

Pre-Law III

Primary Career Cluster:	Law, Public Safety, Corrections, & Security
Consultant:	Sloan Hudson, (615) 532-2839, Sloan.Hudson@tn.gov
Course Code(s):	6197
Prerequisite(s):	<i>Pre-Law I (6195) and Pre-Law II (6196)</i>
Credit:	1
Grade Level:	10-11
Graduation Requirements:	This course satisfies one of three credits required for an elective focus when taken in conjunction with other Law, Public Safety, Corrections, & Security courses.
Programs of Study and Sequence:	This is the third course in the Pre-Law program of study.
Aligned Student Organization(s):	SkillsUSA: https://www.skillsusatn.org/ Tracy Whitehead, (615) 532-2804, Tracy.Whitehead@tn.gov
Coordinating Work-Based Learning:	Teachers are encouraged to use embedded WBL activities such as informational interviewing, job shadowing, and career mentoring. For information, visit https://www.tn.gov/education/career-and-technical-education/work-based-learning.html
Available Student Industry Certifications:	None
Dual Credit or Dual Enrollment Opportunities:	There are no statewide dual credit/dual enrollment opportunities for this course. If interested in establishing a local opportunity, reach out to your local postsecondary institution.
Teacher Endorsement(s):	590, 750
Required Teacher Certifications/Training:	
Teacher Resources:	https://www.tn.gov/education/career-and-technical-education/career-clusters/cte-cluster-law-public-safety.html

Course Description

Pre-Law III is the third course designed to prepare students to pursue careers in the field of law. Upon completion of this course, a proficient student will be able to describe sentencing and decisions, appeals, punishment, parole, probation, detention, and family and property law. In addition, students will model the professional, moral, and ethical standards required of professionals in the field of law.



Program of Study Application

This is the third course in the *Pre-Law* program of study. For more information on the benefits and requirements of implementing these programs in full, please visit the Law, Public Safety, Corrections, & Security website at <https://www.tn.gov/education/career-and-technical-education/career-clusters/cte-cluster-law-public-safety.html>.

Course Standards

Careers in Legal Services

- 1) Review career research from the Foundations of Law course, complete one or more career aptitude surveys, analyze the results, and relate in an essay how personal career aptitudes align with Legal Services careers comparing the range of skills, competencies, and professional traits required.
- 2) Evaluate factors that contribute to effective communication between professionals and their clients, including demonstrating sensitivity to privileged conversations, language barriers, cultural differences, and individuals with special needs. Compare effective practices appropriate for an office, police station, or classroom setting.

Sentencing and Decisions

- 3) Using the Tennessee Criminal Statutes Blue book and Federal Criminal Statutes, prepare an informative narrative describing the range of sentencing options in criminal trials at the federal and state levels. Describe the roles of the judge and jury in the decision-making process for each of the options noted.
- 4) Illustrate the options for alternative sentencing in criminal case convictions and identify the length of sentences available for alternative sentencing in Tennessee. Argue the pros and cons of indeterminate sentencing; research current sentencing trends in Tennessee and their perceived or documented effects on prisoner behavior.
- 5) Explore the origins of parole, probation, intermediate sanctions, and community corrections. Define each term and explain the interrelationship of the concepts, addressing both law enforcement and social issues in criminal justice. Investigate data resources available through government and nonprofit sources on issues related to parole, probation, and intermediate sanctions; review data available from the Bureau of Justice Statistics and analyze trends and success rates in the overall community supervision population.



- 6) Evaluate Tennessee legislative activity over the past decade with respect to juvenile offenders. Evaluate major legislation passed and analyze what these trends signify for the local justice system. Write a persuasive essay on restorative practices for juveniles and its impact on recidivism.
- 7) Summarize landmark Supreme Court decisions that have addressed issues of racial discrimination and sentencing. Explore the effects of at least one decision on the sentencing outcome of a criminal case.
- 8) Using a timeline, analyze Supreme Court decisions that have had the greatest influence over wide areas of procedure, eligible crimes, acceptable evidence, and method of execution in capital punishment cases.
- 9) Create a graphic organizer depicting types of civil cases including, but not limited to divorce and family, personal injury or TORT claims, breach of contract, property disputes, and landlord and tenant disputes. Include the most common decisions reached in each of the cases along with a description of punitive and compensatory damages.
- 10) Interpret the elements of a wrongful death lawsuit. Compare and contrast pecuniary injuries such as the loss of support, services, lost prospect of inheritance, and medical and funeral expenses. Discuss how a court determines fair and just compensation for the injuries that resulted from the decedent's death.

Appeals

- 11) Define what constitutes an appeal, who can file it, and at what point it can occur; explain the right to an appeal and which court decisions, at what level, are eligible for appeal. Differentiate between a traditional, interlocutory, and appeals.
- 12) Construct a diagram to demonstrate the appeals process in the state or federal court system, include the roles of the appellant and appellee, the role of the appellate brief, and the stages of review. Review the components of an appellate brief and draft an outline for a brief based on a fact based scenario.

Punishment

- 13) Outline the medical, community, and crime control models of corrections used in the U.S. since 1900, identifying recurring trends and major reform movements in the 21st century.
- 14) Determine the offense with the highest percentage of convicted criminals currently incarcerated in Tennessee's prison system. Calculate the average sentence length and analyze trends in incarceration rates in Tennessee over the past decade.



- 15) Calculate the costs associated with investigating, arresting, prosecuting, sentencing, and housing someone who has committed a felony.

Detention

- 16) Prepare a chart of the federal and state prisons and county jails in Tennessee, detailing special services or populations served and the level of security at each. Choose one institution (such as the women's state prison or the federal prison) and compare and contrast services provided at that institution to those provided at other prison facilities.
- 17) Diagram the structure of the juvenile detention system in Tennessee; explore efforts underway in the state to address the problem of disproportionate confinement.
- 18) Search for interview transcripts, video documentation, or other published primary and secondary sources detailing first-hand testimony of contemporary prison culture and determine how it is affected by the size and security level of the prison or the types of crimes committed by inmates. Cite example cases whose decisions affected the rights incarcerated individuals. Describe basic prisoner rights protected by the Constitution.
- 19) Investigate the Rules of the Tennessee Corrections Institute related to correctional facilities inspection and summarize some of the minimum standards for local jails and detention facilities, addressing categories such as security, discipline, administration, medical services, and food services.
- 20) Differentiate at least three issues county correctional facilities in Tennessee are currently facing; correlate contributing factors for each issue and debate a range of policy changes that could potentially mitigate current areas of concern. Example topics could include state reimbursement issues and support for individuals with mental health conditions.

Family and Property Law

- 21) Analyze legal considerations of domestic cases including marriage, divorce, child custody, and abuse. Draft a divorce decree outlining division of property and debt, alimony, child custody and support. File an answer with at least one affirmative defense to fault grounds for divorce.
- 22) Investigate items that are considered personal property and determine the characteristics of items that would deem them real property. Analyze case studies related to real and personal property differentiating between both types of properties within each case study.



- 23) Role play an original sales presentation for an estate plan to a fictional couple. Include components such as wills, trusts, beneficiary designations, power of attorney, and medical directives in the presentation while persuading the couple to include each of the components in their estate plan.

The following artifacts will reside in the student’s portfolio:

- range of sentencing narrative,
- restorative practices essay,
- appellate brief outline,
- juvenile detention system diagram, and
- divorce decree.

Standards Alignment Notes

*References to other standards include:

- P21: Partnership for 21st Century Skills [Framework for 21st Century Learning](#)
 - Note: While not all standards are specifically aligned, teachers will find the framework helpful for setting expectations for student behavior in their classroom and practicing specific career readiness skills.