



MODULE SPECIFICATION

Name of Module		Introduction to Law and Legal Systems					
Parent School/Dept		Political Science & International Relations					
Programme(s) where module is offered		BSc Political Science and International Relations					
Status (core, option, free choice)		Option		Pre-Requisite Modules or Qualifications		Completion of year 1-2 modules	
FHEQ Level	5	Unit Value	8 ECTS	Module Code	PS371	Module coordinator	Taida Šarkinović
Semester taught		Autumn		Applicable From		2016	

Educational Aims of the Module

This course is aimed at providing the basic understanding of legal categories and concepts of law. The course will provide students with an overview of the nature of law and legal systems. Students will learn how to identify what the law is, where it can be found, how it is made and how it is enforced. They will discover the world's major legal traditions and understand the pivotal role of the civil/continental and common law systems. They will also become familiar with the different methods of categorising law and the different areas of law that fall within the private and public domains respectively. The course will thus serve as the road map and help students to anticipate and understand the relationship between the various law subjects, including international and European law. The attendance of this course is therefore very useful for students who are interested in further studying of other legal disciplines.

Module Outline/Syllabus

1. Introduction: What is law?
2. Law's roots; Functions of law in society
3. Legal pluralism
4. Sources of law; Subject areas of law
5. Legal methods, research and reasoning
6. Application of legal norms and methods of interpretation; Law enforcement
7. Review week
8. Mid-term exam
9. What is comparative law?
10. Major legal systems of the world today: Intro
11. The civil and common law systems
12. Public/private divide
13. Judicial structure in comparative perspective
14. The legal profession in comparative perspective
15. Course review

Student Engagement Hours

Type	Number per Term	Duration	Total Time
Lecture	30	2 hours	60
Tutorials	30	1 hour	30
Total Guided/Independent Learning Hours			110
Total Contact Hours			90
Total Engagement Hours			200

Assessment Method Summary

Type	Number Required	Duration / Length	Weighting	Timing/Submission Deadline
Presentation, participation and discussion	1	1 hour	10%	Ongoing
Research paper	1	2000 words	20%	Week 13
Mid-term exam	1	2 hours	20%	Mid-semester
Final written exam	1	3 hours	50%	End of semester

Module Outcomes

<u>Intended Learning Outcomes:</u>		<u>Teaching and Learning Strategy:</u>
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Knowledge and understanding of the concepts, theories and sources of law. 2. Knowledge and understanding of structure of legal norms, methods of interpretation and their differences and similarities to other social norms. 3. Knowledge and understanding of the world's major legal traditions and the varieties of contemporary legal hybridity around the world. 4. Knowledge and understanding of different kinds of legal acts and the hierarchy between them, differences between the substantive and procedural law, including public/private divide. 5. Introduce students to foreign legal cultures. 	→	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Course readings and class discussion. (ILO: 1-5) 2. Individual and group presentations and discussions. (ILO: 1-5) 3. Class reviews and homework. (ILO: 1-5) 4. Lecture/presentation by the instructor. (ILO: 1-5) 5. Individual discussions/tutorials with students as needed and detailed feedback on their writings. (ILO: 1-5)
	→	<p><u>Assessment Strategy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Class participation, oral presentation and discussion (10%) (ILO: 1-5) 2. Research paper (20%) (ILO: 1-5) 3. Mid-term exam (20 %) - (ILO: 1-4) 4. Final Exam (50%) (ILO: 1-5)
<p><u>Practical Skills</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To understand, interpret and apply legal norms on a basic level. 2. To be able to draft legal norms and to recognize different legal acts and different kinds of legal norms. 3. To be able to recognize the structure of legal relationships regulated by a legal norm, and to be able to clearly point out the different parts of a legal relationship. 4. To be able to differentiate between different subject areas of law and major legal traditions. 5. To engage in legal discussions with different standpoints using theoretical knowledge about law. 6. To assess hypothetical situations on a basic level through developing general pro and contra legal arguments. 	→	<p><u>Teaching and Learning Strategy:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Course readings and class discussion. (PS: 1-6) 2. Individual and group presentations and discussions. (PS: 1-6) 3. Class reviews and homework. (PS: 1-6) 4. Lectures/presentations by the instructor. (PS: 1-5) 5. Individual discussions/tutorials with students as needed and detailed feedback on their writings. (PS: 1-6)
	→	<p><u>Assessment Strategy</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Course work – class participation, oral presentation and discussion (10%) (PS: 1-6) 2. Research paper (20%) (PS: 1-6) 3. Mid-term exam (20%) (PS: 1-6) 4. Final Exam (50%) (PS: 1-6)

<u>Transferable Skills</u> 1. Presentation skills 2. Argumentation skills 3. Critical thinking and problem solving 4. Intercultural competency	→	<u>Teaching and Learning Strategy:</u> 1. Lectures provide the core knowledge complemented by a set of reading list which students are expected to study from. (TS: 1-4) 2. Individual discussions/tutorials with students as needed and detailed feedback on their writings. (TS: 1-4) 3. Case study presentations and group discussions in class contribute to improving transferable skills (TS: 1-4) 4. Guided workshop sessions (TS: 1-4)
	→	<u>Assessment Strategy</u> 1. Class participation, oral presentation and discussion (10%) (TS: 1-4) 2. Research paper (20%) (TS: 1-4) 3. Mid-term exam (20%) (TS: 1-4) 4. Final Exam (50%) (TS: 1-4)

<u>Key Texts and/or other learning materials</u>	
Key Texts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Zweigert, K. and Kötz, H., (1998), <i>Introduction to comparative law</i>, 3rd Edition, Clarendon Press: Oxford • Glendon, Mary Ann, Paolo G. Carozza & Colin B. Picker., (2016), <i>Comparative Legal Traditions in a Nutshell</i> (West 4th ed.) • Wacks, R., (2008), <i>Law: A very short introduction</i>, Oxford University Press 	
Supplementary Resources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wacks, R., (2006), <i>The Philosophy of Law: A Very Short Introduction</i>, Oxford University Press • Journal of Legal Pluralism and Unofficial Law (JLP), available at: http://www.jlp.bham.ac.uk/articlesindex.htm • Arnaud, A., 'Legal Pluralism and the Building of Europe', in the website of the European Network on Law and Society, available at http://www.reds.msh-paris.fr/communication/textes/arnaud2.htm 	
<p>Please note: This specification provides a concise summary of the main features of the module and the learning outcomes that a typical student might reasonably be expected to achieve and demonstrate if he/she takes full advantage of the learning opportunities that are provided. More detailed information on the learning outcomes, content and teaching, learning and assessment methods of each module and programme can be found in the departmental or programme handbook. The accuracy of the information contained in this document is reviewed annually by the University of Buckingham and may be checked by the Quality Assurance Agency.</p>	
Date of Production	
Date approved by School Learning and Teaching Committee	
Date approved by School Board of Study	
Date approved by University Learning and Teaching Committee	
Date of Annual Review	