

60740 - Professional Communication in English

Información del Plan Docente

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| Academic Year | 2017/18 |
| Faculty / School | 102 - Facultad de Derecho |
| Degree | 522 - Master's in Legal Practice |
| ECTS | 3.0 |
| Year | 1 |
| Semester | Second semester |
| Subject Type | Compulsory |
| Module | --- |

1.General information

1.1.Introduction

Brief presentation of the course

English is the *lingua franca* in the context of globalization. Furthermore, a specialised English jargon for the legal and business world, the so-called "International Legal English", is characterised by its peculiar range of vocabulary, grammatical specialities, and particular idioms and expressions. The course aims to introduce to the students of this Masters' Program to the essential vocabulary used in the main areas of legal practice and to offer them the essential discursive keys of such jargon.

The course is divided into different topics structured according to the detailed program established in this syllabus/teaching guide.

1.2.Recommendations to take this course

Apart from the fact that the accreditation of some knowledge of English (level B1) according to the European Common Reference Framework for Modern Languages constitutes a compulsory requirement for accessing to this Master's Program, it is advisable that the student has an upper level (as high as possible) in English because of the degree of specialisation of both vocabulary and the subject-matter which is going to be studied.

Students shall be willing to increase their general knowledge of English by means of the reading and listening of materials in English (press, movies in original version), as well as they should be ready to read and write weekly short texts related to Legal English.

1.3.Context and importance of this course in the degree

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Context and meaning of the course in the Masters' Program :

The course is taught in the Second Term of the First Year of the Masters' Program. It is part of the module of compulsory courses and it takes 3 ECTS. Taking and passing this course allows students to fulfil Art. 10 of the Regulation to the Act No. 34/2006, whose target consists of students being able to "develop skills which allow them to increase the efficiency of their tasks as lawyers ... by means of ... the knowledge of languages".

The course has its own relevance within the frame of the Masters' Program and there is no need to connect or coordinate it with the rest of the courses, as far as the Bachelor in Law is already indebted to all its contents.

1.4.Activities and key dates

Key course activities will be announced in advance by lecturers according to the proposed schedule

2.Learning goals

2.1.Learning goals

In order to pass this course, students shall give evidence of the following outcomes...

- 1: The student is able to understand spoken and written English in several close-to-reality contexts as the ones which usually meet Legal Professionals in their day-to-day tasks (i.e., speeches, discussions, interviews and presentations on a legal topic).
- 2: The student is able to read and understand specialised texts in English (legislation, contracts, proceedings, companies' documents and legal opinions).
- 3: The student is able to identify and to read general materials (such as handbooks) on the different areas of the professional activity of a lawyer.
- 4: The student is able to write letters, memoranda and drafts within a legal scope.
- 5: The student is able to apply basic oral communications skills in a professional legal context.

2.2.Importance of learning goals

Relevance of the learning outcomes to be achieve in the course :

The knowledge on Legal English extends and increases the geographical range of the cases and the clients of the legal professional and improves the future lawyers' ability to face legal disputes arising in an open and multicultural society. The training and specialisation in Legal English allows learners to access more and better sources of information which may be useful for the preparation and solution of legal problems.

3. Aims of the course and competences

3.1. Aims of the course

The course and the expected outcomes respond to the following approach and aims:

The main aim of this course is to allow to the student of this Masters' Program of Legal Practice to have a first approach to the vocabulary and the main topics of Legal English, which are usually reflected in the more relevant areas of the legal practice. It is about the students being able to identify typical and usual legal institutions and concepts in English and to develop their professional activity in a transnational linguistic environment. In order to do so, students are going to be able to handle the basics of the legal terminology corresponding to the main subject-matter and the most common topics of Legal English.

3.2. Competences

At the end of the course, students should be able to...

- 1: Communicate orally with colleagues in English using the specific essential vocabulary corresponding to the different areas of professional legal practice.
- 2: Write letters, memoranda and drafts within a legal scope.
- 3: Transfer the precise meaning of words in the context of diverse legal systems.
- 4: Distinguish the style of different formats and topics in the legal written communication.
- 5: Perform tasks showing security in protocol and applying the "golden rules" of transnational legal practice.

4. Assessment (1st and 2nd call)

4.1. Assessment tasks (description of tasks, marking system and assessment criteria)

Student shall give evidence of achievement of the expected learning outcomes by means of the following assessment activities:

- The assessment of the course fits the assessment system based on a **global exam** which takes place at the end of the regular teaching period. The global exam deals with all the contents of the program and it is structured in two parts:

(a) **A written exercise** , consisting of

1. A direct translation (English-Spanish) of a short text (i.e., legal provision, contractual term, a section of a judicial decision or of a legal opinion).

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2. An exercise on identification, comprehension and/or translation of specialised legal vocabulary.

For this part, students are not allowed to use any auxiliary materials. This part shall not take longer than 60 minutes.

(b) **An oral exercise**, consisting of a short presentation (3 to 5 minutes) done by the student of the law firm where he/she has developed his/her practical period in the master's program. The examiner may ask questions about the presentation. Maximal duration of the oral exercise per student will be 10 minutes.

The global mark in the course will depend on the average of the marks obtained in both exercises, being both 50 % worth. The average mark will not be given if a student does not attend and/or does not pass both exercises integrating the global exam.

- In the assessment of the exercises, the following criteria will be taken into account:

1. Accurate and precise use of specialised vocabulary.
2. Formal clarity and correction in writing and/or exposing the ideas.
3. Adequate use of communication skills.

5. Methodology, learning tasks, syllabus and resources

5.1. Methodological overview

The learning process designed for this course is based on:

The course combines theory and practice. This implies a close connection between the knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, and its use in the real practice. The methodology mixes the classical teaching model of a lecture (supported by text and materials) with practical exercises based on the reading, comprehension, direct translation, writing of texts and audio-visual materials, as well as the discussion among students, moderated and amended by lecturers. All these aspects will be completed by students' autonomous work outside the classroom.

5.2. Learning tasks

The learning process designed for this course is based on a set of formative and self-assessment activities, which are coherent with the expected learning outcomes and oriented towards the achievement of such outcomes. Depending on the English level accredited by the students, four subgroups will be formed in order to homogenise the teaching and the assessment criteria. This does not mean that the teaching materials are going to change according to the students' English level.

5.3.Syllabus

The course will address the following topics:

Topic 1: Common Law vs. Civil Law

Topic 2: EU Law

Topic 3: The Legal Profession

Topic 4: The Court System

Topic 5: Human Rights

Topic 6: Law of Contracts

Topic 7: Criminal Law

Topic 8: Intellectual Property Rights

Topic 9: Company Law

Topic 10: Antitrust and Distribution Law

Topic 11: Constitutional and Administrative Law

Topic 12: Issues of Continental Private Law

Topic 13: Public International Law

Topic 14: ICT Law

5.4.Course planning and calendar

Calendar of the classes and delivery of papers

Hereafter are listed the scheduled activities to be carried out in the classroom:

- Lectures supported by texts and materials of diverse nature (i.e., outlines, commented texts, conceptual maps, figures, glossaries).
- Exercises focusing on reading comprehension of original texts, identifying specialised vocabulary, idioms and

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grammatical structures.

- Listening exercises and short oral presentations of discussion points on a given set of facts.
- Exercises dealing with direct translation of short texts (i.e., contractual terms and conditions, legal provisions, parts of judicial decisions).
- Brief writing exercises (memoranda) to work on a given set of facts or on general normative issues.
- Conversation and one-to-one dialogues based on a given set of facts, moderated and amended by lecturers.

Obviously, the activities carried out in the classroom should be supported by autonomous and personal work done by the students, which is basic for the achievement of accurate learning outcomes. For this purpose reading and listening activities based on legal materials can be suggested by the lecturers.

5.5. Bibliography and recommended resources

BB Krois-Lindner, Amy; Firth, Matt: *Introduction to international legal English: a course for classroom or self-study use. Student's book*, Cambridge University Press, 2009.

BC Alcaraz Varó, Enrique: *El inglés jurídico*. Ariel Derecho, 6ª ed., 2007