


7.00 credits	67.5 h	Q1 and Q2
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Teacher(s)	. SOMEBODY ;
Language :	French
Place of the course	Bruxelles Saint-Louis
Main themes	<p>The course Sources and Principles of Law (SPD) is one of the core subjects of the Bachelor of Laws program. It is offered at the very beginning of the academic path in order to provide students with an initial structured understanding of the legal phenomenon. The aim of the course is to provide the conceptual foundations necessary for pursuing legal studies. It equips students with the essential legal bases required to adequately follow other courses in the curriculum (such as constitutional law, European law, judicial law, contract law, etc.), while also introducing them to a reflective and contextualized approach to law.</p> <p>The course starts from a clear observation: law, as a regulator of social life, is omnipresent. Law frames social relations, organizes public authorities, guarantees fundamental rights, and provides mechanisms for conflict resolution. Understanding law therefore means not only knowing the rules, but also questioning their origin, their legitimacy, and their hierarchy. From this perspective, the course proposes several interdisciplinary openings, as other disciplines help to shed light on legal phenomena.</p> <p>The course focuses on analyzing all sources of law (notably the Constitution, legislation, regulations, case law, custom, and legal scholarship), situating them within the context of different legal orders (national, European, and international). It also presents law through the lens of legal principles, whether or not they are labeled as "general principles of law."</p> <p>In addition, the course encourages multilingual awareness through the translation of key legal terms into Dutch in the syllabus, and seeks to raise awareness of sustainable development issues through the choice of examples used to illustrate the theoretical discussions.</p>
Learning outcomes	<p>At the end of this learning unit, the student is able to :</p> <p>"I. Acquire a general legal culture"</p> <p>The course aims to provide students with an overview of the legal phenomenon and to familiarize them with the basic legal concepts that are essential for the subsequent study of the various fields of law. It serves as one of the main entry points for students to acquire a general legal culture as well as legal reflexes, both of which are indispensable for pursuing their law studies.</p> <p>"II. Acquire specifically legal knowledge"</p> <p>The course enables students to acquire fundamental legal knowledge and transversal concepts across the different branches of law. It requires students to conceive of law as an organized and hierarchical system embedded within multiple legal orders (regional, federal, European, international).</p> <p>By the end of the course, students should be able to define a number of basic legal concepts (objective law, subjective right, juridicity, justiciability, direct effect, legal personality, norm, statute, regulation, etc.); to describe and identify the different legal orders; to explain the links between them; to list the various sources of law that make up these legal orders; and to present the main principles intended to ensure their coherence. In addition, students should master the secondary rules that articulate the different formal sources of law, and be able to apprehend law as a system.</p> <p>"IV. Acquire analytical, reflective, and argumentative skills from concrete situations"</p> <p>From this perspective, particular emphasis will be placed on legal language and reasoning. Students must assimilate the rigor and precision required by legal reasoning. They should also be able to explain the logic of legal reasoning based on normative texts, judicial decisions, and examples. Concretely, students should be able to illustrate principles taught in the course using examples and case law discussed in class and, conversely, to extract the principle that can be drawn from a court decision. They should also be able to navigate among the various normative texts cited or discussed in the course, and more specifically, to distinguish between the legal rule itself and the commentary surrounding it. Consulting and using normative texts and case law are therefore essential to constructing a coherent, justified, and well-argued legal reasoning.</p> <p>"V. Master written and oral communication in French"</p> <p>By the end of the course, students will, among other things, have acquired legal reflexes, developed the language of law, mastered and understood the fundamental legal concepts, and be capable of formulating a basic legal argument in French. They will also have benefited from an introduction to legal multilingualism through the translation of a significant number of "legal terms" in the course materials. This multilingual dimension is essential in a federal state where federated entities create law in different languages.</p>

Evaluation methods	<p>Type of assessment (and possible arrangements): written exam.</p> <p>Everything covered in the lectures is subject to examination, but only what was covered in the lectures. Consequently, the examples, normative texts, case law decisions, and other documents provided, mentioned, and/or discussed in class may form the basis, either directly or indirectly, of an exam question. The exam generally consists of one broad open-ended question, a series of comprehension, comparison, and definition questions, and sentences to be completed with precise legal terms.</p> <p>Language of assessment: French</p> <p>Assessment criteria: Knowledge of the subject matter and clarity of the written response.</p> <p>Additional information</p> <p>During the exam, students must have their collection of normative texts (Code Bac is preferred, or a personal compilation of all normative texts studied in class) and may also use the relevant annexes analyzed in class (which must be printed beforehand). These two documents, authorized for use during the exam, may only be annotated within the limits permitted and specified in the Code Bac, as reminded at the beginning of the syllabus.</p>
Teaching methods	<p>The course is lecture-based. The teaching of the themes and issues that make up the course content is accompanied by critical reflection. The course requires the active intellectual participation of students, who are encouraged to ask the instructor any general-interest questions that may arise during the lectures.</p> <p>A complete syllabus covering the material presented in class is available from the very first session of each semester.</p> <p>In addition, PowerPoint slides are provided to students as the course progresses and will be uploaded to Moodle. These are not mandatory course materials but are intended to support students in understanding and following the course.</p>
Content	<p>Concretely, the course follows the outline below:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction: defining the scope of the course <i>Sources and Principles of Law</i> 2. Legal rules 3. Sources of the international legal order 4. Sources of the national legal order 5. Conflicts of laws 6. Persons and property 7. Subjective rights 8. The function of judging <p>The <i>Sources and Principles of Law</i> course should not be understood as a succession of self-contained parts, disconnected from one another. Throughout the course, instructors demonstrate that law is a whole — coherent, structured, articulated — and that connections must be drawn between the different areas addressed. The course therefore cannot be perceived in a purely linear fashion.</p> <p>While the course is essentially a law course and describes and explains the legal system from a positivist perspective, it also embraces an interdisciplinary approach. Law is porous; it cannot be understood in isolation. It benefits from being illuminated by the human and social sciences — sociology, history, philosophy, political science — which reveal its social, political, and symbolic stakes. This articulation between legal knowledge and other academic knowledge lies at the heart of the educational project at UCLouvain Saint-Louis Brussels.</p> <p>The university, as an institution, also distinguishes itself from other forms of education by its ambition not only to train legal technicians, but also jurists capable of understanding, questioning, and thinking about law. It emphasizes long-term learning, based on reading, analysis, argumentation, and reasoned discussion. The development of a critical perspective, the ability to justify legal reasoning, and openness to the complexity of social situations are integral parts of the training. As recalled in the <i>Manifesto for Legal Education</i> of Saint-Louis University (https://www.usaintlouis.be/fr/pdf/ALaUne/manifeste__final.pdf), the objective is to train “free and responsible jurists.”</p> <p>This project is also structured around three pillars specific to our Faculty of Law: strong interdisciplinarity, fostering dialogue between law and other disciplines; a multilingual orientation, enabling students to grasp legal issues in different linguistic and cultural contexts; and finally, a constant link to practice, through internships, legal clinics, and partnerships with the professional world.</p> <p>Finally, as a reflective and symbolic conclusion, the course ends with the reading of a legal tale written by Professor François Ost, entitled <i>A Law for Noah’s Ark?</i> (« Un droit pour l’arche de Noé ? ») Through this contemporary fable, the author offers a meditation on the purposes of law, its role in a world in crisis, and its capacity to accommodate the diversity of living beings. This story, taken from the book <i>Si le droit m’était conté</i> (Dalloz, 2019), provides a narrative synthesis of the issues discussed throughout the course and invites students to think of law differently: as a language, a collective construction, and a story.</p>
Inline resources	During the four-month period, PowerPoint presentations and certain accompanying texts, where applicable, will be made available to students via Moodle.
Bibliography	Aucune
Other infos	None
Faculty or entity in charge	DRTB

Programmes containing this learning unit (UE)				
Program title	Acronym	Credits	Prerequisite	Learning outcomes
Bachelor in Law (shift schedule)	DRDB1BA	7		
Bachelor in Law [Dual Bachelor's degree for the holder of a Bachelor in Economics and Management]	DROB1BA	7		