



OÑATI INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE
FOR THE SOCIOLOGY OF LAW

—
OÑATIKO LEGE-SOZIOLOGIAKO
NAZIOARTEKO ERAKUNDEA

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INSTITUTO INTERNACIONAL
DE SOCIOLOGÍA JURÍDICA DE OÑATI

INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS: COURSE ORGANISATION & ASSESSMENT

The IISL's International Master's in Sociology of Law consists of two components. First, students attend intensive courses from generally the last week of September until the last week of March. Second, students work on their Master's thesis projects from usually beginning of April to late July. Written or oral defences take place in early September.

This document provides information for students regarding the organisation of the course programme and the related requirements.

Teaching hours and workload

A course worth 3 ECTS typically consists of ten teaching sessions of two hours each given over a period of two weeks (Monday to Friday, i.e., ten working days), adding up to 20 contact hours in class. One-week courses on methods worth 1,5 ECTS run over half of that period (five working days). Variations of this formula are possible, depending on the needs of teachers, the occurrence of public holidays or special events. The Master Coordination Team will provide you with the exact timetable of each course.

Teachers will, to a certain extent, be available also beyond teaching hours and you may approach them for feedback or advice, e.g., regarding your course assignments or ideas for your thesis research.

3 ECTS translate into 75 hours of work for students in a two-week course, of which 20 hours are spent in class and a little more in consultation with the teacher. The remaining 55 hours should be divided between reading and preparing for class (about 40 hours, or 4 hours per day), and coursework assignments (about 15 hours in total).

Attendance requirements and deadlines

Attendance of course units is mandatory. Students are generally expected to attend all the classes of all courses, including lectures, seminars, and special sessions. Students are expected to arrive to class on time, and course teachers are entitled to impose a penalty for persistent late coming.

Absences have to be justified (e.g., sickness) and should be notified to the course teacher and the Master's Coordination Team, preferably in advance (e.g., by email). A course teacher can penalise any student who fails to regularly attend class, up to a failed grade. Extended absences have to be notified and explained to the Scientific Director, including providing evidence of the stated reason for the student's absence (e.g., a medical certificate).

Active participation during teaching hours and in class-related learning activities is required to successfully pass the course modules. This includes, among others, studying the assigned readings, taking part in course exercises and discussions, and submitting required assignments in time.

The **deadline** for submitting final course essays is always 23:00 o'clock (11:00 pm) of the Saturday following the conclusion of the respective course. Late submission of course essays



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may be penalised by the course teacher. Students who are absent from class or fail to submit assignments for a good reason (e.g., sickness) may be able to submit an alternative piece of assessment subject to approval by the Scientific Director.

Spanish grading scale

According to the Spanish grading scale, the grade awarded to a student should be a numerical grade out of 10, with 5.0 being the passing mark.

There is no direct equivalence between the Spanish grading scale and the ECTS grading scale (European Credit Transfer System). However, this table may give international students some orientation as to how the Spanish grading scale may translate into the ECTS grading scale.

Spanish Grading Scale		ECTS Grading Scale			
Grade	Range		Grade	Percent	Description
Sobresaliente (SB)	9.0-10.0	~	A	10%	Excellent – outstanding performance with only minor errors
Notable (NT)	8.5-8.9	~	B	25%	Very good – above the average standard but with some errors
	7.0-8.4	~	C	30%	Good – generally sound work with a number of notable errors
Aprobado (AP)	6.0-6.9	~	D	25%	Satisfactory – fair but with significant shortcomings
	5.0-5.9	~	E	10%	Sufficient – performance meets the minimum criteria
Suspenso (SS)	2.5-4.9	~	FX		Fail – some more work is required before the credit can be awarded
	0.0-2.4	~	F		Fail – considerable further work is required

Thesis research seminar

Parallel to the individual courses taught by visiting faculty, the Scientific Director offers a weekly thesis research seminar, which provides students with the opportunity to reflect on research design and methodology, and to develop a proposal for their thesis research projects. The thesis seminar may include exercises, such as analysing existing Master's theses, completing a first literature review or similar. It works as a supplement to the individual courses, from which



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thesis research projects may arise, and ends with the last course in March. By then, students are also expected to submit their thesis research proposals, which are assessed and graded by the Scientific Director.

Implications of failed subjects

The degree is conferred on the basis of course credits, a Master's thesis and the defence of the thesis. Candidates must obtain at least a passing mark ("aprobado") in every course module in order to be awarded the degree.

If students fail a course module after the last assessment is completed, they will have a chance to make up for this during the course programme, e.g., by once having the chance to resubmit the final course essay within a period of two weeks after notification of the course results. As this means that you would have less time to focus on the following course, resubmission of essays is not a regular option but an exceptional one subject to approval by the Scientific Director.

A candidate must normally pass all the course modules before being allowed to proceed to writing the thesis. The degree can only be awarded when all components of the Master's programme have been successfully completed.

If students miss or fail one or more courses, even after a "second call" has been arranged, they will have to wait for the following academic year to retake the course, which usually will incur additional fees. In exceptional well-justified cases, the Scientific Director may allow a candidate to proceed to writing the thesis if a course has been missed or failed, with the missing course credits having to be completed in the following academic year, before the degree can be awarded.

If candidates have not fulfilled their financial obligations to the Institute or to the University of the Basque Country (UPV/EHU), course credits may be withheld and the degree not be awarded.

Good academic practice, plagiarism and AI

All written work submitted has to comply with the standards of good academic practice, especially as regards use and citation of sources. **All sources must be properly cited, and any quotations must be clearly marked as such. Failure to mark quotations or cite sources may be treated as plagiarism (passing off the work of another as one's own).** Sanctions for bad academic practice or plagiarism include downgrading, failing the course, and, in serious cases, exclusion from the Master's programme / expulsion from the University.

In the coursework, the use of unauthorised aids is considered as cheating. At the IISL, the use of **ChatGPT or other AI-based software** by students, e.g., in preparing essays, is generally not allowed. Exceptions may be made by teachers who explicitly permit the use of ChatGPT or other AI-based software as an exercise. However, as a default these are considered as unauthorised aids. This specifically concerns any use of text-generative software in examinations and performance components that count into the grade, even if the text as such is revised.



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A teacher or examiner who identifies or suspects bad academic practice or plagiarism should report the matter to the Scientific Director, who may investigate by any means considered appropriate. If a prima facie case is found, the student will be notified of the details and given an opportunity to explain; the student may be accompanied by a friend or adviser. The decision on the grade to be awarded or penalty will be taken by the Scientific Director and, depending on circumstances and the severity of the case, reported to the Academic Committee of the Master's programme.

Other forms of misconduct

The IISL is strongly committed to respect for and to protection of gender, religious, and cultural diversity. Any incident of inappropriate and unprofessional behaviour on behalf of faculty, staff or students in this regard will be followed up by the IISL leadership, who will be able to take further steps, such as informing local authorities in consultation with the affected persons.

Serious cases of students' misbehaviour that occur in class or outside shall be reported to and will be addressed by the Scientific Director, who can decide on appropriate sanctions. This may – in severe cases and after consultation with the students' representatives – include requiring a student to move out of the Residence or excluding the student from the Masters' programme.

Certificates for coursework

Students who need a (preliminary) certificate of their completed coursework (e.g., for grant applications), should check with the Master Coordination Team whether the data are already included in the filing system of the UPV/EHU, from which the students may be able to request study transcripts on their own. If this is not (yet) the case, they can ask for a certificate from the IISL for those courses that they have successfully passed and the ECTS they have accumulated.

Students who obtain credits for some or all required courses, but whose Master's is not submitted or not approved, will likewise be able to obtain a study transcript from UPV/EHU once the grades are available in its filing system. Alternatively, they can request a document from the IISL certifying that they have completed the coursework of the programme with the relevant number of ECTS obtained.

Course evaluations

At the end of each course, students will be asked to provide an anonymous evaluation of the course instructor and the learning activities. This helps document the quality of the programme and spot difficulties in its provision. Given that the IISL works with changing, mostly international faculty and regularly updates its course programme, the students' experiences and feedback are essential for decisions about visiting faculty recruitment and course offers in future academic years.