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.

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.

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.

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.

COURSES AND SEMINARS

- Advanced Criminal Law
- Advanced Criminal Law: Child Abuse Cases (JAG)
- CaseFiles and Contracts
- Contemporary Debates in Criminal Law
- Crime and Punishment
- Criminal Adjudication
- Criminal Investigation
- Criminal Law in the Supreme Court
- Criminal Procedure
- Criminology
- Cybercrime
- Cyber Law and Policy
- Dispute Settlement in International Trade and Investment
- Federal Criminal Law
- Federal Law of Fraud and Corruption
- Federal Pretrial Litigation
- Federal Sentencing
- Free Expression in Cyberspace
- Habeas Corpus and Wrongful Convictions
- Immigration Enforcement
- Innocence Cases: How Much Is Enough?
- International Criminal Justice: Its Successes, Failures and Future Prospects
- International Financial Crimes
- Law of the Police
- Plea Bargaining
- Profiling
- Psychiatry and Criminal Law
- Rescue, Charity and Justice
- Rule of Law/Security
- Cooperation (JAG)
- Scientific Evidence
- Social Science in Law
- Special Topics in Physical and Sexual Abuse Cases (JAG)
- Survey of Military Justice (JAG)
- War Crimes (JAG)
- White Collar Crime
- White Collar Criminal Defense Practice

CLINICS

- Criminal Defense Clinic
- Innocence Project Clinic
- Prosecution Clinic

These courses represent the 2012-15 school years. Not all courses are offered every year.
CHILD ADVOCACY CLINIC
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 CLINIC
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 CLINIC
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 CLINIC
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 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 of Albemarle County in their prosecution of these cases by interviewing victims of domestic violence. The group also organizes police ride-alongs and more.

VIRGINIA INNOCENCE PROJECT
Pro Bono Clinic
Law student volunteers assist clinic attorneys in evaluating claims of innocence by prisoners in Virginia and assessing the appropriate avenues of legal relief available.

STUDENT ENGAGEMENT
Several organizations focus on criminal law issues.