

From: [Smith, Randy](#)
To: [Ralph, Anne](#)
Cc: [Leite, Fabio](#); [Reed, Katie](#); [Smith, Randy](#); [Griffiths, Rob](#); [Miriti, Maria](#); [Kowalsky, Lisa](#); [Duffy, Lisa](#); [Hunt, Ryan](#); [Hebert, L Camille](#); [Greenbaum, Rob](#)
Subject: Proposal to establish a stackable certificate (category 3a) in Business Law
Date: Tuesday, July 16, 2024 3:02:43 PM
Attachments: [image001.png](#)

Anne:

The proposal from the Moritz College of Law to establish a stackable certificate (category 3a) in Business Law was approved by the Council on Academic Affairs at its meeting on July 15, 2024. Thank you for attending the meeting to respond to questions/comments.

No additional level of internal review/approval is necessary. This action will be included in the Council's next Annual Activities Report to the University Senate (July 2024).

The Office of the University Registrar will work with you on any implementation issues.

Please keep a copy of this message for your file on the proposal and I will do the same for the file in the Office of Academic Affairs.

If you have any questions please contact the Chair of the Council, Professor Fábio Leite (.11), or me.

I wish you success with this important program development.

Randy



W. Randy Smith, Ph.D.

Vice Provost for Academic Programs

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TO: Randy Smith, Vice Provost for Academic Programs

FROM: Graduate School Curriculum Services

DATE: **4/12/2024**

RE: Proposal to **Establish a 3a Certificate in Business Law** in **Moritz College of Law**

The **Moritz College of Law** is proposing a **3a Certificate in Business Law**.

The proposal was received by the Graduate School on **3/26/2024**. The combined GS/CAA subcommittee first reviewed the proposal on **4/10/2024** and recommend the proposal for review at CAA.



April 3, 2024

Graduate School-CAA Committee
250 University Hall | 230 N. Oval Mall
Columbus, OH 43210

Dear Committee Members:

The College of Law seeks approval for a new stackable Certificate in Business Law, presented in conjunction with applications for certificates in Compliance and Health Law. Students may combine any two of these 12-credit-hour certificates towards earning the College of Law's Master in the Study of Law (MSL) degree.

The development of the certificate began in the Spring of 2023, and stems from a strategic review aimed at broadening the range of educational offerings at the College of Law. The design of the certificate is based on a pre-existing concentration in the MSL program, and the integration of existing MSL degree courses into the certificate program ensures a clear educational path with minimal additional resource requirements.

The proposed certificate, with its primarily online, asynchronous format, is a response to a market demand for more adaptable, professional-focused education, as evidenced by a market study from Ohio State Online Included in the proposal). This study encourages the College to adapt its offerings to fill existing skills gaps and to concentrate on high-demand fields such as business law. The certificate aims to address these needs by providing a program that supports workforce development for individuals in law-adjacent roles. Specifically, the business law certificate is designed to equip individuals with a comprehensive understanding of the legal intricacies and regulations that govern businesses. By acquiring expertise in areas such as contract law, intellectual property, employment law, regulatory compliance, and corporate governance, professionals can effectively navigate legal challenges and make informed decisions within their organizations.

The certificate was reviewed and approved by the Moritz College of Law's Graduate Studies Committee on January 25, 2024. We appreciate your time and attention in reviewing this proposal, and welcome the opportunity to answer questions or provide additional information that would be helpful to the committee.

With best regards,

Anne Ralph
Associate Dean for Academic Affairs
The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law

Paul Rose
Associate Dean for Strategic Initiatives
The Ohio State University Moritz College of Law



Proposal for a 3a Stackable Certificate in Business Law

Submitted by the Moritz College of Law, The Ohio State University

I. Introduction

The College of Law requests approval of a 3a stackable Certificate in Business Law. The request is being submitted concurrently with requests for certificates in Compliance and Health Law. Any two of these 12-credit-hour certificates could be stacked and used towards completion of the College of Law's Master in the Study of Law degree (MSL).

The College of Law developed the proposal as the culmination of a strategic planning process that has focused on, among other things, expanding the range of educational offerings provided by the College of Law. Because the certificate curriculum uses courses already developed for the College of Law's MSL degree, the certificate will provide a tailored, focused course of study for students with only minimal additional teaching and administrative impacts.

II. Background and Rationale for the Certificate

As the MSL program has grown, the College has found that most MSL students are gravitating to online course offerings (as compared to in-person JD courses) because such courses are much easier to fit into their busy schedules and because the courses are tailored for working professionals preparing for or working in law-adjacent careers, rather than for law students preparing to take the bar exam. The proposed certificate would be able to be completed entirely online through asynchronous instruction. Market analysis by Ohio State Online supports the shift to a working professional-oriented program that optimizes flexibility and creates additional pathways for student learning. The analysis also recommends that the College seek to identify and fill skills gaps in the current workforce, and prioritize program concentrations to meet market demand. The certificate directly answers this need, providing a flexible workforce development program tailored to professionals working in law-adjacent fields.

A stackable certificate in business law can be a valuable asset for working professionals across various industries. This specialized credential equips individuals with a comprehensive understanding of the legal intricacies and regulations that govern businesses. By acquiring expertise in areas such as contract law, intellectual property, employment law, regulatory compliance, and corporate governance, professionals can effectively navigate legal challenges and make informed decisions within their organizations. This knowledge not only enhances their ability to protect their companies from legal risks but also enables them to contribute more effectively to strategic decision-making processes. Ultimately, a certificate in business law empowers working professionals to develop a unique and highly sought-after skillset, fostering career advancement and enhancing their professional value.

III. Certificate Objectives

The College of Law intends the certificate program to provide a flexible, practical suite of courses designed for working professionals whose careers interface with the law on a regular basis, and/or who

seek to broaden their understanding of the laws and regulations governing business organizations, including contracts, intellectual property, tax, and employment law. Professionals completing the certificate will develop their understanding in the following areas:

1. Basic Understanding of the Legal Systems Relating to Business Law.

- Gain insight into the legal framework governing business operations, including regulatory agencies, business laws, and relevant statutory bodies.

2. Legal Doctrine and Substantive Knowledge in Business Law:

- Develop a comprehensive understanding of key business laws and regulations, including contract law, intellectual property, employment law, and corporate governance. Analyze legal precedents and case studies in business law to make informed decisions.

3. Use of Law-Related Materials and Processes:

- Develop an understanding of the use of legal research methods, including statutes, regulations, and legal databases, to access and interpret relevant business laws. Develop an understanding of legal processes such as contract negotiations, dispute resolution, and compliance procedures within a business context.

4. Critical Thinking and Problem-Solving:

- Apply critical thinking skills to identify complex legal issues in business operations. Develop effective problem-solving strategies to address legal challenges, mitigate risks, and make ethical decisions.

5. Communication:

Communicate intricate legal concepts clearly and effectively to various stakeholders within a business environment. Collaborate with other professionals, legal experts, and stakeholders to convey legal information and contribute to informed decision-making processes.

IV. Curriculum

The certificate curriculum for Business Law is entirely online, and requires that students successfully complete **4 courses** (12) credits from the following coursework:

Course	Modality	Credits	Semester
LAW 6121: Contracts	Online	3	Fall
LAW 7228: Regulatory Compliance	Online	3	Fall
LAW 8109: Employment Discrimination	Online	3	Spring
LAW 8530 Financial Services Compliance	Online	3	Spring
LAW 8889: Intro to IP and Tech Transactions	Online	3	Summer
LAW 7220: Business Associations	Online	3	Summer
LAW 8700: Federal Income Taxation	Online	3	Summer

This curriculum allows students to complete this program in a fully online format over the course of up to a year. After completing the certificate, the student could then apply to the MSL program and use the credits from the certificate to satisfy 12 of the required 30 credits for the MSL degree. Importantly, **the courses in the certificate program are the same courses that a student would take if they were enrolled in the MSL program.** This would allow a fluid transition to the MSL degree program and accelerate the completion of the MSL degree for these students.

V. Market Assessment

The creation of this and the other two stackable certificates for which the College of Law is seeking approval is the result of the restructuring of our MSL program. Expanding the MSL program was one of the goals of the College of Law's 2018 strategic planning process. Through that process, the College determined that certificates in several high-demand areas could drive the demand for a fully online master's-level legal studies program as well as contribute to workforce development in Ohio and beyond. The planning process included market assessments from external vendors as well as Ohio State Online, including:

- A 2020 market research report by the Office of Distance Education and E-Learning (ODEE), which focused on Student and Labor Market Demand for an online MSL degree
- A 2020 market research report by Noodle Partners (OPM), which also focused on a general, online MSL degree.
- A 2023 market research report, an employment opportunity scan, and a competitive analysis¹.

¹ The full report is included as an appendix with the College of Law's concurrently submitted *Proposal to Add a Distance Delivery Option to the Master in the Study of Law*.

While these reviews focused on the MSL program, the College views certificates as an alternative or a pathway to the MSL degree for some students with focused interests, as the target students and program objectives are similar for the certificates and the MSL degree, and the courses for the certificates will draw from the pool of MSL courses.

A. Market Trends and Demand

The 2023 market research report concluded that distance-learning programs are seeing a steady increase in degree completions on average. The report’s *Competitor Analysis* found that comparable universities offer stackable certificates. These competitors also offer program tracks tailored to student’s needs which resemble the current concentrations offered in the MSL program at the College of Law. The report therefore suggested that the College of Law “should consider identifying and filling skills gaps in the current workforce . . . [by] prioritizing existing concentrations to meet market demand.”

As business law is one of our existing concentrations, this fully-online certificate is a natural development that will help meet these demands. As an example, the OSU Online market analysis examined the occupational trends for Compliance Officers and Human Resources Managers as these two occupations often showed up in job postings. These two occupations cover a key population that would be attracted to the certificate. The report summarized national, state, and local trends that indicate potentially strong demand for the certificate:

National



Ohio

6.6%

2023 – 2033 Job Growth
Higher than the adjusted national average of 3.0%



+923

2023 – 2033 Jobs Added
Higher than the adjusted national average of +583



14.8k

2023 Total Jobs
Lower than the adjusted national average of 20.2k



Columbus

5.5%

2023 – 2033 Job Growth
Higher than the adjusted national average of 4.4%



+187

2023 – 2033 Jobs Added
Higher than the adjusted national average of 169



3.5k

2023 Total Jobs
Lower than the adjusted national average of 4k

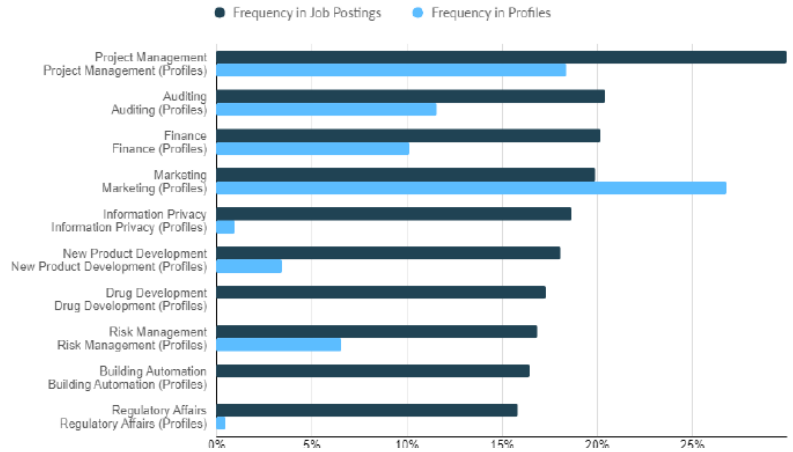


Additionally, the program will help to bridge the “skills gap” Ohio State Online identified in its report between the percentage of postings mentioning a specific skill to the percentage of worker profiles mentioning that same skill:

Lightcast's Profile Analytics is built from individual profiles of over 120 million workers in the U.S. (aggregated from sites such as LinkedIn). The skills gap compares the % of postings mentioning a specific skill to the % of profiles mentioning that same skill.

- Top Specialized Skills
 - Drug Development
 - Information Privacy
- Skills Gaps (Postings vs. Profiles)
 - Information Privacy (19% vs. 1%)
 - Regulatory Affairs (16% vs. 1%)
 - Drug Development (17% vs 0%)

Top Specialized Skills



B. Market Supply

There are currently no business law certificates programs offered in Ohio. Several law schools nationwide offer business law certificates online. The following three schools are the most prominent:

School	Degree Program	Modality
Texas A&M School of Law	Business Law Certificate	Online
Cornell University School of Law	Contract Law Certificate	Online
USC Gould School of Law	Business Law Certificate	Online

The College of Law is ready to meet this demand and compete in this market, given the nearly-completed set of online, asynchronous courses in the area of business law and the brand recognition of The Ohio State University. The College anticipates that the certificate will be an attractive option for professionals in or seeking to work in industries and sectors that demand knowledge of the legal framework governing business operations.

Based on the market studies mentioned above, as well as conversations with MSL applicants and matriculants, we anticipate that the program will initially attract up to 5-10 matriculants per year, with greater growth possible if the College invests in more extensive marketing efforts. Since the courses in the certificate program are the same courses that the College has already developed or plans to develop for the MSL program, the projected growth in this certificate program will not detract from the existing resources that the College has committed to the MSL program.

VI. Program Eligibility

Admission to, performance in, and exit standards for the certificate are consistent with the Graduate School's standards for admission and progression. Admission requirements include a baccalaureate degree from an accredited institution with a minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 (on a 4.0 scale or equivalent) for the last bachelor's or advanced degree earned. Personal statements require articulation of how the certificate is consistent with the applicant's professional and career goals. Students from international undergraduate institutions are recommended to score at least a 100 in the TOEFL iBT. Resumes and transcripts are required from all applicants.

A minimum cumulative GPA of 3.0 is required to receive a certificate, and only grades of A through C- may be counted toward the completion of the certificate program.

VII. Assessment

Students who graduate with a certificate in business law must demonstrate proficiency in the following learning objectives:

- **Basic understanding of the legal systems relating to business law.**
- **Legal doctrine and substantive knowledge in business law.**
- **Ability to use law-related materials and processes.**
- **Critical Thinking and Problem-solving.**
- **Communication.**

A. Direct assessment

Students in the certificate program will be assessed through examinations, course projects, and other course exercises. The learning outcomes for each class will be mapped onto the certificate learning objectives, and instructors will assess whether students exceed/meet/do not meet the objectives. A review of the achievement of the learning objectives will be performed at least once a year, and based on these results, the College's Graduate Studies Committee will determine whether to make changes to individual courses or to the program as a whole.

B. Indirect assessment

The College examines student feedback from the student evaluation of instruction instrument used by the law school. Each year College staff will also solicit individual feedback from students in order to improve the programming and counseling provided to students, and College staff will also track the careers of certificate alumni and will conduct post-graduate surveys to investigate areas for improvement in the curriculum.

The learning outcomes from the certificate mirror the outcomes from the MSL program, except that they are more narrowly focused on legal knowledge and understanding of business law. The courses for the certificate are the same courses offered through the MSL program, and certificate students would be taking the course alongside MSL students. The certificate coursework, when combined with other coursework offered through a full MSL program (including the two required in US Legal Systems and Legal Writing and Analysis), will enable students to satisfy the learning objectives of the MSL program.

VIII. Administration of the Proposed Program

A. Marketing

Ohio State Online will assist the College of Law in marketing the certificate as part of its MSL program marketing arrangement. Ohio State Online will help develop a strategic marketing plan, and additional marketing efforts will be conducted by the College's Office of Communications and Media Relations.

B. Recruitment and admissions

Recruitment and Admissions for students enrolling in the certificate will be administered by the College's Office of International and Graduate Affairs.

C. Advising and student support

Advising and student support for students enrolling in the certificate will be provided by the College's Office of International and Graduate Affairs. The current staffing of the Office of International and Graduate Affairs will be able to manage the additional recruitment, admissions, and support responsibilities created by this and the two other proposed certificate programs. However, if the program grows beyond an anticipated 5-10 new matriculants per certificate, the College will need to add additional staffing. The College intends to grow the program in a gradual and measured way, in order to ensure that staff are able to provide students with adequate support.

D. Career advising

The College's Office of Career Development currently provides general assistance to College students with individualized self-assessment, identifying appropriate career options, and providing training in job search skills. The College's Office of International and Graduate Affairs will be the primary resource for specific career guidance for certificate students.

E. Tuition and student fees

Tuition and student fees were determined based on the assumption that the certificate could be a stackable certificate within the MSL program. Consistent with the 30-credit/\$30,000 tuition structure of the MSL program (\$1,000 per credit hour), the standalone cost of the 12-credit hour certificate in business law will be \$12,000.