 Orientation to Legal Careers (2 cr)

SS 2610 Intro to Law and Society (alt) (3 cr)

Intermediate and Advanced Topics in Legal Studies/Political Science and Policy (9 cr)

(Choose 9 cr of the following courses, all of which are 3 credits)

SS 3300 Environmental Problems (alt)

SS 3600 American Foreign Policy (alt)  
SS 3610 International Law (alt)  
SS 3630 Environmental Policy and Politics  
SS 3640 Topics in Cyber Law and Policy (alt)  
SS 3650 Intellectual Property Law (alt)  
SS 3660 Constitutional Law (alt)  
SS 3710 Social Problems (alt) **or** SS 3750 Social Inequality (alt)  
SS 3801 Science, Technology, and Society  
SS 4100 American Indian Political Issues (alt)  
SS 4705 Critical Race Theory  
FW 3110 Natural Resource Policy

Courses in Law, Business, Ethics and Philosophy (6 cr)

(Choose 6 credits within the following courses, all of which are 3 credits.

BA 2500 Business Law I **or** BA 3580 Legal Environment of Business  
HU 2700 Intro to Philosophy and Ethics **or** HU 2701 Logic and Critical Thinking  
HU 2702 Ethical Theory and Moral Problems  
HU 3621 Journalism  
HU 3710 Engineering Ethics **or** HU 3711 Biomedical Ethics  
HU 4701 Political Philosophy  
PSY 4220 Law and Psychology (pre-req PSY 2000)

Where there is an “or” option noted, students may only use one of the course options for credit toward the Law and Society minor. All prerequisites (other than UN1002 or 2002) are listed above. Courses offered in alternating years are designated (alt).

**4. New Courses in Support of this Minor**

We do not need to propose any new courses in order to offer this minor.

**5. Estimated Costs**

There are no costs associated with adding this minor. All courses listed above are currently being offered. There are adequate library and electronic resources for the minor.

**Introduced to Senate: 16 January 2008**

**Adopted by Senate: 13 February 2008**

**Approved by Administration: 18 February 2008**