

4.00 credits	30.0 h	Q1 and Q2
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Teacher(s)	Bernard Nicolas ;
Language :	French
Place of the course	Bruxelles Saint-Louis
Main themes	The Three Documentary Sources of Law (Legislation, Legal Doctrine, and Case Law) (Digital) Tools for Legal Research References Artificial Intelligence and Law (Functioning of AI, Impact of AI on the Work of Legal Professionals)
Learning outcomes	<p>At the end of this learning unit, the student is able to :</p> <p>In accordance with the learning outcomes framework of the program, this course unit contributes to the development and acquisition of the following competencies:</p> <p>I. Acquisition of Legal Knowledge Mastery of concepts, rules, and principles across most branches of Belgian law.</p> <p>II. Acquisition of Scientific Methods and Tools Mastery of methods and tools for legal documentary research (legislation, case law, legal doctrine), with the aim of exploiting the results, particularly in personal academic work. Ability to conduct independent research of a scientific nature, in compliance with academic ethics. Ability to communicate a legal idea or reasoning, both in writing and orally, and to defend it convincingly.</p> <p>III. Mastery of Written and Oral Communication in French and in a Target Language Ability to communicate a legal idea or reasoning, both in writing and orally, and to defend it convincingly.</p> <p>IV. Understanding the Impact of the Growing Use of Digital Technologies in Legal Professions and Awareness of the Risks Associated with New Digital Tools Ability to use artificial intelligence critically, responsibly, and with proper sourcing.</p>

<p>Evaluation methods</p>	<p>Type of Assessment</p> <p>1. Written Exam (25%, unless failed—in which case it does not count) The written exam covers all parts of the syllabus studied during the first semester (Q1). Passing the written exam exempts the student from a substantial portion of the material covered in that same semester.</p> <p>2. Written Assignment (50%, unless the written exam is failed—in which case: 2/3) Detailed instructions are provided in the syllabus. The assignment must be submitted in printed form and uploaded to Compilatio. It must be accompanied by the signed integrity pledge required for the Bachelor of Law program. Failure to submit the signed pledge results in a two-point deduction. The requirement that the assignment be a genuine piece of work is assessed according to the guidelines outlined in the syllabus chapter dedicated to the assignment, in accordance with the decision of the Faculty Council, to which reference is made. Late submission penalties are as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A deduction of 2 points for every 24 hours of delay • A grade of 0A/20 if the assignment is submitted more than 5 days late <p>Justifications for absences or failure to submit a genuine assignment within the deadline must be provided to the teaching assistant and faculty administration no later than the day following the end of the impediment (e.g., the day after the last day covered by a medical certificate). Otherwise, the justification is automatically deemed inadmissible.</p> <p>3. Oral Exam on the Entire Syllabus (25%, unless the written exam is failed—in which case: 1/3) The oral exam takes place in a computer lab. Students will receive two questions to prepare, involving research and referencing. During the exam, they will answer several short questions related to the prepared topics. Students who are not exempt from the first semester material (due to failing the written exam) will also be questioned on that content. Throughout the oral exam, students may use their Citation Guide.</p> <p>Additional Rules</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Students who did not earn credits for the Legal Methodology seminar in the first session must retake the oral exam in the second session. They must also submit a written assignment unless they received a grade of 10/20 or higher for it in the first session. • Unjustified absence from more than one small-group session during the academic year results in a final grade of “0/20 absent” (0A/20) for the June session. However, this does not prevent registration for the September session. • Unjustified failure to submit the assignment results in a final grade of 0A/20 for the relevant session. • Unjustified absence from the June or September exam also results in a final grade of 0A/20 for the course unit in the relevant session. (<i>Note: Taking the oral exam without having submitted the assignment does not change the 0A/20 grade. Likewise, not taking the oral exam after submitting the assignment does not change the 0A/20 grade.</i>) • If attendance is required for the oral exam, failure to attend results in a grade of 0/20 for the session. <p>Language of Assessment</p> <p>French</p>
<p>Teaching methods</p>	<p>1. Lectures</p> <p>This is an <i>ex cathedra</i> course delivered in person to a large audience.</p> <p>2. Small-Group Sessions</p> <p>These consist of four sessions held in the law library and computer lab. Attendance at small-group sessions is mandatory. Students are expected to be punctual and to bring the required materials (Appendices, Citation Guide).</p> <p>3. Office Hours</p> <p>Optional office hours are available for students to ask questions related to the completion of their assignment.</p> <p>Note: Students will be expected to work with generative AI tools.</p>
<p>Content</p>	<p>This course consists of two interrelated components designed to form a coherent whole. The teaching team places strong emphasis on ensuring close coordination between theoretical instruction (lectures) and small-group seminar sessions.</p> <p>Lecture-Based Instruction (as outlined in the syllabus)</p>

- Theoretical Foundations: Legislation
- Theoretical Foundations: Legal Doctrine
- Theoretical Foundations: Case Law
- Understanding and Researching Legislation
- Understanding and Researching Legal Doctrine
- Understanding and Researching Case Law
- Drafting Legal References
- Understanding the Impact of AI on Legal Practice

Small-Group Seminars (as outlined in the syllabus)

- Using Legal Databases: Legislation
- Using Legal Databases: Legal Doctrine
- Using Legal Databases: Case Law
- Navigating the Law Library
- Drafting Legal References

Learning Outcomes




By the end of the course, students are expected to apply the research tools introduced and demonstrate their ability to work with key legal sources by producing a synthesis paper on an assigned topic.

In other words, students should develop practical “reflexes” (both in the library and at the computer) and a structured working method that enables them to present their topic clearly and coherently.

Pedagogical Focus

Special attention will be given to legal vocabulary and to the standards of rigor and precision inherent to legal work —particularly in light of the constant evolution that characterizes the field of law.

Inline resources	All course materials are available on the Moodle platform associated with this course unit. Students are encouraged to consult it regularly.
Bibliography	BERNARD, N. (dir.), BORN, R., de JONGHE, D., de TERWANGNE, C., MOREAU, P., SLINGENEYER, T., TRUFFIN, B., VAN MEERBEECK, J. et VANVREKOM, S., Guide des citations, références et abréviations juridiques, 6e éd., Bruxelles, Kluwer, 2017.
Faculty or entity in charge	DRTB

Programmes containing this learning unit (UE)				
Program title	Acronym	Credits	Prerequisite	Learning outcomes
Bachelor in Law	DROB1BA	4		
Bachelor in Law (French-English)	DRAB1BA	4		
Bachelor in Law French-Dutch (and French-Dutch-English)	DRNB1BA	4		
Bachelor of Laws (French-Dutch-English / Droit-Rechten-Laws)	DREB1BA	4		