



STUDY PROGRAMME

(1) European Legal Studies Programme

(2) Transatlantic Affairs

ASSIGNMENT

Master's Thesis

ACADEMIC YEAR

2020 - 2021

NATURE OF ASSIGNMENT

Compulsory

SUPERVISING PROFESSOR

The professor of one of the compulsory courses, seminars or compact seminars that the student is attending

ECTS CREDITS

15

1. OBJECTIVES OF THE ASSIGNMENT

The Master's thesis must represent the student's original and autonomous effort of legal research and writing at an advanced level, comparable to what is required for a law review article. It is an assignment that demands advanced skills of legal research, critical legal thinking, legal analysis, and original informed opinion-making on a relevant topic.

2. DESCRIPTION OF THE ASSIGNMENT

Each student has to write a Master's thesis of minimum 12.000 to maximum 15.000 words (about 40 pages) relating to one of his/her compulsory courses, seminars or compact seminars, followed by an oral defence.

The student is required to formally attend the compulsory course, seminar, or compact seminar in which he/she is writing his/her Master's thesis. For the compact seminar, this means that the student should complete the requirements to receive the relevant certificate of attendance.

Writing a Master's thesis in a compulsory course or seminar does not affect in any way the student's responsibilities with regards to the said compulsory course or seminar. Please refer to the ECTS card of the relevant compulsory course or seminar for more information on its structure and method of evaluation.



3. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The assignment objectives tie in with the following learning outcomes of the programme **European Legal Studies** :

- 1.1. Possess advanced knowledge of the European Union (EU), its institutions, competences, substantive principles and legal doctrines
- 1.2. Possess general knowledge on the main elements of the EU's law and policy at large
- 1.3. Possess in-depth, scientific knowledge on specific areas of EU law
- 1.5. Know and understand the main elements of legal methodology, including correct referencing and responsible use of source materials
- 2.1. Be able to think analytically, correctly analysing complex legal problems in a multi-level legal order, the various sources of law, legal instruments and actors, and to formulate a scientifically sound position on the basis of logical reasoning
- 2.2. Be able to think dynamically, to understand the constantly changing and evolving nature of the European integration process and to provide constructive commentary on its possible future development
- 2.3. Be able to think critically, formulating an independent opinion and interpretation of complex legal problems, contextualising findings and weighing a multitude of different factors, including findings from other disciplines
- 2.4. Be able to process a large amount of information within a short amount of time and to deliver accurate and reflective outcomes
- 2.5. Be able to work with primary sources of law, such as judgments and legislation, and to reflect independently on their significance and interpretation
- 2.6. Be able to work in a multi-cultural context, understanding and mediating different legal systems, legal traditions and normative frameworks in a constructive way
- 2.7. Be able to develop, research, discuss and critically answer questions regarding a scientific research question of EU law in a scientifically responsible way
- 2.8. Have a pro-active attitude towards self-development, through self-study, lifelong learning and professional growth, particularly through preparatory reading for group discussion in the courses
- 2.9. Draft a clear legal scientific text in the area of EU law
- 2.10. Present and defend orally an issue relating to EU law on the basis of legal argumentation or a personal position
- 2.11. Be able to study and work in the area of EU law in English and French, including through interaction with native speakers

The course objectives tie in with the following learning outcomes of the programme **Transatlantic Affairs** :

- 1.1 The graduate masters the most important theoretical approaches and concepts of, depending on his or her disciplinary focus, Economics, International Relations and Diplomacy Studies, Legal Studies and/or Political Science relevant for the analysis of transatlantic affairs.
- 1.2 The graduate can describe, explain and illustrate the current state of scientific research in the field of transatlantic affairs in a broad sense and, is, in line with his or her disciplinary focus, able to critically assess the results of this research.
- 1.3 The graduate has good knowledge of, depending on his or her disciplinary focus, the political and/or legal systems, the decision-making processes, the economic structures and the main internal and external policies of the European Union and the United States.
- 1.4 The graduate has insights into historical, political, legal and economic aspects of transatlantic



affairs as well as into those policy areas that are of essential importance to transatlantic affairs. He or she can use these insights to contextualize and interpret new developments.

1.5 The graduate is able to incorporate knowledge and understanding of various fields of transatlantic affairs and of different related disciplines (such as Economics, International Relations, Legal Studies, Political Science) as well as to adopt both a European and a US perspective on transatlantic affairs.

2.1 The graduate can approach the field of transatlantic affairs in a broad sense analytically by assessing the challenges in this domain with an open mind for diversity and for complex situations.

2.2 The graduate has the ability to critically reflect upon problems regarding an extensive range of transatlantic affairs, to adopt well-informed points of view and to communicate them effectively orally and in writing, whether working independently or in a team.

2.3 The graduate can independently transform complex transatlantic issues into a research question within the broader field of transatlantic affairs and, depending on his or her disciplinary focus, find, select and critically assess relevant sources, answer the question using appropriate concepts and methods and present the research results in line with the ethical rules of the chosen discipline.

2.4 The graduate is capable of processing a large amount of information and appropriately analyse relevant sources depending on his or her disciplinary focus within a short period of time and of suggesting possible actions that contribute to problem-solving in a creative way.

2.5 The graduate has the intellectual maturity and skills to take responsibilities and function autonomously in a professional environment at national or international level, and especially in a transatlantic context, and to work efficiently and effectively through planning, organizing, setting priorities, meeting deadlines, cooperating across cultural boundaries and networking.

4. PROCEDURE

The student has the opportunity to discuss with his/her Master's thesis Supervising Professor throughout the academic year. These discussions focus on the research questions and methodology to be followed.

Students should be active in seeking supervision. It is their responsibility to contact the Academic Assistant responsible for the compulsory course, seminar or compact seminar when they need further guidance or feedback from the Supervising Professor.

The student may not submit for substantive scrutiny any part of the final work to his/her Supervising Professor or to the Academic Assistant responsible for the relevant compulsory course, seminar or compact seminar at any point before submission of the final work. Extracts already (pre-)evaluated by the Supervising Professor and/or the Academic Assistant should not appear in the final work.

5. EVALUATION METHOD

The Master's thesis will be orally defended in the final exam session in the presence of the Supervising Professor and the Academic Assistant responsible for the specific compulsory course, seminar or compact seminar. The Master's thesis defence should allow the student, the Supervising Professor and the Academic Assistant to further demonstrate, scrutinise and develop insights and skills.

The student's final grade for his/her Master's thesis is based on the written paper submitted and the oral defence.



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ECTS CARD

The student may not compensate with his/her overall yearly academic performance for a grade lower than 11. A new Master's thesis must be submitted within the relevant deadlines.

6. COVID-19

The College of Europe reserves the right to change the delivery and assessment of the course in case of restrictions related to the Covid-19 pandemic. Any communication from the Department in this regard takes precedence over the information provided in this ECTS card.