

Course Syllabus

Introduction to Law

Course code: LEG 101/1
Semester and year: Spring 2024
Day and time: Thursday 11:30-14:15
Instructor: Jiří Kašný
Instructor contact: jiri.kasny@aauni.edu
Consultation hours: Tuesday 14:15-15:15

Credits US/ECTS	3/6	Level	Introductory
Length	15 weeks	Pre-requisite	None
Contact hours	42 hours	Course type	Required for BA

1. Course Description

This course aims to introduce students to the basic concepts and rules of law. The main objective of the course is to equip students with a theoretical and practical understanding of the law. Students should learn how a lawyer approaches legal problems, and become sufficiently familiar with the relevant rules so that they too can advise a hypothetical client of what his rights and liabilities are likely to be in a particular situation, for example, if he is charged with a crime, or considers that his private rights have been violated and wishes to sue the perpetrator.

Students will become familiar with the main areas of law, i.e., constitutional law, government, property, contracts and treaties, crimes, torts, forms and procedures, legal interpretation, and justice through a comparative approach in European continental tradition and common law tradition.

2. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:

- discuss critically the role of law in contemporary societies
- demonstrate a clear understanding of the main concepts of law, in particular the nature of legal rights and the remedies available to plaintiffs when their rights are breached
- evaluate the application of foundational principles of law in his/her future studies
- demonstrate knowledge of the basic principles of constitutional, property, contract, criminal, and tort law and comparative approach to the civil law and common law systems
- distinguish clearly between the concepts of public and private law, and between natural persons and legal persons
- use appropriate legal terminology and language with reasonable confidence and accuracy

3. Reading Material

Required Materials (Available in the Library or at NEO)

- Honoré, Tony. About Law. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 2005

- Simpson, A.W.B. Invitation to Law. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1988
- Apple, James G., A Primer on the Civil-Law System, Washington, D.C., FJC, 1994

Recommended Materials (Available in the Library or via Interlibrary Loan)

- The Avalon Project. Documents in Law History and Diplomacy at <https://avalon.law.yale.edu/default.asp>
- Federalist Papers. New York, 1787-1788.
- Gearey, Adam, et all. The Politics of the Common Law. Perspectives, Rights, Processes, Institutions. London: Routledge, 2013.
- Weinrib, Ernest. The Idea of Private Law. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1995.
- Pipes, Richard. Property and Freedom. Vintage Books, 1999.
- Fried, Charles. Contract as Promise. A Theory of Contractual Obligation. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1981.
- Glenn, Patrick. Legal Traditions of the World. Sustainable Diversity in Law. Oxford University Press, 2007, p. 224-272.

4. Teaching methodology

The format of this course is primarily lecture – research – reading – presentation – discussion – writing. The classroom and the NEO website are the main platforms of communication. Students are invited to participate in class, to read and study the required and suggested materials and to do their own research-reading.

The module will be taught over the period of one semester. The module runs for three hours a week for 14 weeks.

5. Course Schedule

Date	Class Agenda
1. 8/2/ 2024	<p>Topic: Introduction to Law Description: What is law and custom? How legal systems protect society’s fundamental interests and the rights of individuals. Reading: Honore, Law, p. 1-21 Assignments/Deadlines: none</p>
2. 15/2	<p>Topic: Constitutional law and Government Description: What are the state constitutions and what function do they perform? Why are some legal limits on the power of government necessary? What are the legal ways of limiting the possible misuse of the power of the government? Reading: Honore, Law, p. 23-34 Assignments/Deadlines: Home Essay 1 – detailed instructions will be distributed and discussed in class</p>
3. 22/2	<p>Topic: Attitudes Toward Law Description: We will study the concept of the attitude toward law and examine a descriptive scale to measure the attitude towards law. Reading: Honore, Law, p. 1-21 Assignments/Deadlines: Home Essay 1 – discussion of the draft</p>
4. 29/2	<p>Topic: Property and Ownership Description: What counts as property from the legal point of view? How and why do laws protect property? Reading: Honore, Law, p. 35-43 Assignments/Deadlines: Home Essay 1 – due</p>

5. 7/3	<p>Topic: Contracts and Treaties Description: What we consider as agreements and which of them are legally binding. The difference between contracts and treaties. How could be contracts and treaties enforced legally. Reading: Honore, Law, p. 45-52 Assignments/Deadlines: Home essay 1 – feedback and evaluation</p>
6. 14/3	<p>Topic: Torts Description: What the aims of tort law are - when it is fair to make someone who harms another pay them compensation - what interests tort law protects - the problem of intentional, negligence and strict liability. Reading: Honore, Law, p. 65-75 Assignments/Deadlines: none</p>
7. 21/3	<p>Topic: Crimes Description: The need for criminal law in society (a cause) - what the aims of criminal law are (a goal) - what type of behavior the state does and should make criminal - when it is fair to hold someone guilty of a crime in a particular case. Reading: Honore, Law, p. 53-64; Case Study Regina v Bentham (2005) Assignments/Deadlines: Home Essay 2 – detailed instructions will be distributed and discussed in class</p>
28/3	Midterm break
8. 4/4	<p>Topic: Crime and Tort: Comparison Description: What are the aims of crime and tort law – comparative study. Reading: Honore, Law, p. 53-75 Assignments/Deadlines: Home Essay 2 – discussion of the draft</p>
9. 11/4	<p>Topic: Legal Forms and Procedures 1 Description: The reasons for having forms and procedures in general; the reasons for having forms e.g., as the birth certificate, driver license, marriage, the will; the function of the right of defense in procedures; the question of fairness in a dispute of the citizen vs. the state. Reading: Honore, Law, p. 77-86 Assignments/Deadlines: Home essay 2 – due</p>
10. 18/4	<p>Topic: European Continental Legal Tradition Description: The key historical moments of Civil Law tradition. Typical characteristics of the legal systems in European Continental law. The influence of Jewish and Christian values on European law. Reading: Honore, Law, p. 9-21 Apple, James G., <i>A Primer on the Civil-Law System</i>, Washington, D.C., FJC, 1994 Assignments/Deadlines: Home essay 2 – feedback and evaluation</p>
11. 25/4	<p>Topic: Common Law Tradition Description: Key historical moments of Common Law tradition. Typical characteristics of the Anglo-American legal system. Comparison of world legal systems. Reading: Honore, Law, p. 9-21 Assignments/Deadlines: Home essay 3 – detailed instructions will be distributed and discussed in class</p>
12. 2/5	<p>Topic: Russian Legal Tradition Description: The key historical moments of Russian Legal Tradition. Typical characteristics of the legal systems in Russian law. Reading: Russian Law at the Encyclopedia Britannica Assignments/Deadlines: Home essay 3 – discussion of the draft</p>

13. 9/5	Topic: Comparative law Description: Comparative approach to the studies of legal traditions, especially to the sources of law, court procedures, legal theories. Reading: individual research Assignments/Deadlines: Home essay 3 – due
14. 16/5/2024	Topic: Final exam Description: Home essay 3 – presentation of home essay 3 – discussion – feedback – evaluation Reading: none Assignments/Deadlines: none

6. Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

Assessment in this course will be based upon attendance, class participation, presentation and discussion (10%), home essays 1, 2 and 3 (30% each). Preparation and writing of the essays (workload) include participation in classes, reading and individual research reading.

Assignment	Workload (average)	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes	Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes*
Class Participation and Presentations	42	10 %	Students will participate in class presentation and discuss meaningfully the topics of the course that have been already covered in accordance with the learning outcomes (see above).	1, 2, 3
Home essay 1	36	30%	Students will discuss meaningfully the topics of the course that have been already covered in accordance with the learning outcomes (see above).	1, 2
Home essay 2	36	30%	Students will discuss meaningfully the topics of the course that have been already covered in accordance with the learning outcomes (see above).	1, 2
Home essay 3	36	30%	Students will discuss meaningfully the topics of the course that have been already covered in accordance with the learning outcomes (see above).	1, 2
TOTAL	150	100%		

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

7. Detailed description of the assignments

Class participation and presentations:

Each student will prepare and present two short (5 minutes) presentations in class, first presentation before the midterm break, second presentation after the midterm break. The topics and the schedule of the presentations will be distributed and discussed in the first and the following classes. Each presentation is 5%.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Content	40%
Presentation	40%
Discussion	20%

Home essay 1:

Home essay 1 should be about 6 pages long. The detailed instructions incl. the style, the topics of the home essay will be distributed and discussed in class on February 15, 2024. Submit the essay by February 29, 2024 in electronic version via Neo-Turnitin. Assessed areas include content, resources, structure and argument, and style and form of the essay; the result makes 30% of the final grade.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Content	30%
Resources	20%
Structure and argument	30%
Style and form	20%

Home essay 2:

Home essay 2 should be about 6 pages long. The detailed instructions incl. the style, the topics of the home essay will be distributed and discussed in class on March 21, 2024. Submit the essay by April 11, 2024 in electronic version via Neo-Turnitin. Assessed areas include content, resources, structure and argument, and style and form of the essay; the result makes 30% of the final grade.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Content	30%
Resources	20%
Structure and argument	30%
Style and form	20%

Home essay 3:

Home essay 3 should be about 6 pages long. The detailed instructions incl. the style, the topics of the home essay will be distributed and discussed in class on April 25, 2024. Submit the essay by May 9, 2024 in electronic version via Neo-Turnitin. Assessed areas include content, resources, structure and argument, and style and form of the essay; the result makes 30% of the final grade.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Content	30%
Resources	20%
Structure and argument	30%
Style and form	20%

8. 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 in the Academic 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, with additional communication via NEO LMS or Microsoft Teams. Students sending e-mail to an instructor shall clearly state the course code and the topic in the subject heading, for example, "COM101-1 Mid-term Exam. Question". All electronic submissions are through NEO LMS. No substantial pieces of writing (especially take-home exams and essays) can be submitted outside of NEO LMS.

Attendance

Attendance, i.e., presence in class in real-time, at AAU courses is default mandatory; however, it is not graded as such. (Grades may be impacted by missed assignments or lack of participation.) Still, students must attend at least two thirds of classes to complete the course. If they do not meet this condition and most of their absences are excused, they will be administratively withdrawn from the course. If they do not meet this condition and most of their absences are not excused, they will receive a grade of "FW" (Failure to Withdraw). Students may also be marked absent if they miss a significant part of a class (for example by arriving late or leaving early).

Absence excuse and make-up options

Should a student be absent from classes for relevant reasons (illness, serious family matters), and the student wishes to request that the absence be excused, the student should submit an Absence Excuse Request Form supplemented with documents providing reasons for the absence to the Dean of Students within one week of the absence. Each student may excuse up to two sick days per term without any supporting documentation; however, an Absence Excuse Request Form must still be submitted for these instances. If possible, it is recommended the instructor be informed of the absence in advance. Should a student be absent during the add/drop period due to a change in registration this will be an excused absence if s/he submits an Absence Excuse Request Form along with the finalized add/drop form.

Students whose absence has been excused by the Dean of Students are entitled to make up assignments and exams provided their nature allows. Assignments missed due to unexcused absences which cannot be made up, may result in a decreased or failing grade as specified in the syllabus.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructor within one week of the date the absence was excused to arrange for make-up options.

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

Electronic devices

Electronic devices (e.g. phones, tablets, laptops) may be used only for class-related activities (taking notes, looking up related information, etc.). Any other use will result in the student being marked absent and/or being expelled from the class. No electronic devices may be used during tests or exams unless required by the exam format and the instructor.

Eating is not allowed during classes.

Cheating and disruptive behavior

If a student engages in disruptive conduct unsuitable for a classroom environment, the instructor may require the student to withdraw from the room for the duration of the class and shall report the behavior to the student's Dean.

Students engaging in behavior which is suggestive of cheating will, at a minimum, be warned. In the case of continued misconduct, the student will fail the exam or assignment and be expelled from the exam or class.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism obscures the authorship of a work or the degree of its originality. Students are expected to create and submit works of which they are the author. Plagiarism can apply to all works of authorship – verbal, audiovisual, visual, computer programs, etc. Examples are:

- **Verbatim plagiarism:** verbatim use of another's work or part of it without proper acknowledgement of the source and designation as a verbatim quotation,
- **Paraphrasing plagiarism:** paraphrasing someone else's work or part of it without proper acknowledgement of the source,
- **Data plagiarism:** use of other people's data without proper acknowledgement of the source,
- **False quotation:** publishing a text that is not a verbatim quotation as a verbatim quotation,
- **Fictitious citation:** quoting, paraphrasing, or referring to an incorrect or a non-existent work,
- **Inaccurate citation:** citing sources in such a way that they cannot be found and verified,
- **Ghostwriting:** commissioning work from others and passing it off as one's own,
- **Patchwriting:** using someone else's work or works (albeit with proper acknowledgement of sources and proper attribution) to such an extent that the output contains almost no original contribution,
- **Self-plagiarism:** unacknowledged reuse of one's own work (or part of it) that has been produced or submitted as part of another course of study or that has been published in the past,
- **Collaborative plagiarism:** delivering the result of collective collaboration as one's own individual output.

At minimum, plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment and shall be reported to the student's Dean. A mitigating circumstance may be the case of novice students, and the benefit of the doubt may be given if it is reasonable to assume that the small-scale plagiarism was the result of ignorance rather than intent. An aggravating circumstance in plagiarism is an act intended to make the plagiarism more difficult to detect. Such conduct includes, for example, the additional modification of individual words or phrases, the creation of typos, the use of machine translation tools or the creation of synonymous text, etc. The Dean may initiate a disciplinary procedure pursuant to the Academic Codex. Intentional or repeated plagiarism always entail disciplinary hearing and may result in expulsion from AAU.

Use of Artificial Intelligence and Academic Tutoring Center

The use of artificial intelligence tools to search sources, to process, analyze and summarize data, and to provide suggestions or feedback in order to improve content, structure, or style, defined here as AI-assisted writing, is not in itself plagiarism. However, it is plagiarism if, as a result, it obscures the authorship of the work produced or the degree of its originality (see the examples above).

AAU acknowledges prudent and honest use of AI-assisted writing, that is, the use of AI for orientation, consultation, and practice is allowed. For some courses and assignments,

however, the use of AI is counterproductive to learning outcomes; therefore, the course syllabus may prohibit AI assistance.

A work (text, image, video, sound, code, etc.) generated by artificial intelligence based on a mass of existing data, defined here as AI-generated work, is not considered a work of authorship. Therefore, if an AI-generated work (e.g. text) is part of the author's work, it must be marked as AI-generated. Otherwise, it obscures the authorship and/or the degree of originality, and thus constitutes plagiarism. Unless explicitly permitted by the instructor, submission of AI-generated work is prohibited.

If unsure about technical aspects of writing, and to improve their academic writing, students are encouraged to consult 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/>.

Course accessibility and inclusion

Students with disabilities should contact the Dean of Students to discuss reasonable accommodations. Academic accommodations are not retroactive.

Students who will be absent from course activities due to religious holidays may seek reasonable accommodations by contacting the Dean of Students in writing within the first two weeks of the term. All requests must include specific dates for which the student requests accommodations.

9. 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: Jiří Kašný
Date: January 4, 2024

Approved by: Jan Vašenda, Vice Dean, School of Business Administration, School of Law
Date: January 18, 2024