University of St.Gallen

Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Autumn Semester 2021

7,358: Empirical Analysis of International Human Rights Law

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s
(binding regulations see below)
Decentral - examination paper written at home (in groups - all given the same grades) (30%)
Examination time: term time
Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (10%)
Examination time: term time
Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (50%)
Examination time: term time
Decentral - Presentation (individual) (10%)
Examination time: term time

Attached courses
Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer
7,358,1.00 Empirical Analysis of International Human Rights Law -- Englisch -- Altwicker Tilmann

Course information

Course prerequisites

No formal prerequisites. Students are expected to have a strong interest in international human rights law and are willing to participate actively in class. Though the course does not require any prior statistical training, it is expected that students are willing to familiarize themselves with basic statistical methods and their implementation in the programming language R during the course.

In addition, it is required for all participants to download R and R Studio before the course begins. The download procedure (including download links) is described here https://moderndive.netlify.app/1-getting-started.html. For a video on the installation see https://www.youtube.com/user/TheLearnR/featured.

Students are expected to bring a laptop (with R/R Studio ready) to each session.

Learning objectives

The course follows a rigorous integrated, hands-on, interdisciplinary approach. All students will participate (in groups) in hands-on problem solving using basic statistical methods in R. At the successful completion of the course, students will:

- have acquired / deepened their knowledge and understanding of key concepts and institutions of international human rights law;
- have learned about a range of quantitative methods and their application in the field of empirical legal studies;
- be able to read and to critically evaluate research articles dealing with empirical approaches to international human rights law;
- be able to employ simple quantitative methods in the human rights field using the appropriate software, to assess the validity of the results and the limitations of empirical approaches to human rights law.

Course content

What can we know empirically about international human rights law? Why are some states better human rights compliers? Are all human rights equal? Can decisions by international human rights courts be predicted? This course has two major aims: First, the course approaches questions of international human rights law from an empirical perspective. To this end, it provides an

overview of basic concepts and institutions of international human rights law, and influential studies dealing with questions of evidence-based international human rights law will be discussed. Second, the course provides an introduction to the innovative, emerging field of empirical legal studies. It aims to demonstrate how basic statistical methods (descriptive statistics, hypothesis testing, linear regression, logistic regression and text mining) can be gainfully applied to study international human rights law from an empirical perspective. The necessary methods will be taught in the course: statistical or programming skills are not a prerequisite.

Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

The course consists of six 4-hour sessions. The first session consists of an introduction to the course and 45-minute lecture on international human rights law and a 45-minute lecture on empirical legal studies. Each of the following sessions start with a lecture introducing a topic of international human rights law, statistical methods and their implementation in R. The lecture is followed by individual presentations of students (max. 15 minutes) and an in-class discussion.

Course literature

Textbook used for **empirical legal studies-part** of the lectures:

- Epstein, L./Martin, A.D., An Introduction to Empirical Legal Research, OUP 2014.

  Textbook used for the **statistics-/ R-part** of the lectures:

- Monogan, J.E., Political Analysis Using R, Springer 2015 (chs. 1-6),
- Field, A./Miles, J./Field, Z., Discovering Statistics Using R, Sage 2012 (particularly suitable for students with no prior statistical training) (chs. 1-9), (2nd ed. forthcoming 2021)
- Silge, J./Robinson, D., Text Mining with R, O'Reilly 2017 (chs. 3, 6).

A list of the required readings as well as additional reading will be available on StudyNet before the beginning of the course.

If you want to practice R before the course starts, the following websites (among others) provide online tutorials: https://www.statmethods.net/ or http://www.sthda.com/english/wiki/what-is-r-and-why-learning-r-programming.

If you are an absolute beginner in the field of statistics, the following book is a good read: Wheelan, C., Naked Statistics: Stripping the Dread from the Data, Norton, 2014.

Additional course information

In the case of the President's Board having to implement new directives due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic in AS2021, the course information listed above will be changed as follows:

- The course is conducted online via the platform ZOOM;
- The recordings of the course are available for 30 days;
- The lecturer informs via StudyNet on the changed implementation modalities of the course.

The examination information listed below would be changed as follows:

- The presentations are conducted online and are being recorded.

Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/4)

Examination time and form
Decentral - examination paper written at home (in groups - all given the same grades) (30%)
Examination time: term time

Remark
Theory-guided, quantitative analysis

Examination-aid rule
Term papers

Written work must be written without outside help according to the known citation standards, and a declaration of authorship must be attached, which is available as a template on the StudentWeb.

Documentation (quotations, bibliography, etc.) must be carried out universally and consistently according to the requirements of the chosen/specified citation standard such as e.g. APA or MLA.

The legal standard is recommended for legal work (cf. by way of example: FORSTMOSER, P., OGOREK R., SCHINDLER B., Juristisches Arbeiten: Eine Anleitung für Studierende (the latest edition in each case), or according to the recommendations of the Law School).

The reference sources of information (paraphrases, quotations, etc.) that has been taken over literally or in the sense of the original text must be integrated into the text in accordance with the requirements of the citation standard used. Informative and bibliographical notes must be included as footnotes (recommendations and standards e.g. in METZGER, C., Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien (latest edition)).

For all written work at the University of St.Gallen, the indication of page numbers is mandatory, regardless of the standard chosen. Where page numbers are missing in sources, the precise designation must be made differently: chapter or section title, section number, article, etc.

Supplementary aids

All statistical concepts and methods needed as well as the R Code will be explained in a lecture. In addition, students are advised to use the help of online tutorials (see above).

Examination languages
Question language: English
Answer language: English

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2. Examination sub part (2/4)

Examination time and form
Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (10%)
Examination time: term time

Remark
Presentation of the group work paper

Examination-aid rule
Presentations
In presentations, aids for visual presentation can be used. These aids can be specified or restricted by the lecturers.

Supplementary aids

Examination languages
Question language: English
Answer language: English

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3. Examination sub part (3/4)

Examination time and form
Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (50%)
Examination time: term time

Remark
Analysis of empirical journal article

Examination-aid rule
Term papers

Written work must be written without outside help according to the known citation standards, and a declaration of authorship must be attached, which is available as a template on the StudentWeb.

Documentation (quotations, bibliography, etc.) must be carried out universally and consistently according to the requirements of the chosen/specified citation standard such as e.g. APA or MLA.

The legal standard is recommended for legal work (cf. by way of example: FORSTMOSER, P., OGOREK R., SCHINDLER B., Juristisches Arbeiten: Eine Anleitung für Studierende (the latest edition in each case), or according to the recommendations of the Law School).

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Supplementary aids
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Examination languages
Question language: English
Answer language: English

4. Examination sub part (4/4)

Examination time and form
Decentral - Presentation (individual) (10%)
Examination time: term time

Remark
Presentation of the individual term paper

Examination-aid rule
Presentations
In presentations, aids for visual presentation can be used. These aids can be specified or restricted by the lecturers.

Supplementary aids
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Examination languages
Question language: English
Answer language: English

Examination content

Examination sub part 1 & 2

1)Group Paper: Each group (consisting of 4-5 students) prepares a short paper (max. 3'000 words incl. footnotes) on an empirical legal research question in the context of the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR), which can be answered using simple statistical methods in R. All papers need to adopt the following structure: "Introduction", "Data and Methods", "Results" and "Discussion". The "Introduction" and/or the "Discussion" should engage with the legal issues of the research question. Some

groups will collect their own data. In cases of more complex research questions, the data will be provided. The paper must be submitted to the lecturer on or before Monday, 6 December 2021 (midnight) by email as pdf attachment.

2)Group Presentation of the paper in class (15 min.).

Examination sub part 3 & 4:

3) Individual Paper: Each student submits an analysis paper on a journal article (dealing with the empirical analysis of international human rights law) (max. 3'000 words incl. footnotes). The papers need to provide a summary of the article and a critical examination of the data, methods used, results and discussion. All papers must explain the empirical methods used in the article and why they were used. The due dates (usually a week before each session) will be provided on Study.Net before the course starts.

4) Individual Presentation of the article in class (15 min.).

Active participation in class is expected.

Examination relevant literature

Slides and empirical journal articles presented by students (all distributed via StudyNet, in part at the beginning and in part during the course of the semester for each session).

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Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are is binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW51) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 42 are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 34 (Thursday, 26 August 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 42 (Monday, 18 October 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 42 (Monday, 18 October 2021);

Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before the end of the registration period in CW 45 (Monday, 8 November 2021).

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