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**Federal State Autonomous Educational Institution for Higher Education
PEOPLES' FRIENDSHIP UNIVERSITY OF RUSSIA
NAMED AFTER PATRICE LUMUMBA**

LAW INSTITUTE

educational division (faculty/institute/academy) as higher education programme developer

COURSE SYLLABUS

CRITICAL APPROACHES TO CURRENT LEGAL ISSUES

course title

Recommended by the Didactic Council for the Education Field of:

40.03.01 JURISPRUDENCE

field of studies / speciality code and title

The course instruction is implemented within the professional education programme of higher education:

BACHELOR OF LAWS (LLB)

higher education programme profile/specialisation title

2026

1. COURSE GOAL(s)

The goals of the course are:

- explain conventions of legal analysis critiques.
- assume an “outsider” perspective on law in order to read cases beyond conventional legal analysis.
- assess critiques provided by critics.
- explore the development of law in light of historical, political, and economic contexts.
- assess whether “classic” critiques need to be reformulated in the 21st century.
- consider the application of critical theory to the practice of law.

2. REQUIREMENTS FOR LEARNING OUTCOMES

Mastering the course is aimed at the Bachelor’s students’ formation of the following competences (part of competences):

Table 2.1. List of target competences (parts of competences)

Code (GC, GPC, PC)	Competence	Competence indicators
PC-5	Is able to apply the comparative legal method and use the knowledge of foreign legal systems in practice.	PC-5.1. Knows the specifics of the comparative legal method and the features of its use in legal practice; PC-5.2. Knows the specifics of the legal systems, judicial systems, the legal profession structure in the major countries and the main trends of law development in the modern world; PC-5.3. Can use the comparative legal method to identify general and specific features of the compared objects and search for unified legal solutions; PC-5.4. Masters the skills of using the comparative legal method and the results of comparative legal research when comparing various legal solutions and deciding on best practice, considering the international experience.

3. COURSE IN HIGHER EDUCATION PROGRAMME STRUCTURE

The course refers to the variable component of (B1) block of the higher educational programme curriculum.

Within the higher education programme students also master other (modules) and / or internships that contribute to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes as results of the course study.

Table 3.1. The list of the higher education programme components/disciplines that contribute to the achievement of the expected learning outcomes as the course study results

Competence code	Competence descriptor	Previous courses/modules*	Subsequent courses/modules*
PC-5	Is able to apply the comparative legal method and use the knowledge of foreign legal systems in practice.	Russian Legal System and Legal Traditions Comparative Law Studies Comparing Legal Techniques Comparative Constitutional Law and Justice Comparative Criminal Law Comparative Administrative Law and Justice Comparative Civil and Commercial Law Comparative Criminal Procedure Comparative Civil Procedure Comparative Financial and Tax Law	Communications and Internet Law and Policy Work Experience (Pre-graduation) Internship

* To be filled in according to the competence matrix of the higher education programme.

4. COURSE WORKLOAD AND ACADEMIC ACTIVITIES

The total workload of the course is 2 credits (72 academic hours).

Table 4.1. Types of academic activities during the periods of higher education programme mastering (**full-time training**) *

Type of academic activities	Total academic hours	Semesters			
		5	6	7	8
<i>Contact academic hours</i>	34	34			
including:					
Lectures (LC)	17	17			
Lab work (LW)					
Seminars (workshops/tutorials) (S)	17	17			
<i>Self-studies</i>	29	29			
<i>Evaluation and assessment (exam/passing/failing grade)</i>	9	9			
Course workload	academic hours	72	72		
	credits	2	2		

5. COURSE CONTENTS

Table 5.1. Course contents and academic activities types

Course module title	Course module contents (topics)	Academic activities types
Chapter 1. Formalism and realism	Introduction to critical legal studies, relevance of CLT. Introduction: Of Logic, Morality, and “Social Facts”. Formalism. Introduction to Realism. Realism and Judging: What Does “Experience” Mean? Law in Fact: What’s “Law” Got to Do With It? Law and the idea of justice	LC / S
Chapter 2. Critical theories of race and gender	Critical Race Theory: What Is Race and Racism? Critical Race Theory: Images and Stories. Domestic Violence. Feminism and Law. Law, force and violence	LC / S
Chapter 3 The socioeconomic critique	Poverty and Law. Law “On the Ground” and Economics. Intersectionality: Race, Gender, Socioeconomics, and Everything Else. Law, power and hegemonies	LC / S
Chapter 4 Critical legal theory and lawyers	Law, authority and interpretation. Realism and Lawyering. The Distribution of Legal Services and “Law in Fact”. Mediation: Realist Dispute Resolution?	LC / S
Chapter 5. Critical legal theory in different contexts	The First Amendment. Civil Procedure: Process or Substance? Criminal Law. Immigration Law. Law, sovereignty and the state of exception. Rights and their critiques.	LC / S
Chapter 6. Critiques of legal education	A critical introduction to legal method and techniques. Interdisciplinary approaches to legal studies. Legal Education: Critique and Reform. Duncan Kennedy’s Critique of Legal Education.	LC / S

* - to be filled in only for **full**-time training: LC - lectures; LW - lab work; S - seminars.

6. CLASSROOM EQUIPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY SUPPORT REQUIREMENTS

Table 6.1. Classroom equipment and technology support requirements

Type of academic activities	Classroom equipment	Specialised educational / laboratory equipment, software, and materials for course study (if necessary)
Lecture	A lecture hall for lecture-type classes, equipped with a set of specialised furniture; board (screen) and technical means of multimedia presentations.	Multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection. Software: Office 365 (MS Office, MS Teams), Chrome
Lab work	A classroom for laboratory work, individual consultations, current and mid-term assessment; equipped with a set of specialised furniture and machinery.	Multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection. Software: Office 365 (MS Office, MS Teams), Chrome
Seminars	A classroom for conducting seminars, group and individual consultations, current and mid-	Multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable

Type of academic activities	Classroom equipment	Specialised educational / laboratory equipment, software, and materials for course study (if necessary)
	term assessment; equipped with a set of specialised furniture and technical means for multimedia presentations.	wireless Internet connection. Software: Office 365 (MS Office, MS Teams), Chrome
Computer Lab	A classroom for conducting classes, group and individual consultations, current and mid-term assessment, equipped with personal computers (in the amount of 30 pcs), a board (screen) and technical means of multimedia presentations.	Multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection. Software: Office 365 (MS Office, MS Teams), Chrome
Self-studies	A classroom for independent work of students (can be used for seminars and consultations), equipped with a set of specialised furniture and computers with access to the electronic information and educational environment.	Multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection. Software: Office 365 (MS Office, MS Teams), Chrome
Courtroom	A classroom for court hearing simulation equipped with a set of specialized furniture; a set of devices including portable multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection.	Multimedia projector, laptop, projection screen, stable wireless Internet connection. Software: Office 365 (MS Office, MS Teams), Chrome

* It is necessary to specify a classroom for self-study of students

7. RESOURCES RECOMMENDED FOR COURSE STUDY

Main reading (sources):

1. Günter Frankenberg and Fernanda G Nicola. *Critical Approaches to Comparative Law*. Elgar Encyclopedia/ 2023. P. 495–502. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.4337/9781839105609.critical.approaches.comparative.law>
2. Mari J. Matsuda, 'Looking to the bottom: Critical legal studies and reparations.' *Harv. Cr-ll rev.* 22 (1987): 323.
3. Pheng Cheah and Elizabeth Grosz, 'The body of the law: Notes toward a theory of corporeal justice.' In: Pheng Cheah, David Fraser, and Judith Grbich, *Thinking through the body of the law*. (1996) New York University Press (1996): pp 3-25.
4. Douglas Litowitz, 'Gramsci, hegemony, and the law.' *BYU L. Rev.* (2000): 515.
5. Walter Benjamin, 'Critique of violence.' *Reflections* 14, no. 3 (1978): pp. 277-300.
6. Jacques Derrida, 'Force of Law: The "Mystical Foundations of Authority"' (1990) 11." *Cardozo Law Review*, 919.
7. Giorgio Agamben, *State of Exception*. (2005) University of Chicago Press: pp 1-31.
8. Peter Goodrich, 'Reading the law: A critical introduction to legal method and techniques.' (1986), Blackwell Publishing: pp 3-20.
9. Costas Douzinas, *Critical jurisprudence: The political philosophy of justice*. (2005) Hart Publishing: pp 3-52.
10. Michel Foucault, *M 1977, Discipline and punish: the birth of the prison*, trans. A Sheridan, Penguin, London: pp 195-228
11. Jacques Ranciere, 'Who is the subject of human rights?' (2004) *South Atlantic Quarterly* 103 (2/3)
12. Slavoj Zizek, 'Against Human Rights' (2005) *New Left Review* 34

Additional (optional) reading (sources):

1. Peter Gabel and Paul Harris, 'Building Power and Breaking Images: Critical Legal Theory and the Practice of Law' (1982-83) 11 NYU Review of Law and Social Change 369, 372-4.
2. Patricia Owens, 'Beyond 'bare life': refugees and the 'right to have rights'.' Refugees in international relations (2011): 133.
3. Thomas Keenan, 'Deconstruction and the Impossibility of Justice.' Cardozo L. Rev. 11 (1989).
4. Costas Douzinas and Ronnie Warrington, Justice Miscarried: Ethics, Aesthetics and the Law, 1994.' London: Harvester Wheatsheaf, 132-151.
5. Martin Loughlin, Sword and scales: an examination of the relationship between law and politics. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2000, 1-53.
6. Johnson, Bradley R. "Untagging Ourselves: Facebook and the Law in the Virtual Panopticon." TM Cooley J. Prac. & Clinical L. 13 (2010): 185.
7. Jean-Luc Nancy, The inoperative community. (1991) University of Minnesota Press.
8. Costas Douzinas, (2007), Routledge, Human Rights and Empire, ch.1.

Internet-(based) sources:

1. Electronic libraries with access for RUDN students
 - RUDN Electronic Library System (RUDN ELS) <http://lib.rudn.ru/MegaPro/Web>
 - EL "University Library Online" <http://www.biblioclub.ru>
 - EL "Yurayt" <http://www.biblio-online.ru>
 - EL "Student Consultant" www.studentlibrary.ru
 - EL "Lan" <http://e.lanbook.com/>
 - EL "Trinity Bridge"
2. Databases and search engines:
 - electronic foundation of legal and normative-technical documentation <http://docs.cntd.ru/>
 - Yandex search engine <https://www.yandex.ru/>
 - Google search engine <https://www.google.ru/>
 - Scopus abstract database <http://www.elsevierscience.ru/products/scopus>

A complete list of ELS, databases and search engines is provided on the website of the Educational and Scientific Information Library Center (Scientific Library) of RUDN University <https://lib.rudn.ru>

*Training toolkit for self- studies to master the course *:*

* The training toolkit for self- studies to master the course is placed on the course page in the university telecommunication training and information system under the set procedure.

8. ASSESSMENT TOOLKIT AND GRADING SYSTEM* FOR EVALUATION OF STUDENTS' COMPETENCES LEVEL UPON COURSE COMPLETION

The assessment toolkit and the grading system* to evaluate the competences formation level (competences in part) upon the course study completion are specified in the Appendix to the course syllabus.

* The assessment toolkit and the grading system are formed on the basis of the requirements of the relevant local normative act of RUDN University (regulations / order).

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