AN UNDERSTANDING OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE is fundamental to any lawyer's education.

At the University of Virginia, the nation’s leading criminal law faculty offer an in-depth array of courses on both the substantive criteria of guilt or innocence and the procedures used in the arrest, prosecution and punishment of offenders. On topics ranging from the reliability of eyewitness identifications to the consequences of plea bargaining, Virginia's faculty are looking at the criminal justice system with fresh eyes and considering how to make a more just society.

COURSES AND SEMINARS

Advanced Criminal Law  
Coercion  
Computer Crime  
Contemporary Debates in Criminal Law  
Corporate Rights  
Crime and Punishment  
Criminal Adjudication  
Criminal Investigation  
Criminal Justice Policy  
Criminal Law Simulation  
Criminal Procedure Seminar  
Criminal Procedure Survey  
Criminology  
Current Issues in Drug Law and Policy  
Current Issues in Forensic Science  
Cyber Law and Policy  
Death Penalty  
Federal Criminal Pre-Trial and Trial Practice  
Federal Litigation Practice  
Federal Sentencing  
Forensics Litigation  
Habeas Corpus  
International Criminal Law  
Law and Psychology: Wrongful Convictions  
Seminar  
Law of the Police Legislation and Regulation  
Mental Health Issues in Juvenile Justice  
Plea Bargaining  
Prison Reform Litigation and Advocacy  
Social Science in Law  
Terrorism, Human Rights and Rule of Law  
Law, Comparative Approach  
The Role of the Federal Prosecutor  
Understanding Police Use of Force: Investigation and Litigation Concepts  
White Collar Criminal Defense Practice  
White Collar Investigations, Enforcement  

THE LAW SCHOOL SUPPLEMENTS ITS CURRICULUM with a wide range of extracurricular activities dedicated to criminal law, including a journal devoted to criminal law and an active innocence group.

VIRGINIA STUDENTS DO NOT STUDY CRIMINAL LAW ONLY FROM A DISTANCE. They also enroll in clinics that offer hands-on involvement in juvenile justice, criminal prosecution or defense, and innocence cases.

COLLECTIVELY, THESE EXPERIENCES LEAD VIRGINIA GRADUATES to coveted positions in the U.S. Department of Justice Honors Program, in U.S. attorneys’ offices, and in district attorney and defense offices across the country.
In the clinic, offered in conjunction with the JustChildren Program of the Legal Aid Justice Center, students represent low-income children statewide who have problems with the education, foster care and juvenile justice systems.

Criminal Defense
The semester-long Criminal Defense Clinic allows students to represent defendants in criminal cases in the local courts under the direct supervision of an experienced local criminal defense attorney.

Innocence Project
Students in this yearlong clinic investigate three potential wrongful convictions of incarcerated individuals in Virginia. One of the three cases has forensic evidence (usually DNA) that could potentially be tested, and two are non-DNA cases.

Prosecution
In this yearlong clinic, students work with prosecutors to try cases in local jurisdictions. Students explore a range of issues involved in the discharge of a prosecutor’s duties, including the exercise of discretion in the decision to initiate, prosecute, reduce or drop charges; interaction with defense counsel, investigative agencies and law enforcement personnel; and dealing with victims and other witnesses.

Virginia Criminal Justice Policy Reform Project
This new project will research — and encourage the adoption of — policies aimed at improving the fairness of criminal adjudication, preventing wrongful convictions, reducing recidivism and costs, diverting low-risk offenders from jail or prison, and easing societal re-entry for the formerly incarcerated.

Virginia Journal of Criminal Law
This student-edited journal is one of only a handful at leading law schools focused on criminal law. The journal, which also sponsors legal symposia and conferences, publishes twice a year.

Domestic Violence Project
This pro bono student organization educates the Law School community about domestic violence and monitors domestic violence–related criminal justice proceedings in local jurisdictions. The project assists the commonwealth’s attorney offices of Charlottesville and Albemarle County in their prosecution of these cases by interviewing victims of domestic violence.

Virginia Innocence Project Pro Bono Clinic
Students assist clinic attorneys in evaluating claims of innocence by prisoners in Virginia and assessing the appropriate avenues of legal relief available.

Virginia Law in Prison Project
This student organization sponsors speaking events, pro bono experiences and educational opportunities on correctional practices and policy.