

Course Outline

Course number	RBB115				
Course title	Constitutional Law				
Credit points	3 ECTS (2 LV CP)				
Total hours	80				
Lecture hours	30				
Course level	Bachelor				
Prerequisites	None				
Category	Mandatory	X	Restricted elective		Free elective

COURSE RESPONSIBLE

<i>Name</i>	<i>Academic degree</i>	<i>Academic position</i>
Kristaps Tamužs	LL.M.	Visiting Lecturer

COURSE TEACHERS

<i>Name</i>	<i>Academic degree</i>	<i>Academic position</i>
Kristaps Tamužs	LL.M.	Visiting Lecturer
Filip Cyuńczyk	Ph.D.	Visiting Lecturer

COURSE ABSTRACT

The course is aimed at introducing the students to the basic concepts and principles of constitutional law. Constitutional law is concerned with the organisation of the state, and the relationship between the state and the individual. Constitutions, among other things, help to resolve conflicts within state's structures and among its organs and also conflicts between the state and the individual. Human rights of the people are ordinarily primarily guaranteed by constitutions and implemented by using constitutional mechanisms. The course will address issues related to the formation and transformation of constitutional law as well as its practical application, primarily on the basis of examples from the Germany, Latvia and the United States of America. The second part of the course will be based on the general constitutional theory with the references to the regional, Central and Eastern European, constitutional normative solutions and constitutionalism. The theoretical part will be focusing on the presentation of the basic concepts related to the formation of the constitutional political and legal order, general mechanisms of functioning of the constitutional liberal democracy and the specificity of the regional (CEE) transitional constitutional reality.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Knowledge

The students will gain knowledge of “how” and “why” states are organised. The “how” will cover the actual functioning of constitutional democracies, such as elections and legislative process, administration of state power, the set-up and functioning of the judiciary as well as the separation of the branches of state power. Constitutional mechanisms for the protection of human rights will be discussed alongside the interaction between domestic law and international and supranational law. The “why” will cover the theoretical aspects of constitutionalism. Is constitutional democracy the only way to organise a state? Are there risks inherent in this system? Can we avoid them? What are the specifics of the regional CEE transitional constitutionalism?

- Competencies

The students will gain a systematic overview of how legal systems operate. Constitutional law is the backbone of every national legal system. The students will gain an understanding of the interplay between the individual and the state as well as between various players at the state and international level.

- Skills

The students will be able to identify and apply the principles of formation and operation of the legislative, executive and judicial branches of state power. It is expected that the students will have a solid foundation in resolving various human rights related issues. Also, they will be able to identify the theoretical background of the constitutional movements, both general and its regional (CEE) variations, as determined by various legal and societal factors.

GRADING CRITERIA

Criteria	Weighting
Mid-term exam	35%
Final exam	35%
Course paper #1	10%
Course paper #2	10%
Class participation	10%

COURSE PLAN – MAIN SUBJECTS

No.	<i>Main subjects</i>	<i>Planned hours</i>
1	Branches of state power and their separation	6
2	International dimensions of constitutional law	2
3	Human rights	4
4	Constitutional law of Latvia	2
5	Constitutionalism	3
6	Models of constitutionalism: an overview	3
7	Limits of Power. Rule of law as a crucial issue of transitional constitutionalism	2
8	Role of the constitutional courts in the democratic transition period	2
9	New democracies in crisis?	4
10	Course sum-up. Overview of the material	2