



Bachelor's courses Faculty of Law

VU University Amsterdam - Student- & Onderwijszaken - Exchange programme Vrije Universiteit - 2018-2019

Corporations, Conflict and International Crimes

Course code	R_CorIC ()
Period	Period 4
Credits	6.0
Language of tuition	English
Faculty	Faculteit der Rechtsgeleerdheid
Coordinator	prof. dr. mr. W. Huisman
Examinator	prof. dr. mr. W. Huisman
Teaching method(s)	Study Group, Lecture
Level	500

Course objective

The course corporations, conflict and international crimes deals with the involvement of corporations in international crimes and other gross human rights violations. While using a criminological approach we also use insights, knowledge and theories from various disciplines including history, social psychology, organizational sciences, business ethics and political science. Moreover, multiple areas of law are relevant including public international law, human rights law and international and national criminal law. Because the participants in the course have various backgrounds (they are lawyers, political scientists, psychologists, sociologists, anthropologists and, obviously, criminologists) and because the subject is interdisciplinary by nature, students are encouraged to critically assess the existing viewpoints as well as to bridge the gaps between disciplines (most notably law and social sciences). Moreover, not a lot of research about this subject exists, encouraging students to develop their own critical and creative ideas regarding the subject, the different approaches, and the available theories. For the final assignment students write an individual research paper on a topic they choose themselves.

Course content

- Corporate crime
- White collar crime
- International crimes (genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes)
- Corporate Social Responsibility
- Business ethics
- Totalitarian/authoritarian regimes and the role of business
- International conflict and the role of business
- Non-international conflict and the role of business
- Private military/security firms
- Resource curse and trading conflict commodities

Form of tuition

The course consists of 7 x 2 sessions. In each week, a particular theme or element in the criminological analysis of corporate involvement in international crimes is addressed. Every week, the Monday lecture will provide a general overview of knowledge, research and literature on these particular issues. During the Friday seminars this general knowledge will be applied to actual cases of (alleged) corporate involvement in international crimes. The seminars are interactive, and

based on the assignments you have to hand in via Canvas, the lectures, and the literature of that week.

Type of assessment

Obligatory assignments (pass or fail)

Paper

Course reading

The literature consists of a selection of articles and reports including

Wim Huisman's Business as Usual

(<http://www.bju.nl/juridisch/catalogus/business-as-usual-1>).

Recommended background knowledge

Exchange students need to have an understanding of either (international) law or criminology/other social science. Most importantly they have to be willing to study during the course to make up for the knowledge they lack (limited of course to the course subject).

In general students from other backgrounds such as social psychology, economics, business, organizational studies, conflict studies, IR etc are welcomed because they add to the interdisciplinarity of the course. It is our experience that motivated students from these disciplines can add value to the discussion in class.

Target group

Apart from regular students, the course is also available for:

Students from other universities/faculties

Exchange students (Master)

Contractor (students who pay for one course)

This course is only available to bachelor exchange students who can show they have completed 3 relevant bachelor courses such as criminology, white-collar/organizational crime, international criminal law, human rights, corporate social responsibility/sustainable development or something similar. Please contact the course coordinator.

This is an interdisciplinary course, inviting students from many backgrounds including criminology, (international) law, human rights, psychology, anthropology etc. We especially welcome students of (international) business administration and economics. Students are encouraged to use their existing knowledge but in order to complete the course will also have to be willing to delve into other disciplines.