

Aristotle University of Thessaloniki

Faculty of Law

Bachelor of Laws (LL.B.)

Course Syllabus

1. Course Information

- **Title:** Comparative Law – Introduction to Major Legal Systems
- **Code:** LLB4
- **ECTS:** 5
- **Hours per week:** 3
- **Academic Year:** 1st
- **Teaching Period:** Winter Semester
- **Mode of Delivery:** Face-to-Face
- **Language of Instruction/Assessment:** English
- **Course Type:** Mandatory

2. Course Description

This course introduces students to the discipline of comparative law and provides a structured overview of the world's principal legal families. It examines the historical development, structural features, and conceptual foundations of civil law, common law, and mixed legal systems, alongside elements of religious and customary legal traditions. Emphasis is placed on the functions of law, sources of legal authority, methods of reasoning, and institutional frameworks within each system. Students will also explore the purposes, methods, and challenges of comparative legal analysis, with attention to legal transplants, harmonisation, and legal pluralism. Greek law is presented as a case study within the broader civil law tradition, allowing for contextualised reflection and informed comparison. The course lays the groundwork for further study across doctrinal

fields by equipping students with the conceptual tools to navigate legal diversity and engage critically with legal systems in a globalised world.

3. Keywords

Comparative Methodology, Legal Families, Civil Law, Common Law, Legal Transplants

4. Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. **Identify** the principal legal families and describe their core historical and structural characteristics. (*Remembering*)
2. **Explain** the sources of law, styles of legal reasoning, and institutional features of civil law, common law, and selected mixed or religious systems. (*Understanding*)
3. **Apply** basic comparative methods to analyse similarities and differences across legal systems. (*Applying*)
4. **Compare and contrast** legal concepts, procedures, and institutional arrangements across selected jurisdictions. (*Analysing*)
5. **Evaluate** the challenges and benefits of legal transplants, harmonisation, and pluralism in a global legal context. (*Evaluating*)

5. General Skills to Be Acquired

- Apply knowledge in practice
- Retrieve, analyse, and synthesise data and information
- Adapt to new situations
- Make decisions
- Work in an international context
- Work in an interdisciplinary team
- Generate new research ideas
- Appreciate diversity and multiculturalism
- Respect the natural environment

- Be critical and self-critical
- Advance free, creative, and causative thinking

6. Course Content (Topics)

1. What Is Comparative Law? Origins, Aims, and Methodologies

- An introduction to the discipline, its historical development, and its role in modern legal thought.

2. Legal Families and Classifications: Civil Law, Common Law, and Other Traditions

- Mapping the world's major legal systems and the criteria used to distinguish them.

3. The Civil Law Tradition: Codification, Structure, and Legal Reasoning

- Analysing Romanist foundations, key codes, and the role of doctrine and scholarship.

4. The Common Law Tradition: Case Law, Precedent, and Judicial Creativity

- Exploring judge-made law, adversarial procedure, and institutional evolution.

5. Mixed and Hybrid Systems: Legal Borrowing, Colonial Legacies, and Pluralism

- Examining jurisdictions that blend elements from multiple legal traditions.

6. Sources of Law in Comparative Perspective

- Constitutions, legislation, case law, custom, and the role of soft law across systems.

7. Courts, Legal Actors, and Legal Professions Across Legal Traditions

- Understanding the organisation of the judiciary and legal professions worldwide.

8. Styles of Legal Reasoning and Interpretation

- Contrasting doctrinal approaches, interpretive tools, and legal logic across systems.

9. Legal Transplants and the Circulation of Legal Norms

- Theories and case studies on the movement of legal ideas across borders.

Harmonisation and Legal Integration: Europe and Beyond

- The impact of EU law, international instruments, and global governance on national systems.

10. Customary, Religious, and Plural Legal Orders

- Analysing how non-state and religious norms coexist with formal legal systems.

11. Greek and Cypriot Law: Two Case Studies in Comparative Context

- Situating Greek and Cypriot law within the existing legal traditions and highlighting external and historical influences.

7. Teaching Methods

- Lectures.
- Case law workshops.
- Student presentations and structured debate.
- Guided reading and legal reasoning exercises.

8. Assessment Methods

Method	Weight	Description
Final Written Exam	70%	Essay-type and case-based questions
Mid-Term Assignment/Presentation	20%	Individual or group-based
Participation and Engagement	10%	Constructive attendance, preparedness, contribution

Note: A minimum final exam score of 50% is required to pass.

9. A. Ethics

Students are reminded that all submitted work must comply with the University's academic [integrity policy](#). Plagiarism or unauthorised collaboration will result in disciplinary measures.

B. Course Policies

- Attendance is strongly encouraged.
- All assignments must be submitted on time via the designated platform.
- Special accommodations will be made for students with documented learning or health needs in accordance with university policy.

10. Use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT)

- **Use in Teaching:** (e.g. digital slides, audiovisual aids, interactive tools like Mentimeter)
- **Use in Communication:** (e.g. E-learning platform, Zoom/Google Meet for office hours)
- **Digital Resources:** (e.g. online legal databases, podcasts, video lectures)

11. Bibliography

- Books/E-Books

Adults and Children in Postmodern Societies: A Comparative Law and Multidisciplinary Handbook (e-book). (2019). In J. Sosson & G. Willems (Eds.), *Adults and Children in Postmodern Societies*. Intersentia.
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Δεληγιάννη-Δημητράκου, Χ. (2008). *Comparative law: And the problem of the recoverability of pure economic loss*. Sakkoulas Publications S.A.

Glenn, H. P. (2014). *Legal traditions of the world: Sustainable diversity in law* (5th ed.). Oxford University Press.

Husa, J. (2024). *A research agenda for comparative law*. Edward Elgar Publishing.

International encyclopedia of comparative law. (1973). J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck); Oceana.

Kischel, Uwe., & Hammel, Andrew. (2019). *Comparative law* / Oxford University Press.

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Siems, M. M., & Yap, P. J. (Eds.). (2024). *The Cambridge handbook of comparative law*. Cambridge University Press.

Symeonides, S. (2017). *Codifying choice of law around the world: An international comparative analysis*. Oxford University Press.

Valcke, C. (2018). *Comparing law: Comparative law as reconstruction of collective commitments*. Cambridge University Press.

- Databases

Westlaw UK Academic	https://law.auth.gr/en/subscription-to-electronic-databases-2/
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HeinOnline Academic Core and Kluwer Law International Journal Library	https://law.auth.gr/en/subscription-to-electronic-databases-2/
Beck-online PREMIUM	https://law.auth.gr/en/subscription-to-electronic-databases-2/
O.U.P Oxford Public International Law	https://law.auth.gr/en/subscription-to-electronic-databases-2/
O.U.P Max Planck Encyclopedia of Comparative Constitutional Law	https://law.auth.gr/en/subscription-to-electronic-databases-2/
Dalloz.fr	https://law.auth.gr/en/subscription-to-electronic-databases-2/
JURIS Zusatzmodul Hochschulen, BGB Staudinger Online	https://law.auth.gr/en/subscription-to-electronic-databases-2/
Kluwer Law Online (30 journals)	https://law.auth.gr/en/subscription-to-electronic-databases-2/
IAReporter. Investment Arbitration Report	https://law.auth.gr/en/subscription-to-electronic-databases-2/
Cambridge Core (Law)	https://www.cambridge.org/core/browse-subjects/law
EBSCO	https://research.ebsco.com/c/quc7ji/search/advanced/filters?autocorrect=y&isDashboardExpanded=true
ProQuest Central	https://www.proquest.com/central/topicpaths/AbiGlobal_business/0?accountid=8359#0
Springer link	https://link.springer.com/
Taylor & Francis e-books	https://www.taylorfrancis.com/search?subject=SC LW
Taylor & Francis e-journals	https://www.tandfonline.com/subjects/law
The Making of Modern Law: Legal Treatises 1800-1926 (Gale)	https://go.gale.com/ps/start.do?p=MOML&u=arist&cookieConsent=true&analyticsOptout=false&aty=ip
Wiley online Library	https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/action/showPublications?startPage=&ConceptID=85