

**FOR APPROVAL**

**PUBLIC**

**OPEN SESSION**

**TO:** UTSC Academic Affairs Committee

**SPONSOR:** Prof. Karin Ruhlandt, Vice-Principal Academic and Dean  
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**DATE:** January 8 for January 26, 2026

**AGENDA ITEM:** 6

**ITEM IDENTIFICATION:**

Minor Modifications: Undergraduate Curriculum Changes, Social Sciences UTSC (For approval)

**JURISDICTIONAL INFORMATION:**

The UTSC Academic Affairs Committee (AAC) “is concerned with matters affecting the teaching, learning and research functions of the Campus (AAC *Terms of Reference*, section 4).” Under section 5.6 of its *Terms of Reference*, the AAC is responsible for approval of “major and minor modifications to existing degree programs.”

The AAC has responsibility for the approval of major and minor modifications to existing programs as defined by the [University of Toronto Quality Assurance Process](#) (UTQAP, Section 3.1 and 3.3).

**GOVERNANCE PATH:**

1. UTSC Academic Affairs Committee [For Approval] (January 26, 2026)

**PREVIOUS ACTION TAKEN:**

No previous action in governance has been taken on this item.

**HIGHLIGHTS:**

This package contains minor modifications to the undergraduate curriculum submitted by the UTSC Social Sciences academic units listed below. These changes require governance approval. Minor modifications are defined as adjustments that do not substantially alter program or course learning

outcomes but may involve modest changes to the structure of a program or course. Upon approval, these changes are in effect as of Fall 2026, for the 2026-27 academic year.

- Department of Political Sciences (Report: Undergraduate Minor Curriculum Modifications Social Sciences for Approval)
  - 1 Course Modification:
    - POLB30H3: Law, Justice and Rights

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS:**

There are no significant financial implications to the campus operating budget.

## **RECOMMENDATION:**

Be It Resolved:

THAT the proposed Social Sciences undergraduate curriculum changes for the 2026-27 academic year, as detailed in the respective curriculum report, be approved.

## **DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED:**

1. Report - Undergraduate Minor Curriculum Modifications Social Sciences for Approval



# UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

University of Toronto Scarborough  
 2026-27 Curriculum Cycle  
 Undergraduate Minor Curriculum Modifications Social Sciences for Approval  
 January 26, 2026

**Political Science (UTSC), Department of**

**1 Course Modification**

**POLB30H3: Law, Justice and Rights**

**Description:**

**Previous:**

This is a lecture course that helps students understand the theoretical justifications for the rule of law. We will study different arguments about the source and limitations of law: natural law, legal positivism, normative jurisprudence and critical theories. The course will also examine some key court cases in order to explore the connection between theory and practice. This is the foundation course for the Minor program in Public Law.  
 Areas of Focus: Political Theory and Public Law

**New:**

This course provides an introduction to law, society, and politics laying the groundwork for further study in the Public Law program (Major & Minor). Together, we will examine critical questions such as: Where do laws come from? What roles do courts play in a political system? How do legal systems sustain or challenge social inequalities? And when can judicial interventions foster democracy or protect new rights? This introductory course invites students to engage with the complex ways laws influence—and are influenced by—politics and power.  
 Area of Focus: Public Law

**Exclusions:**

**Previous:**

PHLB11H3 (students who have taken PHLB11H3 prior to POLB30H3 may count PHLB11H3 in place of POLB30H3 in the Minor in Public Law)

**New:**

**Notes:**

**Previous:**

Priority will be given to students enrolled in the Minor program in Public Law. Additional students will be admitted as space permits.

**New:**

Priority will be given to students enrolled in the Minor and Major programs in Public Law. Additional students will be admitted as space permits.

**Breadth Requirements:**

**Previous:**

History, Philosophy & Cultural Studies

**New:**

Social & Behavioural Sciences

**Learning Outcomes:**

**Previous:**

**New:**

After completing this class, students will:

- Better understand how social scientists see and study the world of law and politics.
- Be able to define key concepts and theories on the origins of law, function of courts, access to justice, and legal systems.
- Evaluate competing arguments on access to justice and inequality.
- Critically evaluate the impact of judicial rulings on political outcomes.

**Topic Covered**

**Previous:**

**New:**

- Origins of law
- Function of courts
- Access to justice and inequality
- Comparative legal systems
- Judicial impact

**Rationale:**

This course is redesigned to meet the needs of the new Major in Public Law and our existing Minor Program in Public Law. The exclusion of PHLB11H3 is removed, since the course no longer has a political theory/philosophy focus, instead it is taught as a social science course. The update in topics and learning outcomes are tailored to prepare students for studying law and politics in the major and minor programs. The breadth requirement has now been changed to reflect the social and behavioural science focus.

**Consultation:**

DCC Approved: September 24, 2025  
Campus Curriculum Committee Meeting: September 29, 2025  
Department of Philosophy (Jason F.): September 15, 2025  
RO Consultation (Lindsey T. & Amber L.): December 5, 2025

**Resources:**

None.

**Overlap with Existing Courses:**

None.

**Proposal Status:**

Under Review