Universidad Rey Juan Carlos

TEACHING GUIDE

ARMED CONFLICTS AND INTERNATIONAL HUMANITY

GRADO EN RELACIONES INTERNACIONALES (INGLÉS)

ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-27

Q2803011B UNIVERSIDAD REY JUAN CARLOS
Fecha firma: 13/11/2026 18:33 | Hash: 7042d3139858b1a4d6a1009cffd7f06a.

Publication date: 25-06-2026

I.-Subject Identification	
Type	OBLIGATORIA
Teaching period	2 course, 1Q semester
Nº of credits	3
Language in wich the subject is taught	English

II.-Presentation

In the course "Armed Conflicts and International Humanitarian Law" it is sought that the students have a theoretical knowledge of armed conflicts in international society: evolution, characteristics,current status and interntional ruels, Internationa Humanitarianl Law (IHL) The objective of the subject is that the students have a global and critical vision of the different topics to be covered. This course will cover an important sector of international relations and public international law, such as armed conflict and international humanitarian law. In addition to giving a presentation of the characteristics of the new international conflicts, the course will focus on the legal regulation of the greatest - humanitarian, social, political and legal - crisis experienced by members of the international community: war. Furthermore, the objective of this regulation is the humanization of armed conflict, as we all know, war and war crimes constitute the most hateful of the scourges inflicted on the individual and collective dignity of the human being, without forgetting that behind them other crimes against humanity are generally carried out. We will stop at the historical evolution of International Humanitarian Law (Ius in bello and Ius ad bellum); the functions, principles and regulatory sources of this matter (the Geneva Conventions, their Additional Protocols and other international regulations); the protection of cultural property in the event of armed conflict and the protection of the environment; limiting the employment, means and methods of war (The Hague Law); the international peacekeeping forces; international responsibility and international criminal tribunals.

III.-Learning outcomes

CG03. Students must have the ability to gather and interpret relevant data in order to make value judgements that include an analysis of the relevant political, legal, social, economic, scientific and ethical issues.
CG04. Students must be able to transmit information, ideas, problems and solutions to others, be they specialised or not.
CG07. Students must be able to understand international relations from a perspective based on respect for human rights and the principles of democratic life and multicultural society.
CE01. Students must acquire general knowledge on the source, development and nature of legal systems and protocols governing actions and meetings that regulate interpersonal and institutional relations in national and international scenarios.
CE07. Students must be capable of identifying and independently analysing the main features of International security, defence and threat.
CE18. Students must acquire their own skills to carry out professional activities within the framework of international relations and protection of rights.

- Key for degrees not adapted to RD 822/21: **CB** - basic competences, **CG** - generic competences, **CE** - specific competences, **CT** - transversal competences.
- Key for degrees adapted to RD 822/21: **CON** - knowledge, **COM** - competences, **HAB** - skills.

Q2803011B UNIVERSIDAD REY JUAN CARLOS
Fecha firma: 13/11/2026 18:33 | Hash: 7042d3139858b1a4d6a1009cffd7f06a.

Q2803011B UNIVERSIDAD REY JUAN CARLOS
Fecha firma: 13/11/2026 18:33 | Hash: 7042d3139858b1a4d6a1009cffd7f06a.

IV.-Contents

IV.A.-Syllabus

Lesson I: The prohibition of the Use of Force in International Law.

1.1. The prohibition of the use of (armed) force: the scope of article 2.4 of the United Nations Charter.

1.2. The concept of aggression in the United Nations Charter system.

1.3. Exceptions to the principle of prohibition of the use of force. A) The right to legitimate individual and collective defense. B) The collective security system: the use of armed force within the framework of Chapter VII of the UN charter. C) Peacekeeping Operations: multidimensional and multilevel stabilization missions.

1.4. The role of the Rules of Engagement: ROE.

Lesson II: The New Armed Conflicts.

1. The new generations of wars: asymmetric, hybrid, diffuse, transnational, regional or internationalized.

1.1. Asymmetric Wars and Hybrid Wars.

1.2. The generations of wars and the defining elements of the Fourth Generation Wars (4GW).

1.3. The new generations of wars: the Black Mirror Wars. From the concept of human security to the principle of responsibility to protect.

2. New Actors, new means.

Lesson III: International Humanitarian Law, its Normative Nature and its Relations with other Sectors of International Law.

•Introduction to IHL
•Concept and Purpose of IHL
•International Humanitarian Law and International Human Rights Law. IHL and Criminal Interntional Law
•The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)

Lesson IV: Armed Conflicts and Guiding Principles of International humanitarian law.

•The Fundamental Distinction Between Civilians and Combatants
•Combatants and Prisoners of War
•Protection of the Wounded, Sick and Shipwrecked
•Protection of Civilians and specific gropus
•The Law of Non-International Armed Conflict

Lesson V: The Means and Methods of Waging War.

Conduct of Hostilities

Lesson VI Control and Guarantee Mechanisms for Compliance with International Humanitarian Law.

IV.B.-Training activities

Type	Title
Academic tutorials	All along the course several assginments about the content of the course will be carried out. If the circumnstances allowed it a speialized seminar would be organized in relation to the content of the course.
Oral presentations	Group Task: Analysis of a conflict
Test and/or exams	Test
Lectures	Recommended Readings
Other activities	Guest Lecturer
Theoretical sessions	Lesson 1 to 6

Other activities	Assistance to Seminar or Congress
Resolution of exercises, problems, case studies	Metodología activa. Resolución casos aportados por alumnos a clase de medios de comunicación social

Q2803011B UNIVERSIDAD REY JUAN CARLOS
Fecha firma: 13/11/2026 18:33 | Hash: 7042d3139858b1a4d6a1009cffd7f06a.

V.-Student workload	
Theoretical sessions	10
Resolution of exercises, problems, case studies, etc.	20
Practical sessions in experimental, technological and clinical laboratories, fieldwork, etc.	0
Tests and/or exams	0
Academic tutorials	3
Related activities: conferences, seminars, etc.	6
Preparation of theoretical sessions and self-study	15
Preparation of practical tasks, exercises, case studies, projects, etc.	20
Preparation for tests and/or exams	16
Total student workload	90

VI.-Methodology and academic programme

Type	Period	Content
Theoretical sessions	Week 1 to Week 15	The content of the different lessons detailed in the syllabus will be explained. Introduction to the notion of strategy and the evolution of war.
Resolution of exercises, problems, case studies	Week 2 to Week 2	How to analyse a conflict
Tests and/or exams	Week 8 to Week 8	Multiple choice test
Group work	Week 9 to Week 15	Oral Presentations
Week 7 to Week 7	Guest Lecturer	Theoretical sessions

Q2803011B UNIVERSIDAD REY JUAN CARLOS
Fecha firma: 13/11/2026 18:33 | Hash: 7042d3139858b1a4d6a1009cffd7f06a.

Q2803011B UNIVERSIDAD REY JUAN CARLOS
Fecha firma: 13/11/2026 18:33 | Hash: 7042d3139858b1a4d6a1009cffd7f06a.

VII.-Assessment methods

The general assessment method is continuous as established in the *Regulation for the Assessment of Learning Outcomes* of Rey Juan Carlos University.
All the assessment systems established in the degree report must be employed, except for those that have a minimum weight of 0%, which can be used by professors in the academic years they consider relevant. Each assessment system may be applied through one or more assessment activities, consistent with the system. No assessment activity can exceed individually 60% of the overall grade for the subject.
The sum of non re-evaluable activities cannot exceed 40% of the overall grade for the subject and, in general, should not have an established minimum grade (except for practical activities in which, strictly speaking, the conditions of the ordinary call cannot be reproduced in the extraordinary call).
Those students who do not manage to pass the subject in the ordinary call, or do not attend this first call, may attend the extraordinary call only for failed re-evaluable assessment activities.
The distribution and characteristics of the assessment activities are described below.

VII.A.-Description and weight of the assessment activities

I. Assessment tests or assessable activities

1. Oral Presentation 30%
2. Multiple Choice Exam. Non-liberatory 10%
3. Readings/Seminars/Class Assistance 10%

II. Final Exam
Multiple Choice Test + Some Program Questions

VII.B. Assessment of students with academic exemption from class attendance

Having Academic Exemption from Class Attendance (DAAC) does not imply that students are automatically exempt from participating in the continuous assessment activities or in the training activities of compulsory attendance as established in the teaching guide. Once the exemption has been granted, students must contact the subject's teaching staff, who will propose the adaptations he/she may consider relevant, as long as they guarantee the acquisition and adequate assessment of the learning goals established. Students must maintain adequate communication with the teaching staff so that they may provide information on the dates for training and assessment activities, if these are not established in the programme and available for students at the time of achieving the exemption.
Subject with possibility of academic exemption: Yes.

VII.C. Review of assessment activities

In accordance with the Regulation for the Assessment of Learning Outcomes of Rey Juan Carlos University.

VII.D.-Students with a disability or special educational needs

In order to guarantee equal opportunities, non-discrimination, universal accessibility and academic success, students with disabilities or especial education needs may request curricular adaptations to follow their studies. These adaptations will be provided by the Unit of Attention to People with Disabilities of Rey Juan Carlos University, in accordance with the regulation which regulates the service for the Attention of People with Disabilities at the University. This Unit will issue a report for curricular adaptations, so that students with disabilities or special education needs must contact the service (at e-mail discapacidad.programa@urjc.es) in order to provide relevant information for different educational alternatives.

VII.E.-Academic behaviour, academic integrity and honesty

Rey Juan Carlos University is fully committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty, so studying at the URJC means assuming and subscribing to the values of integrity and academic honesty set out in the University's Ethical Code. To support this process, the University has Rey Juan Carlos University's Academic Conduct Regulation as well as different tools (anti-plagiarism, supervision...) that offer a collective guarantee for the full development of these essential values.

Q2803011B UNIVERSIDAD REY JUAN CARLOS
Fecha firma: 13/11/2026 18:33 | Hash: 7042d3139858b1a4d6a1009cffd7f06a.

VIII.-Teaching resources and materials

Basic bibliography

Crimes Against Humanity
historical evolution and contemporary
application
M. Cherif Bassiouni
DePaul University, College of Law

The Oxford Handbook of International Law in Armed
Conflict
The Oxford Handbook of International Law in Armed Conflict
Edited by Andrew Clapham and Paola Gaeta

Geneva Conventions and the law | ICRC

Consultation bibliography

IME¿NEZ GARCI¿A, F. Conflictos Armados y Derecho Internacional Humanitario, Madrid. Tercera Edición 2021 y la Bibliografi¿a indicada en este manual.
MORA¿N BLANCO, S. y GONZA¿LEZ MARTI¿N, A., Asimetri¿a, Guerras e Informacio¿n, Dilex, Madrid 2009
GARCI¿A, C., Las “nuevas guerras” del siglo XXI. Tendencias de la conflictividad armada contempora¿nea, Institut de Cie¿ncies Poli¿tiques i Socials Barcelona, 2013.
RAMONET, I., GUERRAS DEL SIGLO XXI, NUEVOS MIEDOS, NUEVAS AMENAZAS, 2002.
HENCKAERTS, J.M. Y DOSWALD-BECK, L., Derecho Internacional Humanitario Consuetudinario, Volumen I, Normas, Traduccio¿n de Margarita Serrano Garci¿a, CICR, Buenos Aires, 2007.
RODRI¿GUEZ-VILLASANTE y PRIETO, J.L., (Coord.). Derecho Internacional Humanitario, Tirant lo Blanch, 2007.
JORGE URBINA, J., Proteccio¿n de las Vi¿ctimas de los Conflictos Armados, Naciones Unidas y Derecho Internacional Humanitario. Desarrollo y Aplicacio¿n del Principio de Distincio¿n entre Objetivos Militares y Bienes de Cara¿cter Civil. Tirant lo Blanch, Valencia, 2000.
CHRISTINE CHINKIN AND MARY KALDOR. International Law and new wars.Cambridge University Press. Cambridge. 2017.

BARASH, D. P. and WEBEL. C. Peace and Conflict Studies, SAGE, London, 2014; BAYLIS, SMITH and OWENS, Patricia (eds.), The Globalization of World Politics. An Introduction to International Relations, OUP,Oxford and New York, 2014 (Student Online Resource Centre:www.oxfordtextbooks.co.uk/orc/baylis6e/; CHAPHAM, A. (ed.), The Oxford Handbok of International Law in Armed Conflict, OUP, Oxford and New York, 2013; COLLINS, Alan, Contemporary Security Studies, OUP, Oxford and New York, 2013 (Student Online Resource Centre: www.oxfordtextbooks.co.uk/orc/collins3e/); Cruz Roja Española, Manual básico de Derechos Humanos y Derecho Internacional Humanitario, Cruz Roja Española, Madrid, 2003 (http://www.cruzroja.es/portal/page?_pageid=33,158860&_dad=portal30&_schema=PORTAL30); GOLDSTEIN, J. S. and PEVEHOUSE, J. C., International Relations, Pearson-Longman, 2014; ICRC, Customary International Humanitarian Law Database, ICRC, Geneva, 2011 (http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/publication/pcustom.htm); Henckaerts, J.M. and Doswald-Beck, L., Customary International Humanitarian Law, Vol. 1: Rules, 3rd. edition, ICRC-Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2009 (http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/documents/publication/pcustom.htm); KALSHOVEN, F. and Zegveld, L., Constraints on the Waging of War, ICRC, Geneva, 2011; SASSÒLI, M ; BOUVIER, A. and QUINTIN, A., How does Law Protect in War? Cases, Documents and Teaching Materials on Contemporary Practice in International Humanitarian Law, 3 Vols., ICRC, 2011; VIOTTI, P. R. and KAUPPI, M. V., International Relations Theory, Pearson-Longman, 2014; WILLIAMS, P. D. (ed.), Security Studies. An Introduction, Routledge, London and New York, 2013; Issues in Peace and Conflict Studies, CQ Researcher, SAGE, 2010.

Online Resources of interest: - United Nations (General: http://www.un.org/en/;Secretary-General: http://www.un.org/en/; General Assembly: http://www.un.org/en/ga/; Security Council: http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/; NATO: http://www.nato.int/; OSCE: www.osce.org; European Union (General): http://europa.eu/; EU CFSP: http://eeas.europa.eu/cfsp/index_en.htm; Resource Centre of the International Committee of the Red Cross: http://www.icrc.org/eng/resources/index.jsp; The Armed Conflict Database: (International Institute for Strategic Studies): www.iiss.org/acd.

Q2803011B UNIVERSIDAD REY JUAN CARLOS
Fecha firma: 13/11/2026 18:33 | Hash: 7042d3139858b1a4d6a1009cffd7f06a.

IX.-Professors	
Name and surname	MARÍA ÁNGELES CANO LINARES
E-mail address	angeles.cano.linares@urjc.es
Department	Derecho Público II
Campus	Madrid - Vicálvaro
Category	Titular de Universidad
Academic degree	Doctor
Person responsible for the subject	Yes
Tutorial timetable	Para consultar las tutorias póngase en contacto con el/la profesor/a a través de correo electrónico
Number of quinquennia	6
Number of sexennia	2
No. of positive evaluations by Docentia	6

Q2803011B UNIVERSIDAD REY JUAN CARLOS
Fecha firma: 13/11/2026 18:33 | Hash: 7042d3139858b1a4d6a1009cffd7f06a.