

INTERNATIONAL LAW / AREA STUDIES

This is a listing of selected courses which focus on the domestic legal systems of foreign countries and specific regions.

Search International Law Area Studies Courses (https://curriculum.law.georgetown.edu/course-search/?cluster=cluster_58)

LAW 1788 v00 Asian American Legal Studies Seminar (<https://curriculum.law.georgetown.edu/course-search/?keyword=LAW 1788 v00>)

J.D. Seminar (cross-listed) | 2-3 credit hours

"In the popular imagination, Asian Americans inhabit a vague purgatorial status," Cathy Hong Park writes, neither "white enough nor black enough," regarded with suspicion, overlooked, or, increasingly, used by cynics to dismantle affirmative action. Asian Americans have occupied various positions along the shifting color line: the arrival of Asian immigrants occasioned the assertion of national borders; this "race so different," Justice Harlan wrote, could never be assimilated as Americans, no matter how colorblind our constitution. Since the selective reopening of borders in the 1960s, the image of Asian Americans has been repurposed to serve new and competing ends, to affirm the American dream, to disparage black and brown counterparts, or to signal to white Americans the loss of status threatened by immigration and global capitalism.

This interdisciplinary seminar will offer students an introduction to the history and experience of Asian Americans, not limited to their encounters with the law. We will cover legal histories of Chinese exclusion, Japanese incarceration, and the Muslim ban. But we will also survey instances of Asian American activism, anti-imperial radicalism, and Afro-Asian solidarity. We will also address current events that have brought Asian Americans into renewed visibility, including violence against Asian Americans and the recent affirmative action cases. There are no prerequisites for this class, but students should be prepared to engage with variety of materials, not limited to legal cases or statutes.

Students will be expected to draft short weekly reflections, to participate in leading our seminar discussion at least once during the semester, and to submit a final paper on a topic of their own choosing.

Note: J.D. students must register for the 3 credit section of the seminar if they wish to write a paper fulfilling the J.D. Upperclass Legal Writing Requirement. The paper requirements of the two-credit section will not fulfill the J.D. Upperclass Legal Writing Requirement.

LAW 1529 v00 China and International Law (<https://curriculum.law.georgetown.edu/course-search/?keyword=LAW 1529 v00>)

J.D. Seminar (cross-listed) | 2-3 credit hours

Over the past forty years, China has gone from one of the most isolated countries in the world to a major player in international affairs, a leading exporter, and a much more influential voice on regional security matters. Yet even with the rapid economic growth and increased influence that China has achieved over the past several decades, it maintains an ambivalent attitude towards many key aspects of international law and the architecture of global order. This class will explore China's ambivalent engagement with international law in the context of its increasing prominence as an emerging power, and will in particular look to address the question of how China might adapt to the existing world order, and the ways in which it might look to influence its evolution. The class will cover a range of issues, including China's membership in the WTO; its engagement with the international human rights regime; China's approach to international cooperation on issues like global warming and nuclear non-proliferation; and international law aspects of the dispute over the South China Sea; among others.

Learning Objectives:

This class will provide you with a solid understanding of China's approach to key international law issues, and also a sense of the Chinese government's views on international law and international legal institutions more generally. By the end of the semester, you should have a sense of how China fits into the existing global legal order, and the ways in which it is seeking to influence or even alter it. In-class discussions will also bring out the ways in which other states have sought to influence Chinese behavior, which will give you a sense of how and when relatively powerful states like China can be convinced to alter their approach to key international law issues.

For students who have not previously taken a class on public international law, this course will serve as a basic introduction to key concepts of international law (although the readings will focus very heavily on the Chinese approach, rather than the underlying law itself); for those who have taken prior international law courses, this course will serve as a useful refresher.

A core goal of the class is to understand international law from the perspective of the Chinese state. In other words, students will develop a sense of why China makes the choices it does on key international law issues, and what values and political and historical dynamics drive its decision-making. In so doing, students will gain insight into a different political-legal culture, and seek to understand how different political-legal systems – including non-democratic ones like China – come to grips with legal questions in ways that may differ markedly from the approach of the U.S. government. At the same time, having taken steps to articulate China's perspective, students may be able to see more clearly the values and political and historical factors that drive American decisions on key international law issues.

Finally, a core goal of the response papers – above and beyond demonstrating an understanding of the substance of the readings – will be to give students the chance to build their skills at analyzing legal arguments, and in building their own written arguments in response to them. As noted below, response papers will be graded both on the basis of demonstrated mastery of the material, and also on the basis of the successful construction of a persuasive and fact-based argument.

Recommended: International Law I: Introduction to International Law.

Note: This seminar requires a paper. Students must register for the 3 credit section of the seminar if they wish to write a paper fulfilling the Upperclass Legal Writing Requirement. The paper requirements of the 2 credit section will not fulfill the Upperclass Legal Writing Requirement.

LAW 1546 v00 Chinese Legal System (<https://curriculum.law.georgetown.edu/course-search/?keyword=LAW 1546 v00>)

J.D. Course (cross-listed) | 3 credit hours

This course aims to provide an overview of the legal system of the People's Republic of China. The focus will be more on institutions than on specific rules, because finding the rules is much simpler than understanding their institutional context. We will, however, look at specific pieces of legislation as we go along.

China's legal system exists together with its political, economic, and social structures, and cannot be understood in isolation from them. Thus, part of this course is necessarily about understanding modern China in general, not just its legal system. By the time the course is over, I hope that students will have an understanding of the environment within which Chinese law operates, and will be able to appreciate the differences between the way rules operate in the United States and the way they operate in China as well as the reasons for those differences. Although this course, as a survey course, does not specifically address issues of legal aspects of doing business in China (that is another course), it is a highly recommended preparation for such a course, and it is intended to be useful to anyone contemplating a legal career involving China.

Mutually Excluded Courses: Students may not receive credit for both this course and Chinese Law Seminar.

LAW 1908 v00 Constitutionalism in Greater China: China, Taiwan, Hong Kong (<https://curriculum.law.georgetown.edu/course-search/?keyword=LAW 1908 v00>)

J.D. Seminar (cross-listed) | 2 credit hours

For over a century, constitutional governance has been seen as a key reformist goal in China. From the Qing Dynasty to the People's Republic, would-be reformers, both inside and outside government, have pushed constitutionalist ideas as a means to strengthen the Chinese state, and to redefine the relationship between state and its citizens.

This course will look at the path of constitutional development in what might be called greater China: the People's Republic, Hong Kong, and Taiwan. Our core question will be straightforward: to what extent has the goal of constitutional governance been fulfilled? If the goal is not yet reached, what are the key barriers to further constitutional development? In each of these three jurisdictions, our answers will vary – often quite significantly, given the differing paths that each place has taken. But in all three cases, our answers will help us to better understand how political power is exercised in China, Hong Kong, and Taiwan, and what limits – if any – the constitution document places on state power.

In each case, we will examine the constitution to understand its formal provisions on key constitutional questions, including structure of government, separation of powers, and protection of human rights. At the same time, we will ask who is able to push for constitutional change, and how they are able to do it. What role can social movements, rights activists, and rights lawyers play in pushing for constitutional change? How do they use the constitution as a political platform to advance their own agenda? And how does the Party-state use its own constitution to push its own political and legal goals?

Recommended: Prior course on the Chinese legal system, or prior academic work related to Chinese history or politics.

LAW 807 v00 Cross-Border Transactions in Latin America (<https://curriculum.law.georgetown.edu/course-search/?keyword=LAW 807 v00>)

LL.M. Seminar (cross-listed) | 1 credit hour

The course is designed to give students an overview and practical insight on the legal aspects of doing business with or investing in Latin America. The course will focus on Mexico, but will also address legal issues associated with doing business in Central and South American countries. Topics will be discussed from the perspective of U.S. investors doing business in the region, and will cover the legal implications of cross-border distribution, licensing and joint venture arrangements, acquisitions and direct investments, labor planning and creditor rights.

Recommended: Contracts, Corporations, and International Business Transactions.

Note: ATTENDANCE IS MANDATORY AT ALL CLASS SESSIONS. Enrolled students must be in attendance at the start of the first class session in order to remain enrolled. Waitlisted students must be in attendance at the start of the first class session in order to remain eligible to be admitted off the waitlist. All enrolled students must attend each class session in its entirety. Failure to attend the first class session in its entirety will result in a drop; failure to attend any subsequent class session in its entirety may result in a withdrawal.

Enrolled students will have until the beginning of the second class session to request a drop by contacting the Office of the Registrar; a student who no longer wishes to remain enrolled after the second class session begins will not be permitted to drop the class but may request a withdrawal from an academic advisor in the Office of Academic Affairs. Withdrawals are permitted up until the last class for this specific course.