

Course Descriptions (English Courses)

1. Introduction to American Law

(Mr. von Estorff; Course ID 060520, Monday, 10 am - noon, HGB 30)

This course is a basic introduction to the law and legal system of the United States in English. It covers the basic characteristics of the common law system, the doctrine of stare decisis, sources of law in the United States, the U.S. court system (both state and federal), the jury system, parties to a lawsuit, basics of the adversary system of trial, pleadings and motions, pretrial discovery, the trial process, case briefs and citations. This course is a core course in the Certificate Program of the Legal Faculty. Although the course is primarily a lecture, some participation is expected.

Required reading: will be made available through Moodle.

2. U.S. Constitutional Law II: Fundamental Rights

(Mr. von Estorff; Course ID 060522, Monday, 2 pm -4 pm, GD 1/450)

This course is an introduction to certain fundamental rights of the American legal system through the Bill of Rights and the adjudication of the United States Supreme Court. Students will be taught how to read and analyze cases through selected excerpts of landmark decisions. Issues include judicial review, freedom of speech, the death penalty, equal protection, affirmative action, marriage equality and the right to privacy. This course is a core course for the Certificate Program of the Legal Faculty. Although the course is primarily a lecture, some participation is expected.

Required reading: will be made available through Moodle.

3. Introduction to International Arbitration

(Mr. Wuschka; Course ID 060557, Tuesday, 07.10.2025 to Friday, 10.10.2025, 2–7 pm, GD 1/148)

This course introduces arbitration as a means to settle international disputes. It will address recourse to arbitration in different fields of law, including for inter-state disputes (e.g. under the auspices of the Permanent Court of Arbitration), commercial disputes, sports disputes as well as the constantly hotly debated topic of investor-state arbitration (e.g. under the auspices of ICSID). The course will feature guest presentations by speakers from various institutions.

4. International Legal Dialogue

(Prof. Dr. Windel, Course ID 060360, course dates and times have to be announced)

The class is intended to provide a platform for an international community of teachers and students to exchange views in an open discourse on legal issues brought about by globalization. Students will act actively and independently throughout the whole process, gaining their own direct access to international dimensions of law. A moderated colloquium, including presentations by foreign guest lecturers serves as an external framework. Participation requires an individual application and admission. The course involves both preparing a paper and giving a presentation in German or English. 9 credit points are awarded upon finishing the course. Participation is mandatory.

The class is also recognized as an elective course for the Certificate Anglo-American Law & Language of the Faculty of Law and it meets the requirements of a „domestic work“ (häusliche Arbeit).

5. UK Constitutional Law

(Mr. Provan, Course ID 060534, Monday, 2 pm - 4 pm, GD 1/148)

As one of the only countries in the world without a codified constitution, the UK has a long and rich history of constitutional development dating back hundreds of years. This first part of this course will cover a historical overview of UK constitutional law leading to contemporary lawmaking procedures, voting systems, and the constitutional restraints on legislation and governance. The second part will look at different layers of UK legal authority, first looking inward to devolution and then outward to the UK's relationship with international law.

6. International Dimensions of Law

(Prof. Thiede; Course ID 060527, Friday, 2-4 p.m., Podcasts)

Aims & Intended Outcomes: As indicated by its title, this course will focus on an introduction to Comparative Law, Conflict of Laws, European Law and Public International Law (with a focus on all questions of the law applicable (choice of law) in cases with a foreign element). Participants should obtain basic knowledge in Comparative Law, Conflict of Laws, European Law and Public International Law, understanding of problems in mentioned areas of law and (some) competence in questions of the law applicable in cases with a foreign element.

Previous knowledge expected: Instruction and assessment will be exclusively in English, and participants should have an appropriate level of linguistic competence.

7. U.S. Intellectual Property Law

(Mr. Hanrahan, Course ID 060526, Tuesday, 4-6 pm, Zoom Video Course)

This course will provide students with a basic and fundamental overview of major areas of intellectual property law in the United States. We will cover topics related to United States patents, trademarks, copyrights, and trade secrets, as well as how each of these different areas are interrelated to one another. We will not only discuss how to obtain intellectual property rights, but also how and when to enforce those rights against an infringer. The course will reference current United States laws, cases, as well as rules and procedures enforced by the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office and U.S. Copyright Office. Some participation is expected during the lectures.

8. European Human Rights Law

(Ms. Katsoni, Course ID 060544, Tuesday, 10 am - noon, BF EG/03)

The course introduces to students the scope and content of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and zooms in on specific, impactful and topical judgements of the European Court of Human Rights (ECtHR), for instance in the fields of forced migration and refugee protection, climate change, LGBTTIQ* rights, access to abortion and reproductive rights. Specifically, the seminar will highlight the significance of the ECHR for the protection of human rights in Europe and will underline the most influential judgements of the ECtHR on each right reflected in the convention, inviting the students to critically engage with the court's reasoning and decision-making in these judgements.

9. Normative Legal Philosophy

(Prof. Dr. Magen, Course ID 060012, Monday 10:00 am - noon, GD 2/148)

Normative legal philosophy is concerned with the normative reasons that explain and justify the existence of legal orders and legal institutions like criminal law, contracts, torts, public goods, democracy, human rights, and anti-discrimination law. The lecture provides an introduction into basic approaches to ethics and draws on cases to discuss common theories put forward to justify or criticize different legal institutions.

For further information please contact the chair of Prof. Magen: ls-magen@rub.de

10. Corporate Governance and Sustainability

(Prof. Amatucci, Course ID 060549, Monday, 27.10.2025 to Thursday, 06.11.2025, 16:15–18:15 pm, GD 1/148)

This course examines the evolving role of corporations as socially responsible entities, exploring whether they should act in ways that benefit stakeholders and mitigate harm to society. It investigates the dominant economic model based on unlimited growth, which is increasingly being challenged. The course delves into the ethical foundations of corporate social responsibility and analyzes frameworks like shareholder primacy, stakeholderism, and enlightened shareholder value. It also explores the corporation as a complex social institution with a pluralistic purpose. A comparative analysis will look at corporate governance reforms in various jurisdictions aimed at promoting sustainability and stakeholderism. Finally, the course reviews recent trends in legislation aimed at improving corporate responsibility and governance.

11. General Principles of International Sales Law

(Dr. Babkina, Course ID 060556, 04.11.+11.11.+18.11.+25.11.+02.12.+09.12.+16.12.2025+13.01.+20.01.2026, 02:00 pm–04:00 pm, GD 1/148)

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the foundations of international commercial law with a particular focus on cross-border sales transactions. Students will explore the concept and sources of international commercial law, including the United Nations Convention on Contracts for the International Sale of Goods (CISG), INCOTERMS, UNIDROIT Principles. Key topics include international sale of goods and commercial representation and intermediation (agency), as well as distribution agreements.

The course also examines the formation, structure, and interpretation of international commercial contracts, emphasizing party autonomy and the determination of applicable law. Special attention is given to dispute resolution in international trade, comparing the advantages and disadvantages of national courts and international commercial arbitration, alongside the recognition and enforcement of foreign judgment and arbitral awards.

By the end of the course students will gain a solid understanding of the legal principles and practical mechanisms shaping international trade relations, equipping with analytical skills relevant for both academic research and professional practice.

The final assessment takes the form of a presentation prepared by each student on a topic selected from a provided list.

12. Current Challenges in the International Law of the Sea

(Mr. Herich, Course ID 060551, 31.10.+07.11.+21.11.+05.12.+12.12.2025, 8:00 am – noon, GD 1/148)

As currently 71% of the earth's surface is covered by oceans, the rules and norms that apply to them are a topic which relevance only grows over time. This course provides students with insights into the depths of international maritime law, pondering questions such as “What happens to States that disappear due to sea-level rise?” and “Is there really no law on the High Seas?” We will consider most recent opinions by the International Court of Justice and the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea, giving students their first overview over this highly specific part of public international law. This class does not require any prior knowledge in public international law or the international law of the sea.

Kursbeschreibung (türkische Veranstaltung)

1. Einführung in das türkische Strafrecht (Türk Ceza Hukukuna Giriş)

(Prof. Özaydin; Veranstaltungs-Nr. 060550, 27.10.+24.11.+15.12.2025+12.01.2026, 13-18 Uhr, BF EG/03)

Die Vorlesung „Türk Ceza Hukukuna Giriş/Einführung in das türkische Strafrecht“ wird auf Türkisch gehalten. Neben der Vermittlung der strafrechtlichen Rechtsterminologie werden auch inhaltliche Themen, etwa die Definition und die Grundprinzipien des türkischen Strafrechts, die objektiven und subjektiven Tatbestandsvoraussetzungen einer Straftat und die Rechtswidrigkeit, behandelt. Daneben wird auch auf Kriminologie, Viktimologie, Strafvollzugsrecht und Strafverfahrensrecht eingegangen. Dabei werden Bezüge zum deutschen Recht hergestellt: Während das türkische Strafrecht früher zunächst vom französischen und dann vom italienischen Strafrecht inspiriert wurde, ist das türkische Strafgesetzbuch 2005 unter dem starken Einfluss des deutschen Strafgesetzbuches reformiert worden.

Das theoretische Wissen wird anhand von praktischen Übungen konkretisiert.