Course Specifications
Valid in the academic year 2018-2019

Course
Research Methods (B001328)

Valid in the academic year 2018-2019

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2018-2019
A (year)
Dutch lecture 21.25 h
group work 8.75 h

Lecturers in academic year 2018-2019
Hardyns, Wim RE23 lecturer-in-charge
Baeck, Joke RE21 co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2018-2019 crdts offering
Bachelor of Laws in Laws 3 A
Linking Course Master of Laws in Laws 3 A
Preparatory Course Master of Laws in Laws 3 A

Teaching languages
Dutch

Keywords
Research design, conceptual design, technical design, research goals, research model, research questions, definition of concepts, research materials, research strategy, research planning, legal scientific research, scientific integrity.

Position of the course
The general aim of this course is to provide students with key insights into legal scientific research. The aim is twofold. On the one hand, students are taught to recognize existing legal research using insights from legal sciences. On the other hand, students are trained to attain a higher level of competences and knowledge necessary to scientifically (and empirically) study legal themes. Throughout the course, the stress is on the formation of an empirical research attitude with students. The skills and knowledge acquired through this course will help students to plan and execute an empirical research project on a legal subject, which may prove valuable in the frame of the Masters' thesis.

Contents
I. Understanding legal scientific research;
II. Research planning;
III. Scientific integrity;
IV. Review of quantitative and qualitative research methods;
V. Sub-disciplines of legal sciences (can) draw upon: law and economics, history of law, sociology of law, legal anthropology.

Initial competences

Final competences
1 Understanding the variety of research strategies that can be applied in order to investigate legal themes
2 Understanding the building blocks of a research plan
3 Independently identify the best suited research method to investigate a carefully formulated research question
4 Understand the societal role of scientific research
5 Recognizing the values and duties that accompany scientific research
6 Having a critical-scientific attitude towards existing scientific research within the

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domain of legal sciences in order to assess the quality of this research
7 Have a basic understanding of statistical research
8 Recognize the importance of a highly qualitative execution of scientific research

Conditions for credit contract
Access to this course unit via a credit contract is unrestricted: the student takes into consideration the conditions mentioned in 'Starting Competences'

Conditions for exam contract
Access to this course unit via an exam contract is unrestricted

Teaching methods
Group work, lecture

Extra information on the teaching methods
During lectures (30 hrs) knowledge regarding the design of scientific research is transferred. This knowledge is illustrated using examples from existing research. This way, students gain insight in the logical relationships between research questions and the way a research is set up, the key function of research design within a research project, the development of a research design for a specific research question, and the choice of a method of data gathering which is suited to meet the goals of a research project.
The group work will be introduced before the start of lectures. This group assignment is part of the evaluation.

Learning materials and price
- Dutch syllabus 'Onderzoeksmethoden'. Offered by Top Copy - Docunet (Gebr. Vandeveldestraat 121, 9000 Gent). Estimated price: 20 Euros.
- Texts made available through Minerva.
- Powerpoints of the lectures made available through Minerva.

References

Course content-related study coaching
- Interactive coaching is provided through the e-platform Minerva: among other materials, slides of lectures, suggestions for literature, voluntary assignments to support the learning process are provided.
- During and after the lectures, students are given the opportunity to ask questions, either orally or in written form. Questions can also be addressed to the lecturers or assistant through email. These questions will be dealt with in the next lecture. With regard to the course and lectures, the lecturers and assistant are available for personal feedback during office hours or on appointment.

Evaluation methods
end-of-term evaluation and continuous assessment

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the first examination period
Written examination

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the second examination period
Written examination

Examination methods in case of permanent evaluation
Assignment
Possibilities of retake in case of permanent evaluation

(Approved)
Examination during the second examination period is not possible

Extra information on the examination methods

- **Written** exam in which the different topics covered in this course are tested.
- **Group work** in which the students complete an assignment by applying the material covered during lectures (including research design and research methods in social science).

Calculation of the examination mark

- Assignment: 40% - written exam: 60%
- If a student does not participate in the evaluation of one or more topics it is not possible to pass the course. If the examination mark in this case is 8/20 or higher, this mark is reduced to the highest mark for which deliberation is not possible (i.e. 7/20).
- There is no second examination period for the group work, the calculation of the examination mark remains the same as in the first examination period; the students keep their mark for the part ‘group work’.

Facilities for Working Students

In case of questions or problems regarding the course materials or structure of the course, the course and examination material, working students can always contact the lecturers or assistant. They can do so by email or phone, or in person during office hours. Working students that are unable to take the exam due to their situation at work are invited to contact the lecturers, which can grant the student the possibility to take the exam on another date and/or time.

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