



**LUND**  
UNIVERSITY

Faculty of Law

## **JAMR39, Human Rights Law, the Environment and Climate Change, 7.5 credits**

*Human Rights Law, the Environment and Climate Change, 7,5 högskolepoäng*  
Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

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### **Details of approval**

The syllabus was approved by Faculty of Law Board of education at undergraduate and postgraduate levels on 2020-02-05 (Dnr U 2020/103) and was last revised on 2025-02-05. The revised syllabus comes into effect 2025-02-05 and is valid from the spring semester 2025.

### **General information**

The course is an elective course within the Master's Programme in International Human Rights Law at the Faculty of Law. The course is open to students on the programme leading to a Swedish Professional Law degree and to international students participating in exchange programmes with the Faculty of Law..

*Language of instruction:* English

*Main field of study*      *Specialisation*

Human Rights      A1F, Second cycle, has second-cycle course/s as entry requirements

### **Learning outcomes**

#### **Knowledge and understanding**

To pass the examination the student shall be able to explain core principles concerning human rights in the context of environmental degradation, disasters and climate change, as reflected in international human rights law instruments and other authoritative documents, as well as academic and more practically-oriented texts.

#### **Competence and skills**

To pass the examination the student shall be able to

- critically analyse claims regarding the application of international human rights law in the context of environmental degradation, disasters and climate change
- apply core principles concerning human rights in the context of environmental degradation, disasters and climate change to specific scenarios
- independently write an analytical and argumentative text on a topic that is related to the central parts of the course
- communicate in scholarly writing and in oral presentations
- collaborate with other students in classroom discussions and seminar exercises.

### **Judgement and approach**

To pass the examination the student shall be able to

- distinguish between established legal principles and statements of legal opinion in relation to human rights in the context of environmental degradation, disasters and climate change
- independently reflect upon the role of human rights law in addressing challenges presented by environmental degradation, disasters and climate change.

### **Course content**

The course content consists of a core of relevant human rights law standards and guidelines generated by, for instance, UN Charter and Treaty-based mechanisms that comprise the human rights and environment canon. This material includes, for example, advisory opinions and judgments from international and regional courts and tribunals, reports from UN special procedures mandate holders and guidance from UN treaty-monitoring bodies. In addition, thematic course content, which may vary from year to year, consists of up-to-date legal and subject-matter specific materials, such as reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, The Intergovernmental Panel on Biodiversity, the Platform on Disaster Displacement, amongst others.

### **Course design**

The course adopts a project-based learning approach designed to support students to enhance their ability to independently use international human rights law in a specific practical context relating to the environment and climate change. Informed by contemporary developments in the field, the course convenor will annually identify a specific theme for the course, which might focus, for example, on climate-related human mobility, biodiversity and healthy ecosystems, climate change adaptation, business, human rights and the environment, or other similar issues.

The course is divided into three parts.

Part 1 of the course focuses on large group sessions where lectures predominate. These lectures introduce students to core legal materials, familiarity with which is essential for the project-based work that follows.

Part 2 consists of a series of individual and group tasks focused on producing in-depth human rights-based case studies aligned with the theme. Students are supported by the course convenor to identify an appropriate case study. Based on the final distribution of case studies, students are divided into working groups, which might be based on a sub-theme, geographical region, or other relevant division. Working independently and in groups, students develop their case studies through a series of

seminars focusing on each stage of the case study development. Elements of the case study will include, for instance, relevant background information, relevant law and jurisprudence at domestic and/or regional level, relevant academic and more operational literature, and relevant international human rights law, reports, standards and guidelines.

Part 3 convenes in plenary and working groups are constituted as panellists in a symposium to present their case studies.

## **Assessment**

Assessment takes two forms: 20% is assessed in the form of the presentation during the symposium in Part 3 of the course. The remaining 80% of the course grade is assessed in the form of the written case study report.

To pass the course, the student must pass all examination parts separately.

Submission of assignments by set deadlines is required. Late submission will result in a progressive reduction of points.

All work must be independently produced by the student.

In addition, attendance in all workshops and seminars is compulsory. Students who do not attend a workshop or seminar must submit a make-up assignment in consultation with the teacher.

The examiner, in consultation with Disability Support Services, may deviate from the regular form of examination in order to provide a permanently disabled student with a form of examination equivalent to that of a student without a disability.

## **Grades**

Grading scale includes the grades: Fail, Pass, Pass with Credit, Pass with Distinction

### **B – Pass**

In order to pass, the student must demonstrate basic achievement of the intended learning outcomes. By way of example, ‘basic achievement’ means that, in general, the student can point to relevant legal materials and take steps towards explaining core concepts. The student will attempt to apply these core concepts in relevant contexts, even if certain elements may be missing. Students who pass with a B will attempt to express critical, independent thought, even if the result is not compelling or persuasive. Their command of the material may be limited in certain points. The student will endeavour to complete written assignments, but the submission may reflect weaknesses in structure, logic, command of reading material and/or argumentation. Classroom presentation may reflect basic achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

### **BA – Pass with credit**

In order to achieve BA, the student must, in addition to what is required to achieve the grade of B, demonstrate good or very good achievement of the intended learning outcomes. Submissions in fulfilment of the take home examination will reflect a good or very good command of core legal principles together with a good or very good ability to apply that knowledge in specific contexts. There will be good or very good evidence of critical and independent thinking, combined with strong research and written communication skills, including as regards structure, logic, command of reading material and argumentation. Classroom presentation will reflect the student’s good or very good command of the material, independence of thought and overall communication skills.

### **AB – Pass with distinction**

To achieve the highest grade, the student must, in addition to the general knowledge and skill in the overall subject of human rights, the environment and climate change required for the grade of B and BA, be able to demonstrate in-depth knowledge of and critical engagement with the subject matter of the course. The student's command of the topic should demonstrate an excellent ability to explain core concepts and apply them in specific contexts, whilst also discerning the current limits of the law in this context. Students who achieve the mark of AB will demonstrate a strongly independent and critical engagement with the course material, drawing on assigned material but also engaging in self-directed research. Written and oral communication will be clear and well-argued and will demonstrate excellent achievement of the intended learning outcomes.

### **Entry requirements**

Passed examination in courses corresponding to the first term of the Master's programme equivalent to 30 credits.

For students on the Professional Law Degree Programme the entry requirements for semesters 7 and 8 are outlined in the Programme syllabus (utbildningsplanen).

Exchange students must have passed at least two and a half years of law studies at university level including basic knowledge of public international law.

### **Further information**

The University views plagiarism as a very serious academic offence, and will take disciplinary actions against students for any kind of attempted malpractice in connection with examinations and assessments. The penalty that may be imposed for this, and other unfair practice in examinations or assessments, includes suspension from the University.