Course Specifications
Valid as from the academic year 2020-2021

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 size (nominal values; actual values may depend on programme)
- Credits: 4.0
- Study time: 120 h
- Contact hrs: 30.0 h

Course offerings and teaching methods in academic year 2020-2021
- A (semester 2)
- Dutch
- Gent
- Lecture: 27.5 h
- Lecture: plenary exercises: 2.5 h

Lecturers in academic year 2020-2021
- Peerær, Frederik
- RE21
- Lecturer-in-charge

Offered in the following programmes in 2020-2021
- Bachelor of Laws in Laws
  - 4 crds
  - A offering
- Linking Course Master of Laws in Laws
  - 4 crds
  - A offering
- Preparatory Course Master of Laws in Laws
  - 4 crds
  - A offering

Teaching languages
- Dutch

Keywords
- Legal theory, societal development, definition of law and its multiple facets, functions of law, finality of law, law and society, schools of thought about justice, norms, concepts in context, law as a system

Position of the course
This course outlines the context and the legal-theoretical background of today's law. It thus complements other courses, such as 'Basisbegrippen van recht' and 'Inleiding tot internationaal en Europees recht'.

The first part starts with an exploration of the concept of 'law'. That part explains that 'law' can be understood in different ways and that the way we look at 'law' is not set in stone. There are different visions, which, moreover, have not always been dominant. Those visions and the context in which they are (or have been) dominant form the core of this part.

No matter how you look at 'law', it will always play a certain role in society. The second part of the course deals with the various roles that law can play. Functions that the law has, such as ensuring behavioural alignment and decision-making, are interpreted in a broader historical, social and anthropological context. The finality with which law is used is also discussed.

The third and last part deals in greater depth with norms. What is a norm? What types of norms are there and which are relevant to law? What are the building blocks of norms? How do they relate to each other; to what extent can law be regarded as a 'system'? The answers to such questions are at the heart of this part.

Contents
I. What is law?
II. Functions and finalities of law
III. Norms and their connection

Initial competences

Final competences
1. Understanding the fundamental transformations the organisation of societies can undergo.
2. Explaining the characteristics of different kinds of societies.
3. Understanding the different ways one can look at law as a societal phenomenon.

(Approved)
Understanding the influence the chosen way has on the further interactions with law.
4 Critically reviewing the common elements of definitions of law.
5 Knowing the most prominent schools of thought about justice. Understanding how these schools relate to each other. Understanding the social context in which a particular school is (or has been) dominant. Fitting concrete points of view into these schools of thought.
6 Understanding what functions law can fulfil. Explain how specific functions relate to certain types of society.
7 Critically review the finality with which law can be applied.
8 Differentiating between different types of norms. Explain their meaning and relevance for the law.
9 Understanding the general characteristics and building blocks of prescriptive norms. Understanding the limits of that insight to the use of those norms and their building blocks.
10 Explaining how law can be understood as a system. Explaining the relationship between norms.

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, lecture: plenary exercises

Extra information on the teaching methods
The different components of the course are all discussed in the lectures. To promote the learning process, these lectures make use of exercises that students have to prepare at home. During the semester, students can test their knowledge by means of (voluntary) tests via Ufora.

Learning materials and price
Dutch syllabus ‘Algemene rechtsleer’. Target price: 30 euro.
Texts made available through Ufora.
Slides of the lectures (also made available via the electronic learning platform Ufora).

References

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
deo-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

Possibilities of retake in case of permanent evaluation
not applicable

Extra information on the examination methods
(Approved)
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 lecturer. They can do so by email or phone, or in person during office hours.