
Course: Law

Degree: Bachelor

Branch: Core curriculum

Study plan: Aviso n.º 9088/2019, de 23 de maio

Teaching staff:

Professor in charge of the curricular unit

Prof. Doutor Gonçalo Almeida Ribeiro

Other Professors of the curricular unit

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Language of instruction:

English

Functioning:

The seminar is an introduction to the set of ideas, assumptions, and techniques that structure the field of Law & Economics. The approach is predominantly formative rather than informative. The focus will be on figuring out the basic structure of the discipline rather than the hundreds of arguments and applications that constitute its large, and growing, body of doctrine.

Intended learning outcomes:

The seminar is designed to help the students achieve two important goals: (a) acquisition of the intellectual framework required to understand and master a numerous applications of economic analysis to legal problems; and (b) critical detachment and political self-awareness in the use of Law & Economics.

Syllabus:

Theoretical Foundations: Sessions 1, 2 & 3

Session 1: Microeconomics: Building Blocks

READINGS:

Robert Cooter & Thomas Ulen, *Law and Economics*, 4th ed., ch. 1 (Addison-Wesley: International Edition, 2004)

Session 2: Consumers, Producers, Markets, and Welfare

READINGS:

Robert Cooter & Thomas Ulen, *Law and Economics*, 4th ed., ch. 2 (Addison-Wesley: International Edition, 2004) [same as previous session].

Session 3: The Coase Theorem

READINGS:

- A. Mitchell Polinsky, *An Introduction to Law and Economics*, 3rd ed., ch. 3 (Aspen Publishers, 2003)
- Robert Cooter & Thomas Ulen, *Law and Economics*, 4th ed., pp. 78-80, 85-99 (Addison-Wesley: International Edition, 2004)
- Ronald Coase, “The Problem of Social Cost”, 3 *Journal of Law and Economics* 1 (1960)

Standard Applications: Sessions 4, 5, 6 & 7

Sessions 4: Property

READINGS:

- Steven Shavell, *Foundations of Economic Analysis of Law*, chs. 2-4 (Harvard University Press, 2004)

Session 5: Contract

READINGS:

- Steven Shavell, *Foundations of Economic Analysis of Law*, chs. 13-14 (Harvard University Press, 2004)

Session 6: Accident Law (Torts)

accidents; introductory remarks about products liability.

READINGS:

- Steven Shavell, *Foundations of Economic Analysis of Law*, ch. 8 (Harvard University Press, 2004)

Session 7: Civil Procedure (Litigation)

READINGS:

- Steven Shavell, *Foundations of Economic Analysis of Law*, ch. 17 (Harvard University Press, 2004)

Exam: Session 8

Evidence of the syllabus coherence with the curricular units intended learning outcomes:

Students will not learn the contents of a body of doctrine, or a repository of dogma, but rather the tools, methods, and techniques that provide the raw material of an approach to the study of legal issues. We study applications only to the extent that they perform a useful exemplary role.

Recommended prior learning (or curricular units whose prior attendance is recommended):

Introduction to Economics.

Teaching and assessment methods:

Lectures followed by Q&A. Written exam.

Evidence of the teaching methods and the intended learning outcomes:

As a survey course on a new subject for the students, the primary method of teaching must be the lecture. Students will be, however, asked to participate and contribute to classroom discussion.



Bibliography:

The readings for the seminar combine excerpts of textbooks with scholarly articles. The textbook for the 'standard applications' part of the seminar is Steven Shavell, *Foundations of Economic Analysis of Law* (Harvard University Press, 2004). All the readings are available for download in the course website.

Legislation:

N/A