



COURSE UNIT DESCRIPTION

Course Unit Title	Code
INTERNATIONAL LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s)
Coordinator: asist. dr. Erika Leonaitė Other(s): assist. dr. Lina Strupinskiene	Institute of International Relations and Political Science, Vilnius university, Vokiečių str. 10, LT-01130, Vilnius, tel. +370 52514130, e-mail: tspimi@tspmi.vu.lt

Study cycle	Type of the course unit
First	Compulsory

Mode of delivery	Course unit delivery period	Language (s) of instruction
Face-to-face	4 (spring) semester	English

Requirements for students	
Pre-requisites: -	Co-requisites (if any): -

Number of credits allocated	Total student's workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
10	250	64	186

Purpose of the course unit: programme competences to be developed

Aim of this course is to introduce students to the core concepts and problems of public international law and of the international legal system; to develop student familiarity and fluency with the vocabulary of international law; to provide specific historical events and concrete case analytical knowledge for applying international law skills to research and practice.

Learning outcomes of the course unit	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
Students will understand and be able to correctly use the core concepts of international law, will have developed a fluency with the vocabulary of international law, to identify, explain, and apply the major sources of international law and human rights law and their defining features.	Problem-oriented lectures, seminars (text analysis, comparative assessment and systemic analysis of practical issues, case study, group discussions), group presentations, individual studies (individual search for information, critical literature studies and the analysis of theoretical and practical problems)	High quality participation in the seminar discussions, group presentation, final exam
Identify, explain, and apply the major sources of international law and human rights law and their defining features.		
Students will understand and be able to apply knowledge about scientific research debates, surrounding the purpose, legitimacy, and efficacy of international law and its application in the context of global issues.		
Students will be able to identify, explain, and critically analyze functions of the international legal order, the actors in the international legal system, major international enforcement mechanisms.		
Identify, explain, and critically analyze the application of international law and human rights law and norms to address human rights violations and abuses.		
Students will be able to conduct an independent analysis of the application of international law and human rights law and norms as well as provide recommendations in different professional settings.		
Students will be able to actively and productively participate and collaborate in cross-cultural team activities in respect to cultural and social diversity, to	Seminars (comparative assessment and systemic analysis of practical issues, case	Seminar discussions, group presentation

form and coordinate group work, organize time for performing tasks.	study, group discussions), group presentations	
Students will understand personal responsibility for promoting and protecting the rights of all, will be able to reflect on legal impact of different treatment of human rights.	Problem-oriented lectures, seminars (text analysis, comparative assessment and systemic analysis of practical issues, case study, group discussions), group presentations, individual studies (individual search for information, critical literature studies and the analysis of theoretical and practical problems)	High quality participation in the seminar discussions, group presentation, final exam

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours						Self-study: hours and assignments		
	Lectures	Consultations	Seminars	Practical sessions	Laboratory activities	Internship/work	Contact hours	Self-study hours	Assignments
1. Introductory lecture, presenting the course program and course requirements. Introduction to International Law, main concepts and principles.	2		2				4	6	Seminar discussion "Is international law a real law? Why do states comply?" Read and analyze the texts: J. von Stein. International Law: Understanding Compliance and Enforcement. In: R. A. Denmark, The International Studies Encyclopaedia, Blackwell Publishing, 2010.
2. Main sources of international law. The importance of custom. Soft law.	2		2				4	6	Seminar discussion "Where does international law come from? Why are sovereign states legally bound by customary international law? How do treaties affect the development of customary international law?" Read and analyze the texts: M. Dixon. The sources of international law. In: M. Dixon. Textbook on International Law, Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 49-54.
3. The subjects of international law	2		2				4	8	Seminar discussion "Who are the main subjects of international law: states, persons, corporations?" Read and analyze the texts: Malanczuk P. (2000) Multinational Enterprises and Treaty-Making — A Contribution to the Discussion on Non-State Actors and the "Subjects" of International Law. In: Gowlland-Debbas V. (eds) Multilateral Treaty-Making. Nijhoff Law Specials. Springer, Dordrecht
4. The main principles of international law of treaties. International agreements. International adjudication.	4		2				6	8	Seminar discussion "International adjudication in the ICJ and other tribunals" Familiarize yourself with: Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties, also available at: http://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/1_1_1969.pdf ; ICJ Statute available at: https://www.icj-cij.org/en/statute

5. The relationship between international and domestic law. Rules and principles, different systems.	2		2				4	6	Seminar discussion "Can rules of international law be effective within states. Must all rules be effective as law within states?" Read and analyze the texts: Błaszczak, J. (2020). The implementation of commitments regarding the Polish minority in Lithuania in the Council of Europe's system. <i>Border and Regional Studies</i> , 8(3), 95-109.
6. Recognition in international law. Responsibility not to recognize.	2		2				4	10	Read and analyze the texts: Recognition of States and Governments. In: J. Crawford. <i>Brownlie's Principles of Public International Law</i> , 8th edition, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 143-165; Legal Consequences for States of the Continued Presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) notwithstanding Security Council Resolution 276 (1970) Prepare and present a group presentation: "Recognition in international law and politics" (Cases: Kosovo, Palestine, Crimea, Transnistria, etc.)
7. Right to self-determination	2		2				4	10	Read and analyze the texts: Declaration on principles of international law friendly Relations and co-operation among states in accordance with The charter of the united nations; UN ICJ Advisory opinion Accordance with international law of the unilateral declaration of independence in respect of Kosovo. Prepare and present a group presentation: "Right to self-determination" (Cases: Palestine, Tibet)
8. International responsibility and remedies. The basic principles of state responsibility and when does it become an issue.	2		2				4	10	Seminar discussion "Can human rights violations within a state legally justify intervention or other actions inconsistent with the sovereignty of that state?" Read and analyze the texts: C. Puppato. The Responsibility to Protect Doctrine: Emerging Norm or Failed Doctrine?, <i>Global Tides</i> , 2015, Vol. 9.
9. International law and the use of force. UN Charter and the prohibition of the use of force, right to self-defense, humanitarian intervention.	2		2				4	10	Seminar discussion "When is the use of force in self-defense justified? Is a prior armed attack necessary?" Read and analyze the text: Byers, M. (2002). Terrorism, The use of Force and International Law After 11 September. <i>International and Comparative Law Quarterly</i> , 51(2), 401-414; Schmitt, Michael N., Grey Zones in the International Law of Cyberspace (October 18, 2017). 42:2 <i>Yale Journal of International Law Online</i> 1 (2017).
10. International Criminal Law and the main principles of	4		4				8	10	Seminar discussion "Individual criminal responsibility and obligation to extradite"

International Humanitarian Law.								<p>Read and analyze the texts: Hillebrecht, Courtney & Straus, Scott, Who pursues the perpetrators: state cooperation with the ICC, Human Rights Quarterly, 39, 2017, 162-188; Mills, K., & Bloomfield, A. (2018). African resistance to the International Criminal Court: Halting the advance of the anti-impunity norm. Review of International Studies, 44(1), 101-127.</p> <p>Group presentation on the jurisdiction of International Criminal Tribunals and cooperation of states (Cases: ICTY, ICTR, ICC).</p>
11. International Economic Law	4		2			6	10	<p>Seminar discussion “Key institutions and legal principles of international economic law”</p> <p>Read and analyze the texts: Julia Ya Qin, Forced Technology Transfer and the US–China Trade War: Implications for International Economic Law, Journal of International Economic Law, Volume 22, Issue 4, December 2019, Pages 743–762.</p>
12. International Human Rights Law. What is the relationship between international human rights and the idea of natural law. Are they part of positive international law? Different Human Rights protection systems (national, regional, international)	4		2			6	10	<p>Seminar discussion “Are all human rights equally important? Are economic and social rights really human rights? What are the obligations of states?”</p> <p>Read and analyze the texts: Rainey, B. Historical Development of Rights. In: Human Rights Law: Concentrate. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 2-13; Donnelly, J. The Relative Universality of Human Rights. Human Rights Quarterly, Volume 29, Number 2, May 2007, p. 281-306.</p>
13. Freedom of thought, belief and religion			2			2	8	<p>Seminar discussion “Freedom of religion vs. secularism”</p> <p>Read and analyze the texts: Rainey, B. Freedom of Religion and Expression. In: Human Rights Law: Concentrate. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 118-128; Tulkens, F. The European Convention on Human Rights and Church-State Relations: Pluralism vs. Pluralism. Cardozo Law Review, vol. 30 (6), 2009.</p> <p>Group presentation of selected cases (Leyla Sahin v. Turkey (GC), application No. 44774/98, Judgment of 10 November 2005; S.A.S. v. France (GC), application No. 43835/11, Judgment of 1 July 2014; Lautsi and Others v. Italy (GC), application No. 30814/06, Judgment of 18 March 2011)</p>
14. Freedom of information, opinion and expression			2			2	8	<p>Seminar discussion “Should there be limits to freedom of expression in democracies?”</p> <p>Read and analyze the texts: Rainey, B. Freedom of Religion and Expression. In: Human Rights Law: Concentrate. Oxford,</p>

												New York: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 129-139. Group presentation of selected cases (Axel Springer AG v. Germany (GC), application no. 39954/08, Judgment of 7 February 2012; Vajnai v. Hungary, application no. 33629/06, Judgment of 8 July 2008; Faber v. Hungary, application no. 40721/08, Judgment of 24 July 2012)
15. Freedom of assembly and association				2			2	8				Seminar discussion "State obligations. Democracy as a self-defending mechanism". Read and analyze the texts: Rainey, B. Freedom of Assembly and Association. In: Human Rights Law: Concentrate. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2013, p. 140-150, 154-155 Group presentation of selected cases (Refah Partisi (the Welfare Party) and Others v. Turkey, applications nos. 41340/98, 41342/98, 41343/98 and 41344/98, Judgment of 13 February 2003)
Group presentation								28				
Final exam								30				
Total	32			32				64	186			

Assessment strategy	Weight, percentage	Assessment period	Assessment criteria
High quality participation in the seminar discussions	30%	During semester	Students will be expected to demonstrate both the knowledge related to international law gained during the course, as well as their abilities to apply it in a given situation. Their ability to refer to course literature, provide correct answers to questions related to various aspects of international law, formulate problems and suggest (search for) solutions, contribute to other participants' ideas, offer thoughtful critical remarks, etc. will be assessed.
Group presentation	30%	During the semester	At the beginning of the semester all students will be divided into smaller groups (depending on the size of the class) and will have to prepare and present one presentation of assigned topic/legal case. Their ability to critically assess the case, identify the most significant themes, explain broader context of a particular case and provide arguments in support of their point made in a logical, coherent and structured manner will be assessed.
Examination	40%	At the end of the course	Answering 2 theoretical open-ended questions and solving 1 practical situation (all of equal weight) in written. Students are thereby required to demonstrate their advanced knowledge related to theory and practice of international law gained during the course. When answering, students should provide all the necessary information in an argumentative, coherent, structured and clear manner, to base their arguments on course literature and course discussions. No material (handbooks, slides, schemes, notes) is allowed.

Author	Year of publication	Title	Issue of periodical or volume of publication	Publishing place and house or web link
Compulsory reading				
R. A. Denmark	2010	The International Studies Encyclopaedia		Blackwell Publishing
M. Dixon	2013	Textbook on International Law		Oxford University Press

Gowlland-Debbas V. (eds)	2000	Multilateral Treaty-Making		Nijhoff Law Specials Springer, Dordrecht
		Vienna Convention on the Law of Treaties		http://legal.un.org/ilc/texts/instruments/english/conventions/1_1_1969.pdf
		ICJ Statute		https://www.icj-cij.org/en/statute
Błaszczak, J.	2020	The implementation of commitments regarding the Polish minority in Lithuania in the Council of Europe's system	8(3)	Border and Regional Studies
J. Crawford	2012	Brownlie's Principles of Public International Law	8 th edition,	Oxford: Oxford University Press
	1970	Legal Consequences for States of the Continued Presence of South Africa in Namibia (South West Africa) notwithstanding Security Council Resolution 276		
Rainey, B.	2013	Human Rights Law: Concentrate		Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press
Donnelly, J.	2007	The Relative Universality of Human Rights	Volume 29, Number 2, May	Human Rights Quarterly
Tulkens, F.	2009	The European Convention on Human Rights and Church-State Relations: Pluralism vs. Pluralism	vol. 30 (6)	Cardozo Law Review
Recommended reading				
Gary J. Bass		The Old New Thing	The New Republic	HTTPS://NEWREPUBLIC.COM/ARTICLE/78542/TH E-OLD-NEW-THING-HUMAN-RIGHTS
Eric Posner	2014	The Twilight of Human Rights Law		Oxford University Press
Rob Dickinson, Elena Katselli, Colin Murray, Ole W. Pedersen (eds.)	2012	Examining Critical Perspective on Human Rights		Cambridge University Press.
Philip Alston and Ryan Goodman	2013	International Human Rights: Texts and Materials		Oxford University Press
Human Rights Watch	2020	World Report		https://www.hrw.org/world-report/2020
UNESCO	1997	Universal Declaration on the Human Genome and Human Rights		https://en.unesco.org/themes/ethics-science-and-technology/human-genome-and-human-rights