

LW6100E: ADVANCED LEGAL RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Effective Term

Semester B 2024/25

Part I Course Overview

Course Title

Advanced Legal Research Methodology

Subject Code

LW - Law

Course Number

6100E

Academic Unit

School of Law (FL)

College/School

School of Law (FL)

Course Duration

One Semester

Credit Units

3

Level

P5, P6 - Postgraduate Degree

D8 - Professional Doctorate

R8 - Research Degree

Medium of Instruction

English

Medium of Assessment

English

Prerequisites

Nil

Precursors

Nil

Equivalent Courses

LW6700/LW8700D/LW8709D Advanced Legal Research Methodology

LW6700 and LW8700D are the old course codes for LW8709D

Exclusive Courses

LW6703 Globalisation and Legal Research Methodology

Part II Course Details

Abstract

This course aims to develop the students' ability to conduct research at an advanced level. The skills taught will have a wide application to both scholarly inquiry and problem solving generally.

Course Intended Learning Outcomes (CILOs)

CILOs		Weighting (if app.)	DEC-A1	DEC-A2	DEC-A3
1	Understand and demonstrate various kinds of research skills which are essential for conducting legal research at an advanced level.		x	x	x

A1: Attitude

Develop an attitude of discovery/innovation/creativity, as demonstrated by students possessing a strong sense of curiosity, asking questions actively, challenging assumptions or engaging in inquiry together with teachers.

A2: Ability

Develop the ability/skill needed to discover/innovate/create, as demonstrated by students possessing critical thinking skills to assess ideas, acquiring research skills, synthesizing knowledge across disciplines or applying academic knowledge to real-life problems.

A3: Accomplishments

Demonstrate accomplishment of discovery/innovation/creativity through producing /constructing creative works/new artefacts, effective solutions to real-life problems or new processes.

Learning and Teaching Activities (LTAs)

LTAs		Brief Description	CILO No.	Hours/week (if applicable)
1	Lectures	Weekly lectures on key topics in the field of Legal Research Methodology. The Course Leader will also lecture on "literature search" and illustrate it with examples.	1	
2	Group Discussion	Students are required to prepare for the lectures and to participate in group discussions in class.	1	
3	Research Proposal	Students are required to conduct independent research and write a research proposal.	1	
4	Class Presentation	Students are required to give one class presentation on their research project/ proposal, and specifically the methodology of their project.	1	

Assessment Tasks / Activities (ATs)

ATs		CILO No.	Weighting (%)	Remarks (e.g. Parameter for GenAI use)
1	1. A research proposal of 6,000 words	1	60	While generally students are not encouraged to rely on AI, they are permitted to use GenAI for assignment completion. The pedagogical objectives limit the use of AI to three specific purposes: 1. Utilizing AI instead of traditional search engines to gather sources; 2. Developing the skills to pose questions to AI that effectively prompt useful answers; 3. Garnering inspiration from the points of knowledge/ideas/thoughts generated by AI. Students are strictly prohibited from directly incorporating sentences or expressions produced by Gen AI into their assignments. This would be viewed as plagiarism. When AI has been utilized in their work, it is crucial that students acknowledge this fact.
2	2. Class participation and presentation	1	40	

Continuous Assessment (%)

100

Additional Information for ATs

Applicable to students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter

Students must obtain a minimum mark of 40% in both research proposal, class participation and presentation, and an overall mark of 40% in order to pass the course.

Applicable to students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024

Students must obtain a minimum mark of 50% in both research proposal, class participation and presentation, and an overall mark of 50% in order to pass the course.

Assessment Rubrics (AR)**Assessment Task**

Class participation and presentation (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

Students are required to attend at least 70% of the classes (lectures, seminars, presentations). If a student does not meet this requirement, he/she may be disqualified for assessment.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence of original thinking; good organisation, capacity to analyse and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Evidence of grasp of subject, some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Evidence of grasp of subject, some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.

Marginal

(D) Sufficient familiarity with the subject matter to enable the student to progress without repeating the course.

Failure

(F) Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of literature.

Assessment Task

A research proposal of 6,000 words (for students admitted before Semester A 2022/23 and in Semester A 2024/25 & thereafter)

Criterion

- Selection of topic
- Formulation of aims and objectives of research including reasons for the selection of topic, why it is worthy of study, research question(s) etc.
- Procedure including design of proposed research and literature review
- Data collection and methods of analysis
- Literature review and bibliography
- Timetable

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) Strong evidence of original thinking; good organisation, capacity to analyse and synthesize; superior grasp of subject matter; evidence of extensive knowledge base.

Good

(B+, B, B-) Evidence of grasp of subject, some evidence of critical capacity and analytical ability; reasonable understanding of issues; evidence of familiarity with literature.

Fair

(C+, C, C-) Student who is profiting from the university experience; understanding of the subject; ability to develop solutions to simple problems in the material.

Marginal

(D) Sufficient familiarity with the subject matter to enable the student to progress without repeating the course.

Failure

(F) Little evidence of familiarity with the subject matter; weakness in critical and analytical skills; limited or irrelevant use of literature.

Assessment Task

Class participation and presentation (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

Students are required to attend at least 70% of the classes (lectures, seminars, presentations). If a student does not meet this requirement, he/she may be disqualified for assessment.

Excellent

(A+, A, A-) High

Good

(B+, B) Significant

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Moderate

Failure

(F) Inadequate

Assessment Task

A research proposal of 6,000 words (for students admitted from Semester A 2022/23 to Summer Term 2024)

Criterion

- Selection of topic
- Formulation of aims and objectives of research including reasons for the selection of topic, why it is worthy of study, research question(s) etc.
- Procedure including design of proposed research and literature review
- Data collection and methods of analysis
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Excellent

(A+, A, A-) High

Good

(B+, B) Significant

Marginal

(B-, C+, C) Moderate

Failure

(F) Inadequate

Part III Other Information

Keyword Syllabus

Introduction to advanced legal research skills
Formulating research questions
Literature review
The research design
Doctrinal Research
Socio-legal Studies / Law and Society

Empirical Legal Studies
 Law and Economics
 Legal Research in the Humanities
 Legal History
 Comparative Law and Methodology
 Critical Legal Studies

Reading List

Compulsory Readings

Title	
1	Booth, Wane C., Colomb Gregory G & Williams Joseph M. The craft of research 3rd Edition (2008) Chicago: University of Chicago Press
2	Cresswell, John W. Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative and Mixed Method Approaches 4th Edition (2014) Thousand Oaks: SAGE
3	Watkins, Dawn and Burton, Mandy Research Methods in Law (2013) Oxford: Routledge
4	Bell, Judith Doing your research project: A guide for first-time researchers in education and social sciences 5th Edition (2010) Buckingham: Open University Press
5	Chatterjee, Charles Methods of research in law (2000) London: Old Bailey Press
6	Cottrel, Jill Legal research: A guide for Hong Kong students (2009) Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press
7	Hoffman, Marci & Rumsey International and Foreign Legal Research: A coursebook (2008) Leiden: Mirtinus Nijhoff Publishers
8	Knowles, John & Thomas Philip Effective Legal Research 2nd Edition (2009) London: Sweet & Maxwell
9	Watt, Robert Concise legal research 4th Edition (2001) Sydney: Federation Press

Additional Readings

Title	
1	Nil