

Introduction to the Laws of European Union – Summer 2026

Contact Information:

Professor Tasha Willis (Clinical Faculty)

(713) 743-2066

Email: tlwillis@central.uh.edu

The aim of this course is to provide students with a basic understanding of how the European Union uses the law as a means to achieve market objectives through national and international business transactions. To this end the class will examine the basic components lawyers need to know when preparing to draft contracts involving EU member states. These include:

- the emergence of the European Economic Community
- how the European Union is administered/governed by the four main institutions
- the sources and general principles of the European Community law
- how European Community law is integrated at a national level
- the contributions of the Court of Justice to this process
- how European community law is enforced at both a national and European level

Course Agenda: The course will be graded on a series of short and practical written assignments, which will guide students through the drafting of a basic contract enforceable within the European Union. There will be four contractual drafting assignments that will be designed to build upon each other so that the fourth and final assignment will result in a draft of a complete contractual agreement. Over the course of the semester, each student will prepare an agreement governed by European Union law. The agreement should not exceed ten (10) pages. Additionally, 15% of the grade will be based on a student experiential in class assignment.

Week 1

EU History and Treaty Development

Introduction to EC/EU law: We will begin with an overview of the role of law in the EU and the concepts of sovereignty and competence in the EU context.

Comparative law: One Europe, two systems: how Civil Law and Common Law systems have contributed to the EU legal order. Distinguishing the EU from other international structures and organizations, specifically Council of Europe, United Nations and WTO.

Fundamental Freedoms Established by the EU

Class Assignment: We will begin to focus on the contractual agreement. There will be four (4) main parts to the agreement. The first substantive part of the agreement will deal with the use of agents, employees and the free movement of workers. There will be a class lecture covering the subject matter. Students will then receive the first part of the drafting assignment. This first drafting assignment will be due the following Tuesday at the beginning of class.

Week 2

EU Regulations, Directives and Enforcement Structure

Class Assignment: The second substantive part of the agreement will deal with directives involving the leasing of property, the procurement of goods and services. There will be a class lecture covering the subject matter. Students will receive the second part of the drafting assignment. The second part of the drafting assignment will be due the following Tuesday at the beginning of class.

EU and International Trade

Class Assignment: Class will consist of the reviewing, correcting and stream-lining of assignments one and two. Additionally, we will devote class time to further examining the details of all relevant EU directives to help students better understand the nuances of the contractual drafting process.

Week 3

Immigration and the Free Movement of Goods and People

Class Assignment: The third substantive part of the agreement will deal with directives concerning choice of law, choice of forum, language to be used, currency accepted (as well as conversion terms). There will be a class lecture covering these areas of law. Students will be provided with the third part of the drafting assignment. The third part of the drafting assignment will be due at the beginning of class the following Tuesday.

Who Can Sue, Be Sued and What For

Class Assignment: The fourth part of the agreement will deal with the inclusion of alternative dispute resolution procedures available and the importance they play in contracting to do business within the European Union. There will be a class lecture covering this growing area of the law and students will be assigned the final important segment for the agreement.

Week 4

International ADR in General, EU Directives and Judgment Enforcement

Class Assignment: There will be a final class lecture recapping all topics covered during the course of the semester and a chance for students to ask any final questions they may have before combining all individual drafts into one cohesive final agreement.

USE of the CISG and INCOTERMS and RECAP

Class Assignment: In this class students working in teams will be presented with sample contractual language and challenged to find the defect and redraft to reflect clients intent. The sample contractual language will cover all topics discussed through this point in the semester. This should aid students in clarifying the language used in their own contractual agreement before final drafts are due.

Week 5

Class Assignment: The class lecture will deal with preparing a client letter in response to specific concerns the client has expressed regarding certain terms of the contractual agreement. Students will be assigned the task of returning to class the next day having drafted a three (3) to four (4) paragraph client explanation letter.

Last class set aside for individual contract drafting review.

Course materials:

No book assigned. Materials will be handed out in class as needed. Students will become proficient in locating relevant, current law in a broad range of topics.

Grades: 75% Contract/Memo 15% Group Project 10% Class Participation

Secondary online sources are as follows:

www.jeanmonetprogram.org is the website of a joint Harvard/New York University program to teach EU law. Supporting the open source approach to learning, these institutions have made their full courses available on line, including lectures and reading materials. Selective excerpts from the materials in this program will be used in reading assignments.

www.euractiv.com contains daily articles on current legal (and other) topics, but also contains extensive references and links to official materials and studies of other organizations such as NGOs, think tanks, trade organizations and legal journals. www.euobserver.com, www.europeanvoice.com and www.eupolitix.com are basically news sources discussing new legislation and its implementation in the member states.

www.eubusiness.com focuses on news regarding business aspects of EU law and has extensive guides to specific sectors and

<http://adjudicatingeurope.eu/> An interesting blog on the European Court of Justice – its cases, its members, its politics.

<http://eutopialaw.com/>

<http://www.presseurop.eu/en>

<http://www.statewatch.org/> (One of the best sites on the web for tracking developments in EU law and policy)

Expectations:

Be present in class

Be on-time to class

Maintain a schedule to get your class work done and keep up with all reading

Office Hours:

To meet with the professor regarding the class, students should email them with available dates and times. tlwillis@central.uh.edu (meetings can be in person, by phone, or via ZOOM or other virtual online program)

Honor Code:

The UHLC Honor Code applies to all aspects of this course. You are responsible for knowing all Honor Code provisions and for complying with the Honor Code. Please inquire if you have any questions regarding how the Honor Code's provision apply to specific activities or situations related to this course. Your continuing enrollment in this course is deemed to be a pledge by you under the Honor Code to comply with the Honor Code in relation to this course and to comply with the instructions in the courses syllabus.

AI Generated Text:

The software technology known as artificial intelligence has recently expanded its capability to generate text (AI Generated Text). Examples of the technology include what are known as “generative” large language models (LLMs), and a specific implementation of what is well known in the general public as ChatGPT. These systems can generate text in response to prompts and/or input of other text/documents/code/images. The output, the AI Generated Text, appears to have human-mimicking “intelligence” and is thus potentially usable as a substitute for written work product one might generate themselves. AI Generated Text can include computer code or programs as well as human language content.

Your continuing enrollment in this course is deemed to be a pledge by you under the Honor Code to not prompt, generate, obtain, read, or use any AI Generated Text in relation to any activity or assessment in this course. This applies to AI Generated Text from yourself or others. This pledge included that your assessment work product in this course is without

any contribution from AI Generated Text. This specifically extends to the plagiarism policy and unauthorized aid/materials parts of the Honor Code: AI Generated Text will be treated as from another/others in applying the plagiarism policy to this course. The term “assessment” means any work product generated for this course this is submitted to the instructor or presented in a class session, regardless of whether it is graded content or not. Assessments include mid-terms and final exams. AI Generated Text may not be used in the development or drafting of any assessments created by you in a non-proctored environment, such as a “take-home” final examination unless specified as an exception below. The parts of the Honor Code that refer to unauthorized materials or aids are specifically prohibited from any use of AI Generated Text in this course unless specified as an exception below.

The following activities are exceptions to the immediately preceding paragraph; the intent of these exceptions is to allow use of AI Generated Text for specifically and narrowly defined activities in relation to this course:

- creating content for an outline that you use exclusively to summarize the course content; or
- “conversing” with the AI Generated Text software system to create hypotheticals to better understand course content, alone or with others;

Chosen Names and Preferred Pronouns:

We want to address each of you in a manner that corresponds to your identity. Although mistakes happen, chosen names and preferred pronouns—including non-binary ones such as they|them|their—must be respected in my classroom. Please feel free to reach out to us at any time if you want to make me aware of your chosen name or preferred pronoun or if you have concerns about how we or your classmates address you.

Inclusion and Wellness:

This is an inclusive learning space.

At UHLC, we are committed to ensuring inclusive online and classroom learning spaces, where you’ll be treated with respect and dignity, and where everyone is provided the equitable opportunity to participate, to contribute, and to succeed.

If you feel like your class performance is impacted in any way by your experiences inside or outside of class, please reach out to your professors. We want to be a resource for you. If you feel more comfortable speaking with someone besides us, Student Services is an excellent resource: 713-743-2182.

University Sexual Misconduct Policy:

The University is committed to maintaining and strengthening an educational, working and living environment where students, faculty, staff, and visitors are free from discrimination and sexual misconduct. If you have experienced an incident of discrimination or sexual misconduct, there is a confidential reporting process available to you. For more information, please refer to the University System’s Anti-Discrimination Policy SAM 01.D.07 and Sexual Misconduct Policy SAM 01.D.08, available here:

<http://www.uhsystem.edu/compliance-ethics/uhs-policies/sams/01-general-information/index.php>

<http://www.uhsystem.edu/compliance-ethics/docs/sam/01/1d7.pdf> (antidiscrimination)

<http://www.uhsystem.edu/compliance-ethics/docs/sam/01/1d8.pdf> (sexual misconduct)

Please be aware that under the sexual misconduct policy, SAM 01.D.08, faculty are required to report to the University any information received regarding sexual misconduct as defined in the policy. Please note that the reporting obligations under the sexual misconduct policy reach to employees and students. Also, as a required reporting party, Law Center employees and faculty members are not a confidential resource.

Mental Health and Wellness Resources:

The University of Houston has a number of resources to support students' mental health and overall wellness, including CoogsCARE and the UH Go App. UH Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) offers 24/7 mental health support for all students, addressing various concerns like stress, college adjustment and sadness. CAPS provides individual and couples counseling, group therapy, workshops and connections to other support services on and off-campus. For assistance visit uh.edu/caps, call 713-743-5454, or visit a Let's Talk location in-person or virtually. Let's Talk are daily, informal confidential consultations with CAPS therapists where no appointment or paperwork is needed.

The Student Health Center offers a Psychiatry Clinic for enrolled UH students. Call 713-743-5149 during clinic hours, Monday through Friday 8 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. to schedule an appointment.

The A.D. Bruce Religion Center offers spiritual support and a variety of programs centered on well-being.

Need Support Now? - If you or someone you know is struggling or in crisis, help is available. Call CAPS crisis support 24/7 at 713-743-5454, or the National Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: call or text 988, or chat 988lifeline.org.

Reasonable Academic Adjustments/Auxiliary Aids

The University of Houston is committed to providing an academic environment and educational programs that are accessible for its students. Any student with a disability who is experiencing barriers to learning, assessment or participation is encouraged to contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center (Dart Center) to learn more about academic accommodations and support that may be available to them. Students seeking academic accommodations will need to register with the Dart Center as soon as possible to ensure timely implementation of approved accommodations. Please contact the Dart Center by visiting the website: <https://uh.edu/accessibility/> calling (713) 743-5400, or emailing jdcenter@Central.UH.EDU.

Recording of Class

Students may not record all or part of class, livestream all or part of class, or make/distribute screen captures, without advanced written consent of the instructor. If you have or think you may have a disability such that you need to record class-related activities, please contact the Justin Dart, Jr. Student Accessibility Center. If you have an accommodation to record class-related activities, those recordings may not be shared with any other student, whether in this course or not, or with

any other person or on any other platform. Classes may be recorded by the instructor. Students may use instructor's recordings for their own studying and notetaking. Instructor's recordings are not authorized to be shared with anyone without the prior written approval of the instructor. Failure to comply with requirements regarding recordings will result in a disciplinary referral to the Dean of Students Office and may result in disciplinary action.

Syllabus Changes

Please note there may be needed modifications to the course syllabus. Notice of such changes will be announced as quickly as possible through email.

Resources for Online Learning

The University of Houston is committed to student success, and provides information to optimize the online learning experience through our Power-On website (<https://uh.edu/power-on/learning/>). Please visit this website for a comprehensive set of resources, tools, and tips including: obtaining access to the internet, AccessUH, and Canvas; using your smartphone as a webcam; and downloading Microsoft Office 365 at no cost. For questions or assistance contact UHOnline@uh.edu.

UH Email:

Please check and use your Cougarnet email for communications related to this course. Faculty use the Cougarnet email to respond to course-related inquiries such as grade queries or progress reports for reasons of FERPA. To access your Cougarnet email, login to your Microsoft 365 account with your Cougarnet credentials. Visit University Information Technology (UIT) for instructions on how to connect your Cougarnet e-mail on a mobile device.