



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
CONSTITUTIONAL COMPARATIVE LAW	14465

Lecturer(s)	Department(s) where the course unit (module) is delivered
Coordinator: Assoc. Prof. Dr. Vaidotas A. Vaičaitis Other(s):	Department of Public Law, Faculty of Law, Vilnius University. Saulėtekio av. 9, Building 1, LT-10222, Vilnius, Room 405 tel. (85)2366175; e-mail: vtkatedra@tf.vu.lt

Study cycle	Type of the course unit (module)
First, Second	Optional

Mode of delivery	Period when the course unit (module) is delivered	Language(s) of instruction
Face-to-face	Autumn	English

Requirements for students	
Prerequisites: -	Additional requirements (if any): -

Course (module) volume in credits	Total student's workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	125	32	93

Purpose of the course unit (module): programme competences to be developed
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Students will get to know the basic theories of constitutionalism and constitutional law. The course aims to develop student's abilities to discuss and critically evaluate the main constitutional values-principles when analyzing and comparing different constitutions in the light of Western (European) constitutional tradition, as well as to systemically comprehend European integration in the narrative of traditional (national) constitutionalism. Students will understand, how to interpret constitutions and how to understand jurisprudence of constitutional courts; they will be able to independently analyze legal reasoning; finally, they will be able to integrate knowledge of constitutionalism based on three constitutional values (principles): rule of law, democracy and human rights.

Learning outcomes of the course unit (module)	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
To understand constitutionalism as part of the common European legal heritage	Interactive method of teaching during lectures (analyses of various constitutions and legal field-specific problematic issues, presentations on assigned topics, case studies approach when elaborating legal and/or other field-specific solutions, group discussions), individual studies (individual search of information, analysis of the relevant legal framework, policy and case-law, reading of academic literature)	Evaluation of participation in discussions and quality of presentations, including final research paper
To be able to comprehensively explicate the main constitutional paradigms	Interactive method of teaching during lectures (analyses of various constitutions and legal field-specific problematic issues, presentations on assigned topics, case studies approach when elaborating legal and/or other field-specific solutions, group discussions), individual studies (individual search of information, analysis of the relevant legal framework, policy and case-law, reading of academic literature)	Evaluation of participation in discussions and quality of presentations, including final research paper
To be able to identify, specify and critically evaluate the main constitutional values-principles	Interactive method of teaching during lectures (analyses of various constitutions and legal field-specific problematic issues, presentations on assigned topics, case studies approach when elaborating legal and/or other field-specific solutions, group discussions), individual studies	Evaluation of participation in discussions and quality of presentations, including final research paper

	(individual search of information, analysis of the relevant legal framework, policy and case-law, reading of academic literature)	
To be able to analyse and compare your own and other countries' constitutions in the light of common Western legal traditions and European integration, as well as the jurisprudence of these countries' constitutional courts	Interactive method of teaching during lectures (analyses of various constitutions and legal field-specific problematic issues, presentations on assigned topics, case studies approach when elaborating legal and/or other field-specific solutions, group discussions), individual studies (individual search of information, analysis of the relevant legal framework, policy and case-law, reading of academic literature)	Evaluation of participation in discussions and quality of presentations, including final research paper
To be able to use comparative method in constitutional interpretation by paralleling Lithuanian and home country constitutions	Interactive method of teaching during lectures (analyses of various constitutions and legal field-specific problematic issues, presentations on assigned topics, case studies approach when elaborating legal and/or other field-specific solutions, group discussions), individual studies (individual search of information, analysis of the relevant legal framework, policy and case-law, reading of academic literature)	Evaluation of participation in discussions and quality of presentations, including final research paper
To be able to accurately use legal terminology in discussions, to trigger or to contribute to the discussions providing his/her own insights in an international context.	Interactive method of teaching during lectures (analyses of various constitutions and legal field-specific problematic issues, presentations on assigned topics, case studies approach when elaborating legal and/or other field-specific solutions, group discussions)	Evaluation of participation in discussions and quality of presentations

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours						Self-study work: time and assignments		Assignments
	Lectures	Tutorials	Seminars	Exercises	Laboratory work	Internship/work placement	Contact hours	Self-study hours	
1. Introduction to concept of historic constitutionalism	4						4	9	Presentation on concept of historic constitution.
2. Three paradigms of constitutionalism: philosophic constitutionalism, interpretive constitutionalism and value constitutionalism	4						4	12	Presentation on concepts of Constitution prevailing in origin country of students and description on main methods of interpretation of Constitution.
3. Three main sovereign constitutional values: rule of law, democracy and human rights	4						4	12	Presentation on three fundamental constitutional values reflected in different constitutions.
4. Four main sovereign powers (law, state, people and human being) under Western legal tradition	4						4	12	Presentation on meaning of sovereign power.
5. Other autonomous authorities (entities): local government (municipality), university and church or religious community	4						4	12	Presentation on autonomous authorities (entities) reflected in various constitutions.
6. Head of state: representative of state and executive	4						4	12	Presentation on head of state: double constitutional status and impeachment.
7. Constitutional Courts in Europe	4						4	12	Presentation on double status of Constitutional Court.
8. European integration in the light of constitutional values	4						4	12	Presentation on European integration reflected in different constitution in the light of three fundamental constitutional values.
	32						32	93	

Assessment strategy	Weight, percentage	Assessment period	Assessment criteria
Presentation and discussions on the topics of presentations	40	During the semester	<p>Every next class students will have to prepare and present a presentation on a different topic. The maximum number of points that may be received for presentations is 2 out of 10. The evaluation of the presentation will be based on content of presentation: clear identification of the topic (particular provisions of Lithuanian and home country constitutions), distinct comprehension of provisions compared.</p> <p>Another 2 points might be earned for active participation in discussions on the topics of presentations, answering to questions, contribution to other participants' ideas.</p>
Research Paper	60	At the end of the course	<p>Every student will have to prepare an individual research paper. The research paper will have to cover topics discussed during the class activities. The topic of the research paper is subject to the approval of the professor. The maximum number of points that may be received for the written paper is 6 out of 10. The evaluation of the paper will be based on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - comprehension of constitutional law, problem analysis, proper legal sources application, critical analytical thinking, clear and argumentative conclusion and formulation of recommendations (up to 4 points), - structure and style: clear structural parts, scientific language, exact wording, source references, proper and ethical citation (up to 2 points).

Author	Year of publication	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing place and house or web link
Compulsory reading				
Vaidotas A. Vaičaitis	2025	Lithuanian constitutional law. IEL (International encyclopaedia of laws) Constitutional Law. André Alen and David Haljan (eds)		Wolters Kluwer https://kluwerlawonline.com/EncyclopediaChapter/IEL+Constitutional+Law/CONS20200108
Vaidotas A. Vaičaitis	2016	History of Lithuanian constitutionalism (English summary). P. 265-276.		Vilnius Universiteto Leidykla. http://www.tf.vu.lt/wp-content/uploads/2016/12/V.-Vaičaitis-et-al.-Lietuvos-konstitucionalizmo-istorija.pdf
Optional reading				
Vaidotas A. Vaičaitis	2025	Lithuania// Parliament and time. European comparative approach: international conference – 18th and 19th December 2023.	Hemicycle of the Hauts-de-France Regional Council: ParlTime. P. 292-309	
Vaidotas A. Vaičaitis	2024	The multi-stage adoption of the 1992 Lithuanian Constitution in comparative perspective and some constitutional paradoxes	Juridiskā zinātne = Journal of the University of Latvia. Law. 2023, Vol. 16, p. 7-17.	https://journal.lu.lv/jull/article/view/604
Vaidotas A. Vaičaitis	2023	Constitutional status of presidents in the French and Lithuanian Republics	Etudes parlementaires. Les figures contemporaines du chef de l'État en régime parlementaire. P. 97-113.	Bruylant, Bruxelles, Belgium