

LSE: INTERNATIONAL LAW, CONTEMPORARY ISSUES

This course develops understanding of international affairs through the study of the legal frameworks which ostensibly govern them. It situates international law within the material and cultural conditions of international politics and equips students with the tools to think critically about the role of law in the pursuit of global public goods.

Our approach is problem-based rather than purely doctrinal, and we focus on topical, controversial and high-profile issues in international politics – including:

Legal controversies arising from the Syrian conflict

The annexation of Crimea and the 2003 use of force against Iraq

War crimes trials, such as those of Slobodan Milosevic and Saddam Hussein

Economic globalisation and international economic integration via, for example, the World Trade Organization (WTO) agreements

The promotion of human rights and environmental protection, with an emphasis on climate change.

Both lectures and classes are taught in a manner that encourages participation through role-plays, small group discussions, and question and answer sessions.

The course is not restricted to those with a background in law and typically draws students with an interest in international relations, global politics and global economic relations, as well as law.

Assessment*: One examination and one essay

Programme structure

The protection of the global environment

Possibilities and challenges of global economic integration

The use of force in international politics

The promotion and protection of human rights

International criminal law

The laws of war (international humanitarian law)

The right of colonised and other subjugated or oppressed peoples to self-determination

Course outcomes

Students will be given a solid grounding in the foundations of the international legal order.

However, the course will be problem-based, rather than doctrinal, and will focus on controversial and challenging issues in contemporary international politics – including the recent examples of the use of force, international economic integration, international criminal law and the promotion and protection of human rights.

Reading materials

There will be electronic resources for this course containing links to much of the essential reading. In addition, students should be sure to have individual access to both Evans (ed), *International Law*, 4th ed. (OUP: 2014), and Trebilcock, *Advanced Introduction to International Trade Law* (Edward Elgar, 2015).