

University of Minnesota

Undergraduate Business Law Minor

Summary, Requirements, and FAQs

Summary of the Minor

This undergraduate minor enables students to explore issues and concepts at the intersection of law and business. Legal regulation of firms and markets is pervasive. Students interested in a career in business should understand how law structures business entities and the environments in which they operate, and how law both enables and constrains innovation. Students will learn analytical techniques that will be helpful in business settings and that can prepare them for further study in a law school, an MBA program, or other graduate program.

Among the topics that students can explore through the minor are: the formation and regulation of business entities, the challenges of operating in a regulated market, rules applicable to fields in which many students will work (e.g., insurance, banking, consumer services, and manufacturing), and the intricacies of creating and managing intellectual property.

Students who complete the minor will be in a better position to innovate; identify, define and solve problems; and communicate effectively in interactions with lawyers as they navigate through regulatory requirements that all businesses inevitably confront. The minor thus provides a portal to new ways of thinking and new forms of knowledge.

Required and elective courses in the minor are offered through the Law School and the Carlson School of Management. All advising is through the Undergraduate Program Office in the Carlson School, room 2-190 Hanson Hall (612-624-3313). The Business Law Advisor is Chelsie Bohlman, M.S.E. She can be reached at lawminor@umn.edu.

The minor is available to undergraduate degree-seeking students at the University of Minnesota. Undergraduates enrolled in graduate-level courses will be graded separately from graduate students.

Admission Requirements

An undergraduate GPA of 3.0 or higher at the time of entry into the minor is required. This requirement can be waived on a case by case basis.

Course and Credit Requirements

Total Required Credits: 15

Required Courses

1. LAW 3000 – Introduction to American Law and Legal Reasoning (3.0 cr)
-Note: undergraduates must complete this course (grade of C or higher) before enrolling in other Law School courses as part of the minor. Students should plan ahead and complete this course as early as possible.

2. One (and only one) of the following business and accounting concepts courses:
FINA 3001 – Finance Fundamentals (3.0 cr)
LAW 5076 – Essentials of Business for Lawyers (3.0 cr)
MGMT 3001 – Fundamentals of Management (3.0 cr)
MGMT 3004 – Business Strategy (3.0 cr) (open only to CSOM students)

Strongly Recommended Course

Students are strongly encouraged, although not required, to take the following course:
LAW 3050 – Law of Business Organizations (3.0 cr)

Elective Courses [more courses may be added in future years]

Students are particularly encouraged to take core courses noted by an asterisk *.

- BLAW 3058 – The Law of Contracts and Agency (4.0 cr)
- BLAW 3059 – Real Estate Law (2 cr)
- LAW 5025 – Patent Law Proseminar (1.0 cr)
- LAW 5026 – Intellectual Property and Technology Proseminar (1.0 cr)
- LAW 5061 – Financial Regulation (3.0 cr)
- LAW 5062 – Energy Law (3.0 cr)
- LAW 5078 – Legislation and Regulation (3.0 cr)
- *LAW 5100 – Taxation I (3.0 cr)
- *LAW 5102 – Mergers and Acquisitions (3.0 cr)
- LAW 5103 – Data Privacy Law (3.0 cr)
- *LAW 5211 – Federal Securities Regulation (3.0 cr)
- *LAW 5214 – Insurance (3.0 cr)
- LAW 5224 – Patents (3.0 cr)
- *LAW 5601 – International Business Transactions (3.0 cr)
- LAW 5608 – Trademarks (3.0 cr)
- LAW 5613 – Copyright (3.0 cr)
- LAW 5707 – Intellectual Property Transactions (2.0 cr)
- LAW 5908 – Independent Research (1.0 or 2.0 cr) (requires permission from law school faculty supervisor)

Additional Elective Courses (advisor permission required)

Appropriate Law School courses not on the list above may be taken to fulfill minor requirements, with permission from the Business Law Advisor.

Transferred Credits

Transfer course substitutions may be considered for business designated courses (FINA, MGMT, BLAW). No substitutions will be made for LAW designated courses and no more than 2 courses may be transferred into the minor.

More Information on Courses

Course descriptions and syllabi for Law courses are available on the Law School's website:
<https://www.law.umn.edu/academics/course-guide/alphabetical-list>

Additional information about courses and the minor in general is available on the Carlson School website: <https://carlsonschool.umn.edu/degrees/undergraduate/majors-and-minors/business-law>

Frequently Asked Questions:

Is the minor open to all undergraduates, or limited to students in certain colleges or majors?

The Business Law Minor is open to all University of Minnesota undergraduate degree candidates in all colleges and in all majors. However, students should check with their advisors to ensure that their programs allow enrollment in a freestanding undergraduate minor.

Is the minor open to students on coordinate campuses?

Yes, but classes currently require physical attendance in the twin cities. In future years, remote attendance from coordinate campuses might be possible.

Can courses in the minor count toward Honors Program requirements?

Yes – Law 3000 is available as an honors contract course. The instructor will provide additional information about fulfilling the contract. Additional honors contract courses may be available in the future.

Is the minor open to students who do not plan to attend law school?

Yes. There is no requirement or assumption that you plan to attend law school. The classes are designed to be interesting and helpful to a wide variety of students with a wide variety of career goals.

Will the minor help me if I plan to attend law school?

Yes, in that you will take courses from law professors, will be exposed to law school teaching methods, and will be trained in basic elements of legal analysis. This will help you adapt to law school more easily than students who lack that background. The minor might also help you decide whether to attend law school.

There are two important caveats. First, the American Bar Association prohibits accredited law schools in the U.S. from awarding J.D. credit for undergraduate work. Accordingly, your credits in the minor will not transfer into law school. Second, law schools do not require students to have prior exposure to law, so you should not think of the minor as essential preparation for law school.

Will the minor help me if I plan to attend a graduate program other than law school?

Yes. The minor emphasizes critical reasoning and problem solving skills. These skills are useful in all academic fields. Of course, there is an opportunity cost to every decision: if you complete the Business Law Minor, then you are not doing something else with that time. You should consult with your advisors to determine what options are best for you in light of your goals and circumstances.

When can I begin taking courses to satisfy the minor?

We recommend that you start in your sophomore or junior year.

Do I need any preparation for the minor or prior knowledge of law?

No. Courses in the minor do not assume prior familiarity with law, provided that you take Law 3000 before enrolling in 5xxx or 6xxx level law school courses.

Do I need to apply for the minor? How do I sign up?

Students can start coursework for the minor without formally signing up for the minor. We recommend that students first complete Law 3000: Introduction to American Law and Legal Reasoning. This will allow you to test the waters before diving into the minor.

Signing up for the minor requires meeting with the Business Law Advisor and completing a form.

Should I take courses in a particular order?

Yes. The ideal starting course is Law 3000: Introduction to American Law and Legal Reasoning. This course is required before you can take more advanced (5xxx and 6xxx) courses at the Law School.

After completing Law 3000, is there an ideal sequence of courses?

In general, we recommend taking 3xxx level courses before 5xxx and 6xxx level courses. You should work with the Business Law Advisor to find a sequence that makes sense in light of your goals, schedule, and preparation.

What should I do if Law 3000 does not fit in my schedule, but I still want to start the minor?

You should either wait until you can take Law 3000, or take one of the other 3xxx level courses in the minor. (The courses are listed elsewhere in this document.) You cannot take 5xxx or 6xxx law courses as part of the minor until you complete Law 3000.

If I have a substantial background in law, can I start taking 5xxx and 6xxx level law courses without having taken Law 3000?

Maybe. Please meet with the Business Law Advisor to discuss your situation. In unusual circumstances, you might be able to take certain 5xxx or 6xxx law courses before taking Law 3000. However, you will almost always be better off taking Law 3000 first.

When I take law courses, will I be evaluated in comparison to law students?

No. Undergraduates in law courses will be graded separately from law students.

Can I take Law School courses without being part of the minor?

Most 5xxx and some 6xxx law school courses are open to undergraduates who are not part of the Business Law Minor. However, faculty members who teach those courses recommend that undergraduates first complete Law 3000 or Law 3050.

Can I start the minor but then decide not to finish it?

Yes. You can take one or more classes and then decide that you do not want to complete the minor. You will still get the benefit of the coursework.

Can I take more than one minor?

We do not require exclusivity. But your college or major may limit the number of minors that you can pursue – you should check with your advisor.

Can I take courses in the summer?

Maybe. Some Law School courses are offered in the summer each year. You should check the Law School website in late March to see what is available. Please consult with your advisor regarding the implications of summer registration for tuition and scholarships.

Are there any special registration procedures for Law courses?

Generally, no. All 3xxx and 5xxx Law courses that are part of the minor are open for undergraduate registration in the same way that students typically register for courses. You might find that you are unable to directly enroll in some 6xxx Law courses. In that case, you should email lawreg@umn.edu for guidance.

Can graduate students complete the minor?

No, but they can complete the Graduate Law Minor. For more information, see <https://www.law.umn.edu/academics/non-degree-programs/graduate-and-undergraduate-courses>.

Who can I contact for more information about the minor?

You should start with the Business Law Advisor at the Carlson School of Management:
Chelsie Bohlman, M.S.E.
Senior Academic Adviser
2-190 Hanson Hall
lawminor@umn.edu