

COURSE ORGANIZATION AND TEACHING GUIDELINES

The IISL's International Master's in Sociology of Law consists of 2 components. First, students attend intensive taught courses from the end of September until late March. Each course lasts for 2 weeks. Second, students must submit a 15,000 word research thesis at the beginning of September.

The following guidelines provide information concerning teaching on the taught coursework component of the programme. There are separate guidelines concerning the supervision and grading of assessment.

COURSE CONTENT

The programme aims to introduce students to the main themes of contemporary sociology of law. The design of courses should be neither too narrow nor too ambitious. We welcome material relating to your own research, however, a course should also provide a general coverage of the topic. It is also important to include different perspectives which have had an important influence on the topic, even if you are critical of them.

Please also try to bear in mind what other courses may be covering. So that you do not overlap too much, teachers can access each other's course materials via Moodle.

Our students come from a wide range of geographical backgrounds, and we ask that you bear in mind this cultural diversity when selecting material.

STUDENTS' WORKLOAD

Students are expected to complete 75 hours of work for each course. Courses usually run for 2 weeks, with teaching normally involving a 2 hour daily seminar, totalling 20 hours of face-to-face teaching for each course. In addition, teachers may schedule individual tutorials with students, e.g. to discuss their assignments. The remaining 50-55 hours should be divided between reading and preparing for class (about 40 hours, or 4 hours per day), and coursework assignments (10-15 hours).

MOODLE

The IISL provides students access to all teaching materials via the learning platform Moodle. This will allow you to directly download materials onto Moodle. Alternatively, we can upload material for you (email rakel@iisj.es / ainhoaba@iisj.es).

New teachers who are yet to be assigned a username can still logon to Moodle. For instance, it may be useful for new teachers to get an idea of other course designs and types of assessments by looking at the 2019-2020 course materials. To access this, please contact Rakel and/or Ainhoa (email rakel@iisj.es / ainhoaba@iisj.es).

COMPULSORY AND NON-COMPULSORY READINGS

We ask that you set compulsory readings for your course. Compulsory readings should be limited to a maximum of **45 pages per day**, e.g. 2 articles or book chapters. The required readings will be made available on Moodle, and are also provided to the professor, if requested.

Course teachers may also recommend additional reading. Students are not expected to have read the non-compulsory readings; however, they may be useful to allow a student to expand their knowledge of a topic, or to assist with preparing assessments. Non-compulsory readings are also made available on Moodle.

Teachers are asked to send their reading lists to the IISL by **15 May 2020**. This is necessary so that the library can acquire copies of readings if needed. Preparing readings is time consuming, and so changes to the reading list cannot be made at short notice. In particular, changes cannot be made to the compulsory reading list during the actual course.

TEACHING

Teaching is done in English. Students will have a proficiency in English, but this can vary. In exceptional cases a professor may agree to accept a written assignment in another language.

Students come from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds, and so it is important that you do not assume too much prior knowledge. Many will have a first degree in law, but have little knowledge of social science, while some may have studied little or no law but have a grounding in social science.

The face-to-face teaching consists of 20 hours of seminars held each morning **from 9:00am to 11:00am**. Seminars normally involve a mix of presentations by the teacher and class discussion. The seminar room has a laptop and projector, as well as a whiteboard and flip-chart, and other equipment may be available if needed.

Students complete evaluations at the end of each course, and some suggestions for the seminars from previous years include:

- Discussing required readings in class so that students can understand how the reading links to the topic;
- Managing class discussions so that they are not dominated by the most fluent students. A suggested method is to include questions on the reading lists and assign specific students the day before to prepare answers;
- Use of slides is especially appreciated by students from non-English backgrounds. Students also appreciate the slides being made available prior to class.

Lecturers are expected to be available for students. We ask that you set aside 1.5 hours per day from Monday to Friday for student consultation.

ASSESSMENT

Deadlines

The final deadline for assessments is 06:00pm on the Saturday evening following the end of the course. Extensions can only be given in **exceptional circumstances** and must be agreed with the Scientific Director. The deadline allows students to start each course afresh, which is essential considering the intensive nature of the programme.

Submission

Coursework submission is done via email/Moodle. Correction can be also done via Moodle, although we can send you electronic copies of the coursework, or print out essays and send them on to you.

Types of assessment

There is no set template for assessment, and instead assessment should be appropriate to each individual course. Class participation must make up at least 10% of the total grade. Examples of some previous assessments include:

- Class participation (10%), oral presentation (30%), essay of 2,500 words (60%);
- Class participation (10%), learning diary consisting of notes on readings and class discussions (2000 words, 45%), essay of 2,000 words (45%)
- Class participation (10%), group exercise, with all members of a group given the same grade (45%), essay of 2,000 words (45%);
- Class participation (10%), oral presentation (25%), exam given on the last day of the course (65%);
- Class participation (10%), essay of 4000 words (90%).

The word length of written assessments can vary, however, 4,000 words is the absolute maximum. Assessment should be formative, i.e. develop students' critical understanding of a topic, rather than merely summative, i.e. to test what has been learned.

Lecturers must clearly specify the assessment scheme in the course outline. It cannot be changed during the course.

Non-Attendance and lateness

Students are expected to attend the seminars and other sessions, submit coursework and participate in all courses. Students are also expected to attend classes on time, and course teachers are entitled to impose a penalty for persistent late attendance. Any absence for any reason must be explained to the course teacher and the Scientific Director, preferably in advance (e.g. by email). A course teacher can penalise, including giving a Fail grade, any student who fails to attend or participate in a course.

PERSONNEL

- Susana Arrese is the Coordinator for the Masters programme (susana@iisj.es)
- Rakel Lizarralde and Ainhoa Baños oversee Moodle and the library (rakel@iisj.es / ainhoaba@iisj.es)
- Noé Cornago is the current Scientific Director (noecornago@iisj.es)
- Maite Elorza is the Administrative Director (m.elorza@iisj.es)

Grading of Courses and Master’s Theses

The mark awarded to each student for a course, as well as the thesis, should be a numerical grade out of 10. This corresponds to a 4-band scale (apart from Fail). As an international Institute, we need to ensure comparability of grades with systems used in various different countries. To ensure this, we apply the European Credit Transfer System’s methodology for grade comparability, explained in the Guidelines issued by the European Commission in 2009. This requires each institution to analyse the grades awarded over a number of years (minimum of 2), according to the 4 bands suggested by the ECTS: top 10% (A), next 25% (B), next 30% (C), next 25% (D). On the basis of our analysis in 2009 of 18 years of examination of theses, and the previous 3 years of coursework, the 4 bands which have been used in the Institute do correspond, broadly speaking, to this distribution.

IISL Grading Scheme and ECTS Equivalence

Numerical grade	Criteria	Spanish equivalent	ECTS equivalent
9.6-10	Excellent, outstanding, of publishable quality	Matrícula de honor	A top 10%
8.6-9.5	Very Good, only minor limitations or errors	Sobresaliente	B next 25%
7-8.5	Good, above average standard, some limitations or errors	Notable	C next 30%
5-6.9	Satisfactory, generally sound, a number of limitations or errors	Aprobado	D next 25%
0-4.9	Inadequate research, significant limitations and errors	Suspense	

Examiners are asked to award grades bearing in mind the normal distribution. This means that when deciding which grade to award, you should ask yourself where, in your experience of this type of a one-year Master’s, you would place this particular piece of coursework or thesis. Thus, it is irrelevant whether in your own system you would never award even the best student a mark of 100%, you should give a mark between 9.6 and 10 to a piece of work which you rate in the top 10% for this type of work. Similarly, even if in your system a D (or a mark below 6/10) would normally be considered a Fail, you should award a 5 or 5.5 for a piece of work or a thesis which you rate as a Pass but in the bottom range.

Normally, grades should be a whole or half integer (i.e. 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10; or 5.5, 6.5 etc), unless there is a very good reason for a more subtle variation (e.g. 6.8).