

Criminal Law General Course Guide

Criminal law refers to the body of law that is applied to individuals and/or entities who are accused of committing a crime or are otherwise involved in the criminal justice system. Criminal lawyers include private criminal defense attorneys and public defenders as well as state, local, and federal prosecutors. Defense attorneys defend individuals and entities charged with crimes. Prosecutors work with law enforcement officials to investigate, charge, and as needed try cases on behalf of the state. Criminal lawyers handle a diverse spectrum of criminal cases, including domestic violence, human trafficking, drug crimes, civil rights violations, and white-collar crimes.

In addition to required courses (*e.g.*, Criminal Law, Constitutional Law, Criminal Procedure I, and Evidence), students interested in criminal law should take elective substantive and skills courses addressing criminal law and procedure as well as courses relating to relevant areas of substantive law.¹

Core Courses:

Criminal Procedure II
Advanced Evidence

Core Experiential/Skills Courses:

Basic Skills in Trial Advocacy*

Alabama Criminal Practice and Procedure or Advanced Skills in Trial Advocacy - Criminal Jury Selection

At least one Clinic or Externship Placement²

Clinics: Capital Defense Clinic, Criminal Appeals Clinic, Innocence Clinic

Externships: Government Agency Externship (U.S. Attorney's Office, Federal Public Defender, or Jefferson County District Attorney's Office), Judicial Externship, Public Interest Externship, and externships with Criminal-Defense focused firms

Recommended Courses:

Appellate Advocacy
E-Discovery and Digital Evidence
Juvenile Justice
Legislation
Municipal Court Practice and Procedure
Post-Conviction Remedies
Scientific Evidence

Related Courses:

Business Crime
Cybercrime
Healthcare Fraud and Abuse
Immigration Law
Military Justice
Pretrial Practice

¹Please consult the course schedule for current course availability. Courses may be offered in alternating years.

² Available externships and internships are posted on 12Twenty. The director of Externships and the director of the Career Development Office may be contacted for additional information.

* Indicates that this course is a prerequisite to other courses. Accordingly, it is strongly recommended that students take it in the 2L year.