

COURSE SYLLABUS



Course Title: Foundations of Law

Course code: LEG 180

Semester and year: Spring 2017

Day and time: Thursdays 11:30 – 14:30

Instructor: Pietro Andrea Podda, PhD

Instructor contact: pietro.podda@aauni.edu

Consultation hours: Thursday 17.30-18.30

Credits US/ECTS	3/6	Level	Introductory
Length	15 weeks	Pre-requisite	TOEFL iBT 71 MHT 111
Contact hours	42 hours	Course type	Bachelor Elective

1. Course Description

This course provides an introduction to the concept of Law and an overview of the key traditions that have shaped modern Law on the European and American continents. As such, it naturally presents a useful background and ideological context for the study of Law; however, it also offers a sweeping overview of Law as it relates to, *inter alia*, business, economics, sociology, and world order.

Students are expected to gain a deep understanding of the Foundation of Law, of the original idea of implementation of IUSTITIA (Justice), of those values and logic underpinning the organisation and functioning of the various legal systems in Europe as well as in the US. After gaining an in-depth knowledge into these issues, students will be better capable to appreciate the various concepts, ideas and logic transmitted to them during the study of those various subjects which compose their course of study.

Part I (weeks 1-7): **What is “Law”**. How is Law defined and where does Law come from? What are the original ideas underpinning the creation of the various legal systems? What are the essential aspects and principles of modern Law and legal systems and what experiences and traditions have defined these aspects? Where does modern Law come from?

Part II (weeks 8-14): **Law in practice**: what is the need to regulate business activities? Can the Market not come to optimal solutions?

This Course teaches concepts as well as skills, hence combining theoretical knowledge with practical applications of theory. A particular emphasis will be put on the development of analytical skills and critical awareness from the side of students. The course is suitable to fresh Law students as well as to students of other disciplines interested in understanding legal concepts and the application to their area of study. There are no prerequisites.

2. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- 1) **Gaining an understanding of the very basics underpinning the creation of legal systems**
- 2) **Developing an appropriate level of critical awareness**
- 3) **Learning how to identify a topic**
- 4) **Learning how to review legal literature**
- 5) **Understanding the link between Law, Business and Society**
- 6) **Capacity to present a topic in class**

The attainment of these objectives will be assessed through constant class tests, quizzes and also the formal exams.

3. Reading Material

*Required Materials*Text:

Slides will be prepared and uploaded in the AAU Information System NEO. The lecturer will indicate web resources useful to gain knowledge of the various topics. The Web represents a central instrument students should use to prepare for the exam.

4. *Gary Slapper, How the Law Works* (Routledge, 2nd ed., 2011)

Michelle Sanson, Thalia Anthony and David Worswick, *Connecting with Law* (Oxford University Press, 2nd ed., 2015).

Nickolas James and Rachael Field, *The New Lawyer* (Wiley, 2013)

5. Teaching methodology

Classes are thought to be inter-active, with a constant participation of students to discussions and practical exercises.

6. Course Schedule

Date	Class Agenda
1 st week	Topic: Introduction Description: Class Information, Discussion on Class Expectations, Introduction to the issue Reading: Assignments/deadlines:
2 nd week	Topic: Definition of Law, Purpose of Law Description: Analysis of the ontological and teleological connotation of Law Reading: Assignments/deadlines:
3 rd week	Topic: Law and Morality Description: Analysis of Relationship between legal systems and ideas of justice and morality Reading: Assignments/deadlines:
4 th week	Topic: Legal Traditions 1

	Description: Analysis of historical legal traditions (Greek, Mesopotamia, Roman) Reading: Assignments/deadlines:
5 th week	Topic: Legal Traditions 2 Description: Analysis of historical legal traditions (Middle Age, Renaissance) Reading: Assignments/deadlines:
6 th week	Topic: The modern concept of Law Description: Analysis of the main characteristics of Contemporary Law vs. other historical periods Reading: Assignments/deadlines:
7 th week	Topic: Midterm exam Description: Reading: Assignments/deadlines:
8 th week	Topic: Review of the mid-term exam. In class discussions Description: Students presenting legal cases and critical in class discussion Reading: Assignments/deadlines:
9 th week	Topic: Law and Business 1 Description: Why does Law need to regulate Business? Reading: Assignments/deadlines:
10 th week	Topic: Law and Business 2 Description: Analysis of the concepts presented in the topic Reading: Assignments/deadlines:
11 th week	Topic: Law and Society Description: Impact of Law on other areas (economics, international area) Reading: Assignments/deadlines:
12 th week	Topic: Students defending a case Description: The class is divided into two parts, each defending a different party of a case Reading: Assignments/deadlines:
13 th week	Topic: Review of the program Description: review of what learnt Reading: Assignments/deadlines:
14 th week	Topic: Final exam Description: Reading: Assignments/deadlines: Essay

7. Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

Assignment	Workload (average)	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes	Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes*
Attendance and Class Participation	42	10 %		1,2,3
Mid-term test (week 7)	44 hours	35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding of the topics discussed during the weeks 1-6 	1,2,3,
Final exam (week 14)	44 hours	35%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Understanding of the topics discussed during the weeks 8-12. The knowledge of the topics of the weeks 1-6 is also necessary 	1,2,3
Research project and class-presentation (week 14)	20 hours	20%	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> evaluate the capacity of students to identify a topic and research on it 	1,2,3
TOTAL	150	100%		

*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3 = Effective and Responsible Action

8. Detailed description of the assignments

[Assignment 1]:

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Capacity to discuss theoretical concepts	50%
Capacity to solve practical exercises	50%

[Assignment 2]:

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Capacity to discuss theoretical concepts	50%
Capacity to solve practical exercises	50%

The research project has to be run individually and involves a research (1,500- 2,000 words) on a topic chosen by the student but related to the course. The choice of the topic can be discussed with the instructor. Plagiarism will not be tolerated.

9. General Requirements and School Policies

General requirements

All coursework is governed by AAU's academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules available in the Codex and Student Handbook and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work.

Electronic communication and submission

The university and instructors shall only use students' university email address for communication. It is strongly recommended that any email communication between students and instructors take place in NEO LMS.

Each e-mail sent to an instructor that is about a new topic (meaning not a reply to an original email) shall have a new and clearly stated subject and shall have the course code in the subject, for example: "COM101-1 Mid-term Exam. Question".

All electronic submissions are carried out through NEO LMS. No substantial pieces of writing (especially take home exams and essays) can be submitted outside of NEO LMS.

Attendance

Attendance is required. The university recommends, as a minimal policy, that students who are absent 35 percent of the course should be failed (or administratively withdrawn from the course if the absences are excused).

Absence excuse and make-up options

Should the student be absent from a class for relevant reasons (illness, serious family matters), s/he needs to submit an Absence Excuse Form supplemented with documents proving the reasons for absence to the Assistant Dean. Should a student be absent during the add/drop period due to a change in registration this will be an excused absence if they submit an Absence Excuse Form along with the finalized add/drop form. The form and documents must be submitted within one week of absence. If possible, it is recommended to inform the instructor about the absence in advance.

Students whose absence has been excused by the Dean are entitled to make up exams they missed provided that the nature of the exam allows for a make-up. The students are responsible for contacting their instructor within one week from the date the absence was excused, and for making arrangements with the instructor about make-up options as necessary.

Unexcused absences

Students are allowed two unexcused absences. Absences above this number may result in failure of the course.

Late work: No late submissions will be accepted – please follow the deadlines.

Electronic devices

Any electronic devices (phones, tablets, laptops...) may be used only for class-related activities (taking notes, looking up related information...). Any other use will result in being marked absent and/or being expelled from the class. No electronic devices may be used during the tests.

Eating is not allowed during classes.

Cheating and disruptive behavior

If a student engages in disruptive or other conduct unsuitable for a classroom environment of an institution of learning, the instructor may require the student to withdraw from the room for the duration of the activity or for the day and shall report the behavior to the Dean.

Students engaging in behavior which is suggestive of cheating (e.g. whispering or passing notes) will, at a minimum, be warned. In the case of continued misbehavior the student will be expelled from the exam and the exam will be marked as failed.

Plagiarism and Academic Tutoring Center

Plagiarism is "the unauthorized use or close imitation of the language and thoughts of another author and the representation of them as one's own original work." (Random House Unabridged Dictionary, 2nd Edition, Random House, New York, 1993)

Turnitin's White Paper 'The Plagiarism Spectrum' (available at http://turnitin.com/assets/en_us/media/plagiarism_spectrum.php) identifies 10 types of plagiarism ordered from most to least severe:

1. CLONE: An act of submitting another's work, word-for-word, as one's own.
2. CTRL-C: A written piece that contains significant portions of text from a single source without alterations.
3. FIND-REPLACE: The act of changing key words and phrases but retaining the essential content of the source in a paper.
4. REMIX: An act of paraphrasing from other sources and making the content fit together seamlessly.
5. RECYCLE: The act of borrowing generously from one's own previous work without citation; To self plagiarize.
6. HYBRID: The act of combining perfectly cited sources with copied passages—without citation—in one paper.
7. MASHUP: A paper that represents a mix of copied material from several different sources without proper citation.
8. 404 ERROR: A written piece that includes citations to non-existent or inaccurate information about sources
9. AGGREGATOR: The "Aggregator" includes proper citation, but the paper contains almost no original work.
10. RE-TWEET: This paper includes proper citation, but relies too closely on the text's original wording and/or structure.

As the minimum policy the types of plagiarism from 1 through 8 results in the failing grade from the assignment and must be reported to the Dean. The Dean may initiate a disciplinary procedure pursuant to the Academic Codex. Allegations of bought papers and intentional or consistent plagiarism always entail disciplinary hearing and may result in expulsion from AAU.

If unsure about technical aspects of writing, students are encouraged to consult their papers with the tutors of the AAU Academic Tutoring Center. For more information and/or to book a tutor, please contact the ATC at: <http://atc.simplybook.me/sheduler/manage/event/1/>.

Students with disabilities

Students with disabilities are asked to contact their instructor as soon as possible to discuss reasonable accommodation.

10. Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage*	Description
A	95 – 100	Excellent performance. The student has shown originality and displayed an exceptional grasp of the material and a deep analytical understanding of the subject.
A–	90 – 94	
B+	87 – 89	Good performance. The student has mastered the material, understands the subject well and has shown some originality of thought and/or considerable effort.
B	83 – 86	
B–	80 – 82	
C+	77 – 79	Fair performance. The student has acquired an acceptable understanding of the material and essential subject matter of the course, but has not succeeded in translating this understanding into consistently creative or original work.
C	73 – 76	
C–	70 – 72	
D+	65 – 69	Poor. The student has shown some understanding of the material and subject matter covered during the course. The student’s work, however, has not shown enough effort or understanding to allow for a passing grade in School Required Courses. It does qualify as a passing mark for the General College Courses and Electives.
D	60 – 64	
F	0 – 59	Fail. The student has not succeeded in mastering the subject matter covered in the course.

* Decimals should be rounded to the nearest whole number.

Prepared by: Pietro Andrea Podda, PhD

Approved by: Carollann Braum