Due to Covid 19, the education and evaluation methods may vary from the information displayed in the schedules and course details. Any changes will be communicated on Ufora.

Course Specifications
Valid as from the academic year 2020-2021

Course
Research Methods  (B001328)

Course size
(nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)
Credits 3.0
Study time 90 h
Contact hrs 30.0 h

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2020-2021
A (year)
Dutch
Gent
lecture
21.25 h
B (semester 2)
lecture
30.0 h

Lecturers in academic year 2020-2021
Peerer, Frederik
RE21 lecturer-in-charge
Vandeviver, Christophe
RE23 co-lecturer

Offered in the following programmes in 2020-2021
Bachelor of Laws in Laws
3 A
Linking Course Master of Laws in Laws
3 B
Preparatory Course Master of Laws in Laws
3 B

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, research data management, 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 study legal themes (in an empirical way). Throughout the course, the stress is on the formation of a broad 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. Review of quantitative and qualitative research methods;
III. Sub-disciplines of legal sciences (can) draw upon: law and economics, history of law, sociology of law, legal anthropology.
IV. Scientific integrity, research planning and research data management;

Initial competences

Final competences
1 Understanding the characteristics and features of traditional legal dogmatic research.
2 Understanding the variety of research strategies that can be applied in order to investigate legal themes.
3 Understanding the building blocks of a research plan.
4 Independently identifying the best suited research method to investigate a carefully formulated research question.
5 Understanding the societal role of scientific research.
6 Recognizing the values and duties that accompany scientific research.

Understanding how scientific research should be conducted in conformity with
standards of scientific integrity, with respect for legal and ethical norms.
7 Having a critical-scientific attitude towards existing scientific research within the
domain of legal sciences in order to assess the quality of this research
8 Understanding how traditional legal dogmatic research can be completed and
enriched by other research methods.
9 Recognizing 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
Lecture

Extra information on the teaching methods
The lectures aim to introduce students to the diverse aspects of research methods.
They do not only envisage transferring knowledge concerning those aspects, but also
offering insights and make students acquainted with a variety of research techniques
they can use in their own research.

Learning materials and price
• Dutch syllabus 'Onderzoeksmethoden'. Offered by Top Copy - Docunet (Gebr.
• Texts made available through the online learning environment.
• Powerpoints of the lectures made available through the online learning environment.

References
• BIJLEVELD, C., Methoden en technieken van onderzoek in de criminologie. Den
• BIJLEVELD, C., Kansen voor juristen. Statistiek en onderzoeksmethodologie voor
• CAHILLANE, J. en SCHWEPPE, J., Legal Research Methods: Principles and
• CREWSWELL, J. en POTH, C., Qualitative inquiry & research design : choosing
• DECORTE, T en ZAITCH, D., Kwalitatieve methoden en technieken in de
• DENSCOMBE, M., Ground rules for good research, Buckingham/Philadelphia, Open
• GILBERT, N., Researching social life, Londen, Sage, 2008.
• KESTEMONT, L. en SCHOUKENS, P., Rechtswetenschappelijk schrijven, Leuven,
• SAUNDERS, M., LEWIS, P. en THORNHILL, A., Methoden en technieken van
• VERSCHUREN, P. en DOOREWAARD, H., Het ontwerpen van een onderzoek, Den
• VERSCHUREN, P., De probleemstelling voor een onderzoek, Utrecht, Uitgeverij Het

Course content-related study coaching
• Interactive coaching is provided through the online learning environment: 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 lecturer
  through email.

Evaluation methods
end-of-term evaluation

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the first examination period
Written examination with open questions, written examination with multiple choice questions,
written examination

Examination methods in case of periodic evaluation during the second examination period
Written examination with open questions, written examination with multiple choice questions,
written examination

Examination methods in case of permanent evaluation

(Approved)
Possibilities of retake in case of permanent evaluation  
not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods

**Written** exam in which the different topics covered in this course are tested.

Calculation of the examination mark

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. They can do so by email or phone, or in person during office hours.