



**RIGA
GRADUATE
SCHOOL OF
LAW**

Course Outline

Course number	RBE305				
Course title	European Legal History				
Credit points	3 ECTS (2 LV)				
Total hours	80				
Contact hours	32				
Seminar and other hours	48				
Course level	Bachelor				
Prerequisites	-				
Category	Mandatory		Restricted elective	X	Free elective

COURSE RESPONSIBLE

<i>Name</i>	<i>Academic degree</i>	<i>Academic position</i>
Tjaco Theo van den Hout	LLM (Leiden)	Visiting lecturer

COURSE TEACHERS

<i>Name</i>	<i>Academic degree</i>	<i>Academic position</i>
Tjaco Theo van den Hout	LLM (Leiden)	Visiting lecturer

COURSE ABSTRACT

This course offers students an introduction to European legal history. It illustrates how the beginnings of the civil law tradition in Europe can be traced back to the rediscovery of Roman

law and the emergence of classical canon law around 1100 AD. It then explores how in the subsequent centuries, up to and including the eighteenth, a sophisticated legal science of a distinct European dimension developed. Since that time different European states have constructed their own legal systems but, with the exception of England and Ireland, they are all heirs to this tradition of the *jus commune*. The course covers Roman law in antiquity, the revival of Justinian's law, Roman law & the nation state and Roman law & codification. It takes us from before AD 565, to a sequence of historical periods, viz. circa 500 -1000, 1000 – 1453, 1453 – 1648, 1648 – 1914, and 1914 - present.

Teaching is based on the modern (American law school) version of the “Socratic method” — blurring the distinction between lectures and seminars. As a consequence, it is highly interactive with ample opportunity for classroom discussion and stimulating critical thinking.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

With regard to the knowledge, skills and competencies that students will acquire from this course, the following are the main objectives:

Knowledge:

1. Knowledge of the origins of the European civil law tradition.
2. Knowledge of the main features of Roman law and how these functioned.
3. Knowledge of classical canon law and its relationship with Roman law.

Skills:

4. Ability to indicate how over time the European civil law tradition evolved.
5. Ability to indicate how problems in ancient Roman society were resolved using the legal tools available at the time.

Competencies:

6. By combining the knowledge and skills listed above, students will have acquired a deeper understanding of European legal history enabling them to better comprehend certain aspects of modern private law and their distinctly European character.

GRADING CRITERIA

<i>Criteria</i>	<i>Weighting</i>
Home assignments and class participation	20%
Quizzes and essay	30%
Final exam	50%

COURSE PLAN – MAIN SUBJECTS

No.	<i>Main subjects</i>	<i>Planned hours</i>
1	Introduction to the course; grading criteria; course requirements	1
2	European legal history	15
3	Preparation for final exam	