



What is Criminal Law?

Criminal Law relates to the rules and principles that apply when the government is alleging that a member of society is deserving of punishment for breaching the law rule. The allegation places the government in an adversarial relationship with the accused individual or group, necessitating that special and generally enhanced legal protections be afforded to the accused to ensure that the innocent are not convicted and fundamental fairness is observed in the investigatory and prosecutorial processes. Thus, for example, Criminal Law encompasses matters such as the definitions of crimes, the availability of defences, the interpretation of numerous rights in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and the admissibility and value of pieces of evidence.

Criminal Law Curriculum Stream

Western Law offers numerous foundational courses in the area of Criminal Law, including the first-year introductory course, Criminal Procedure, Evidence and Sentencing. We also offer more specialized courses, like the Capstone in Criminal Law and Youth Criminal Law, providing interested students with the opportunity to both further their knowledge of and critically analyze the criminal justice system. Western Law offers numerous opportunities to receive practical, hands-on training, through courses like Trial Advocacy and mock appeal and trial competitions like the Gale Cup and the Arnup Cup. We even offer students the opportunity to leave campus and work with local criminal practitioners and judges, to see first-hand how criminal law is practiced in the real world. Students can also represent actual clients in minor criminal matters by working at Community Legal Services.

CAPSTONE COURSE		
Upper Year Prerequisites*	Upper Year Electives**	Co-Curricular Activities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evidence Criminal Procedure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Advanced Criminal Law Clinic Arnup Cup (Moot) Clinic in Criminal Law Practice Clinical Practice Skills Criminal Law Clinic Gale Cup (Moot) International Criminal Law Ontario Court of Justice Placement Program Sentencing Statutory Interpretation Trial Advocacy Wrongful Convictions Youth Criminal Law 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cherniak Cup (Moot) Community Legal Services Criminal Law Students Association Lerners LLP Cup (Appellate Advocacy Moot)

*All upper year prerequisites must be taken AFTER First Year Criminal Law.

**Please note that not all courses are offered every year.