

## Course Outline

<b>Course number</b>	
Course title	Legal Research and Writing
Credit points	3 ECTS (2 CP)
Total hours	26
Lecture hours	26
Seminar and other hours	0
Course level	Masters
Prerequisites	None

### COURSE RESPONSIBLE

<i>Name</i>	<i>Academic degree</i>	<i>Academic position</i>
Bård Sverre Tuseth	Cand. Jur.	Doctoral Research Fellow

### COURSE TEACHERS

<i>Name</i>	<i>Academic degree</i>	<i>Academic position</i>
Bård Sverre Tuseth	Cand. Jur.	Doctoral Research Fellow
Ligita Gjortlere	M.Sci.Soc.	Lecturer

### COURSE ABSTRACT

The course aims to provide the skills necessary to write a successful Master Thesis in Law. It covers all aspects of academic writing from project design to practical research and varied methodological perspectives. The course has a practical approach and uses discussions of real world examples to illustrate different facets of legal writing. In addition, it enables students to avoid the pitfalls of inadequate research or poor source criticism and to adhere to the ethical standards required in academic writing.

### LEARNING OUTCOMES

- **Knowledge**
  - Students will know the genre criteria of legal academic writing.
  - Students will be aware of legal sources and methodological approaches that are relevant for their project.
- **Competencies**
  - Students understand the importance of authorities and citations in academic legal writing.
  - Students are aware of the need to address contradictory sources in their research.
  - Students will be able to apply the norms for research ethics in law in their work.
- **Skills**
  - Students are able to gather information through effective and efficient research strategies
  - Students are able to critically evaluate information
  - Students are able to apply information effectively to answer research questions.
  - Students are able to distinguish between ethical and unethical use of sources

## GRADING CRITERIA

Criteria	Weighting
Multiple choice quiz	25 %
Exam (paper max. 1000 words)	75 %

## COURSE PLAN – MAIN SUBJECTS

No.	Main subjects	Planned hours
1	Project design and thesis writing	12
2	Researching EU-law	2
3	Utilizing legal and multidisciplinary databases	2
4	Preparing a literature review	2
5	Introduction to different methodological approaches in law	8

## COURSE PLAN – SESSIONS

Session	Session subjects and readings	Lecture/seminar
1	Overview of the thesis writing process Project design	Lecture (BST)
2	Discussion of project ideas and possible research questions Planning research and writing	Lecture (BST)
3	Outlining your thesis project Finding a suitable title, writing the introduction and conclusion	Lecture (BST)
5	Researching European Union law	Lecture (LG)
4	Source Criticism Working with your thesis advisor and a study group	Lecture (BST)
6	Citing sources, the RGSL Style Guide and Thesis Manual Research Ethics in Law	Lecture (BST)
7	Assessment of master theses Types of discussions in a thesis	Lecture (BST)
8	Reading judgements Definitions and interpretation	Lecture (BST)
9	Information retrieval using legal and multidisciplinary databases	Lecture (LG)
10	Introductions to methodology Legal dogmatic method	Lecture (BST)
11	Literature review	Lecture (LG)
12	Internationalization Comparisons and Comparative Law	Lecture (BST)
13	Law and legal culture Legal Historical methods	Lecture (BST)

## COURSE RESULTS

*By completing the study course and successfully passing examination, the student will be able to:*

Study results	Evaluation criteria		
	(40-69%)	(70-89%)	(90-100%)
<b>Knowledge</b>	The student has acquired only basic knowledge of the course subject. The student lacks understanding of some of the core issues of the course subject.	Overall, the student's knowledge complies with the expectations. However, there are issues that the student does not fully understand.	The student has demonstrated in-depth knowledge and understanding of the issues related to the course subject.
<b>Skills</b>	The student has demonstrated only basic level of skills.	The student has demonstrated good skills.	The student has demonstrated excellent skills.
<b>Competencies</b>	The student can apply the knowledge only at a basic level. The student struggles with assessment and evaluation of legal issues. The student can identify the relevant legal norms. However, the student cannot correctly apply them.	The student can apply the knowledge at a reasonably good level. However, the student does not have the necessary level to be able to fully apply the acquired knowledge independently. The student has some problems to correctly apply the legal norms.	The student is able to apply the knowledge independently and correctly. The student can assess and evaluate legal issues, identify the relevant legal norms, and correctly apply them.

## COURSE LITERATURE

No.	Author, title, publisher
<b>Compulsory reading</b>	
1	Jan M. Smits, "What is Legal Doctrine? On the Aims and Methods of Legal-Dogmatic Research" In <i>Rethinking Legal Scholarship: A Transatlantic Dialogue</i> , edited by Rob van Gestel, Hans-W. Micklitz & Edward L. Rubin, pp. 207-228. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017.
2	Snyder Hannah, "Literature review as a research methodology: An overview and guidelines", <i>Journal of Business Research</i> 104 (2019): pp. 333-339.
<b>Supplementary reading</b>	
1	Andrea Bianchi, "Constitutionalism and Global Governance," in <i>International Law Theories: An Inquiry into Different Ways of Thinking</i> , pp. 44-71. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016.
2	Catherine Valcke, "Reflections on comparative law methodology – getting inside contract law," In <i>Practice and Theory in Comparative Law</i> , edited by Maurice Adams and Jacco Bomhoff, pp. 22-48. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
3	Dirk Heirbaut, "Reading Past Legal Text - A Tale Of Two Legal Histories," In <i>Reading Past Legal Texts</i> , edited by Dag Michalsen, pp. 91-112. Oslo: Unipax, 2006.
4	Dag Michalsen, "The Nominalistic Argument in Interpreting Past Legal Texts," In <i>Reading Past Legal Texts</i> , edited by Dag Michalsen, pp. 134-157. Oslo: Unipax, 2006.

5	Rodolfo Sacco, "Legal Formants: A Dynamic Approach to Comparative Law," <i>AJCL</i> , 39(1) (1991): pp. 1–34.
6	Jørn Øyrehagen Sunde, "Champagne at the Funeral – an Introduction to Legal Culture," In <i>Rendezvous of European Legal Cultures</i> , edited by Jørn Øyrehagen Sunde and Knut Einar Skodvin, pp. 11–28. Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2010.
7	Eirik Holmøyvik, "A little bit of This and a little bit of That - the Complexity of Legal Reception," In <i>Rendezvous of European Legal Cultures</i> , edited by Jørn Øyrehagen Sunde and Knut Einar Skodvin, pp. 45–59. Bergen: Fagbokforlaget, 2010.
8	Graff-Peter Calliess, "Law, Transnational" <i>CLPE Research Paper 35/2010</i> : pp. 2–9. Available on: <a href="http://ssrn.com/abstract=1630348">http://ssrn.com/abstract=1630348</a> . Accessed October 18, 2019.

Programme director	/signature/	/date/
Field expert	/signature/	/date/
Course responsible	/signature/	/date/