



Faculty of Law

JUFN26, Law and Literature, 15 credits

Law and Literature, 15 högskolepoäng

Second Cycle / Avancerad nivå

Details of approval

The syllabus was approved by Faculty of Law Board of education at undergraduate and postgraduate levels on 2014-12-11 to be valid from 2015-01-19, spring semester 2015.

General Information

The course Law and Literature is open to students on the programme leading to a Swedish Professional Law degree. It is also open to students participating in international exchange programmes with the Faculty of Law.

Language of instruction: English

Main field of studies

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Depth of study relative to the degree requirements

A1N, Second cycle, has only first-cycle course/s as entry requirements

Learning outcomes

The aim of the course is provide experience in reading literature closely and with an eye to social questions, while equally providing access to ongoing debates about the role and methods of domestic and/or international law and legal processes in addressing those questions. A secondary goal is to provide understanding of how narrative is used in legal practice and of how effective narrative can be incorporated into day-to-day legal work. Finally, the course is designed to provide each student with a well-supported opportunity to conduct legal research and to explore a pertinent topic through the lens both of law and of literature.

Knowledge and understanding

To pass examination the student shall:

- Demonstrate a familiarity with the contents of the literary, legal and other texts assigned in the course

- Take part in the class discussions on the basis of the readings
- Draft a 2-4 page (double-spaced) analytic paper dealing with one of the literary texts in the class
- Draft a 2-4 page (double-spaced) piece of narrative writing, whether fiction or non-fiction, designed to serve a purpose in a legal context or to illuminate a legal issue (ungraded)
- Draft a research-based, analytic paper on a relevant topic to be chosen by the student in consultation with the instructor.

Competence and skills

To pass examination the student shall:

- Demonstrate the ability to read and analyse literary texts
- Demonstrate the ability to analyse complex legal issues drawing on multiple sources
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of one approach to narrative structure
- Demonstrate the ability to conduct research and write clearly and substantively on a relevant topic.

Judgement and approach

To pass examination the student shall:

- Show the ability to discuss literary and legal texts from a critical perspective
- Show the ability to think creatively, and to draw on interdisciplinary sources, when exploring a legal issue.

Course content

The course uses literature as a catalyst for exploring selected contemporary legal issues from critical perspective. The overall goal is to 1) better understand the complex social and human aspects of the problems that law seeks to address and 2) better understand the limits and promises of law in addressing those problems.

The course focuses each term on 2-4 specific legal issues, with some additional time spent on questions of theory around literature and the law, as well as of the role of narrative in effective lawyering and the crafting of effective stories in legal practice contexts. An example of a legal issue the class might focus on is how law adapts to rapid technological advances, for instance in the context of surveillance, communication, reproduction or military weaponry.

The course also uses both literature and legal texts to explore the role of the individual, especially but not only the lawyer, in engaging with law for purposes of social improvement.

The central elements of the course are:

- An introduction to law and literature as field of inquiry.
- Literary readings from a variety of genres (fiction, drama, poetry and creative non-fiction); all will be in English, including some read in translation.
- Literary criticism and other secondary texts meant to illuminate the literary readings.
- Case law, legal theory and other sources meant to illuminate and help problematize the selected legal issues.
- Sources on the role of narrative in effective lawyering.
- Sources on effective narrative tools in legal contexts.

Course design

The students obtain knowledge and competences as indicated above by individual studies of course literature and other course material, and by taking part in lectures and seminars.

Instruction is given in the form of lectures and seminar-style discussions, with students expected to contribute actively during class sessions. Regular attendance and preparation of the assigned readings in advance of the class sessions are essential components of the course.

Assessment

The course will include three writing assignments:

- One short analytic paper (2-4 pages, double-spaced).
- One short narrative paper (2-4 pages, double-spaced). This paper is ungraded, but must be submitted to receive credit.
- One final research-based analytic paper (15-25 pages, double-spaced).

Subcourses that are part of this course can be found in an appendix at the end of this document.

Grades

Marking scale: Fail, Pass, Pass with credit, Pass with distinction.

All grading criteria rest on the baseline set up for the grade B. Criteria for the grade BA are additional to those for the grade B. Criteria for the grade AB are additional to those for the grade BA. Each grade criterion consists of a qualitative and a quantitative dimension. To be awarded a specific grade, the grade criterion must be satisfied in its qualitative as well as its quantitative dimension.

Grading criteria are applied to all dimensions listed as "Learning outcomes" in this syllabus. By way of example, an AB would presuppose that the student's examination reflect her or his mastery with regard to knowledge and understanding, skills and abilities and values and attitudes as laid down in the syllabus as "learning outcomes". Grading is done primarily using Qualitative and Quantitative criteria. The Quantitative criterion reflects how well read the student is whereas the Qualitative criterion reflects how well the student can use his/her knowledge to make a well structured critical and analytical argument and put it in a proper context.

B – Basic command

In order to pass the student must attend the course regularly; participate in the class discussions while demonstrating familiarity with the assigned readings; submit the two short papers; and show a basic command of analytic and research skills, while drawing at a basic level on the central concepts of the course as appropriate, in the long paper.

BA – Advanced command

In order to achieve this grade, the student must participate substantively in the class discussions and show command of interdisciplinary research skills, along with a strong

command of the basic concepts of the course as appropriate, in the long graded paper.

AB – Mastery

In order to achieve the highest grade the student must undertake substantial interdisciplinary research for the long paper and provide strong analysis, drawing creatively on the basic concepts of the course as appropriate.

Students are welcome to use the course in part as a way to improve their written and spoken English.

Entry requirements

For students studying for the professional Degree Master of Laws: prerequisites for studies on the 7th or 8th semester stated in the Curriculum for the Law Study programme.

Prerequisites for international exchange students: relevant undergraduate studies corresponding to three years at a university level.

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.

Subcourses in JUFN26, Law and Literature

Applies from V15

1401 Law and Literature, 15,0 hp
Grading scale: Fail, Pass, Pass with credit, Pass with distinction