


**This learning unit is not open to incoming exchange students!**

Teacher(s)	Frison Christine ;Sibony Anne-Lise ;
Language :	French
Place of the course	Louvain-la-Neuve
Prerequisites	French. Passive knowledge of English and Dutch is necessary for reading texts in English and Dutch.
Main themes	<p>The aim of this course is to introduce students to the methodologies of legal research in order to prepare them for the dissertation seminar and their final dissertation. After a general introduction explaining why it is important to learn about legal research methods, we will cover the following points:</p> <p>What are the main theoretical trends in law (legal positivism; natural law; realism and sociology of law; critical theory of law; etc.)?</p> <p>What are the different legal research methodologies? Positivist methodology; empirical methodology (quantitative or qualitative: surveys, interviews, focus groups, participant observation, etc.); methodological pluralism; comparative approach; interdisciplinary approach, etc.</p> <p>How do you formulate an original and relevant research question?</p> <p>How do you choose a research methodology suited to your research question and apply it scientifically and rigorously?</p> <p>How to carry out exhaustive documentary research, including sources of international and foreign law, using the relevant databases?</p> <p>How do you write a solid argument, following a well-structured plan, in order to answer your research question as convincingly as possible?</p> <p>Is there such a thing as scientific neutrality? If not, what are the criteria for scientific recognition?</p> <p>What ethical criteria must research meet? How can these ethical criteria be respected?</p> <p>How should references be written to meet the requirements of legal methodology, including international and foreign sources and sources from disciplines other than law?</p> <p>How should a complex bibliography be structured, involving a large number of references and a diversity of types of sources?</p> <p>As these elements cut across all legal disciplines, mastering them is an essential part of training lawyers.</p>
Learning outcomes	
Evaluation methods	The assessment will take the form of a multiple-choice questionnaire. Sample questions will be provided during the semester. Depending on the number of students enrolled in the second session, this may take the form of an oral exam.
Teaching methods	<p>This course is based on an active teaching method with a strong interactive and practical dimension. Students participate actively in three ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• by taking part in class discussions based on compulsory readings (class sessions)</li> <li>• by carrying out practical activities alone, in pairs or in small groups, in class (practical sessions) or between classes. These exercises will enable you to put into practice the different methodologies seen in class.</li> <li>• by correcting exercises carried out by another student using a correction grid that will be provided.</li> </ul>
Content	<p>The course consists of 13 two-hour sessions.</p> <p>During the first session, we will present the course content and lay the groundwork for thinking about what legal research is. The second session will focus on the criteria for writing a good law thesis. During this session, a round table discussion will be organized with several faculty advisors to clarify expectations regarding the thesis. During the third session, we will address the question of the perspective to adopt in a thesis and discuss the possibility of remaining neutral. The fourth and fifth sessions, presented by Pierre Walckiers, will help you navigate the different approaches to law. The sixth and seventh sessions will then be dedicated to the essential methodological elements for writing a good thesis, based on seven essential methodological elements. The eighth session will introduce empirical approaches, with a presentation by Professor Arthur Dyèvre. The ninth session will focus on writing the introduction and outline of the thesis. During the tenth session, we will explore comparative law with Sofia Vandebosch. The eleventh session will introduce interdisciplinarity in legal research. The twelfth session will offer practical advice for writing your thesis, with a focus on the use of artificial intelligence and ChatGPT. Finally, the thirteenth session will be devoted to exam preparation.</p>

<p>Inline resources</p>	<p>Students will have online access to various readings for this course: books to which the library provides electronic access and articles posted on Moodle.</p>
<p>Bibliography</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ch. Jamin et Ph. Jestaz, <i>La doctrine</i>, Dalloz, Coll. Méthodes du droit, Paris 2004</li> <li>• H. Dumont, A. Bailleux, "Esquisse d'une théorie des ouvertures interdisciplinaires accessibles aux juristes", <i>Droit et Société</i>, 75/2010, pp. 275 et seq.</li> <li>• V. Champeil-Desplats, <i>Théorie générale des droits et libertés</i>, Paris, Dalloz, 2019</li> <li>• V. Champeil-Desplats, <i>Méthodologies du droit et des sciences du droit</i>, Paris, Dalloz, 2022</li> <li>• O. Corten, <i>Méthodologie du droit international public</i>, Brussels, Editions de l'ULB, 2009.</li> <li>• L. Kestemont, <i>Handbook on legal methodology: from objective to method</i>, Intersentia, 2018 (accessible via StradaLex)</li> <li>• M. Van Hoecke, "Preface" and "Legal Doctrine: Which Method(s) for What Kind of Discipline?", in M. Van Hoecke (ed.), <i>Methodologies of Legal Research: what kind of method for what kind of discipline?</i>, Hart Publishing, 2013, pp. 1-18.</li> <li>• Uwe Kischel, <i>Comparative Law</i>, OUP 2019</li> <li>• Taekema, S., &amp; Van Der Burg, W., <i>Contextualising Legal Research: A Methodological Guide</i>, Edward Elgar Publishing, 2024</li> </ul>
<p>Other infos</p>	<p>The main aim of this course is to better equip students for the dissertation support seminar and the dissertation itself. In this sense, the assessment of learning from this course will be fully realised during the assessment of the research note (at the end of the dissertation support seminar) and the dissertation itself. The MCQ is designed to assess the acquisition of a basic foundation that will be put to good use later on.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan for reading time (knowing that you may need more time for readings in English or Dutch)</li> <li>• Read the assigned materials very carefully</li> <li>• Come to class (both lectures and practical sessions)</li> <li>• Be prepared to participate in class discussions and practical exercises.</li> <li>• Read critically and think comparatively: write down the questions you would like to raise in class and think critically about the sources and arguments analysed. Are the arguments convincing or not? Why or why not?</li> <li>• Engage in discussions with colleagues outside the classroom, help each other.</li> </ul>
<p>Faculty or entity in charge</p>	<p>DRT</p>

<b>Programmes containing this learning unit (UE)</b>				
Program title	Acronym	Credits	Prerequisite	Learning outcomes
Master [120] in Law	<a href="#">DROI2M</a>	2		