Universidad Rey Juan Carlos

TEACHING GUIDE

INTERNATIONAL CRIMINAL LAW

GRADO EN RELACIONES INTERNACIONALES (INGLÉS)

ACADEMIC YEAR 2026-27

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

II.-Presentation

International Criminal Law is a discipline in which diverse subjects such as criminal law, international law and procedural law are included. It tends to study matters such as criminal law enforcement in space, international treaties that regulate certain crimes of such nature, supranational criminal law, the international legal mechanisms, and finally the influence of Community law on Spanish criminal law.

The main objective of the subject we are dealing with now is to bring together the various interdisciplinary aspects and to interconnect them in order to provide an overview of the main aspects of the criminal prosecution of the offender who is in the territory of a State other than the one in which he committed the crime. Furthermore, International Criminal Law is essentially a body of international rules designed both to proscribe certain categories of conduct (war crimes, crimes against humanity, genocide, torture, aggression, terrorism) and to make those persons who engage in such conduct criminally liable. They consequently either authorize states, or impose upon them the obligation, to prosecute and punish such criminal conducts. In this regard, International Criminal Law regulates international proceedings before international courts and tribunals, for prosecuting and trying persons accused of such crimes (see, for instance, Antonio Cassese, International Criminal Law). The first limb makes up substantive law. Substantive Law is the set of rules indicating what acts are prohibited, with the consequence that their authors are criminally accountable for their commission; they also set out the subjective elements required for such acts to be regarded as criminalized, the possible circumstances under which persons accused of such crimes may nevertheless not be held criminally liable, and also the conditions on which states may or must, under international rules, prosecute or bring to trial persons accused of one of those crimes. This whole corpus of rules is premised on the general notion that international legal prescriptions are capable of imposing obligations directly on individuals, without the intermediary of the state wielding authority over such individuals.

The second limb makes up the rules regulating international proceedings before international criminal courts and tribunals, that is procedural criminal law, which governs the action by prosecuting authorities and the various stages of international trials. We will focus on substantive criminal law, the jurisdiction of States or international courts to pursue them, and some obstacles to pursuing certain subjects (immunities). We treat also the matter of international legal cooperation, as an essential tool to avoid impunity for individuals who cross borders.

In short, the aim is for the student to acquire a series of skills and objectives related to the content of the course program. In this way, it is very important that the student develops critical and problematic thinking; masters the capacity to analyze reality and the transcendence of the legal-criminal-international problems; acquires the capacity to reason legally and to argue and masters the basic knowledge of International Criminal Law. In order to achieve the objectives set out above, the student will have to carry out a series of essential activities to finally obtain the credits assigned to the International Criminal Law course.

On the other hand, the teaching and learning activities to be carried out will consider the classroom as the space for interaction between teachers and students. We follow a model of continuous work (evaluation assessment) in a fully face-to-face model, with synchronous and asynchronous activities. In short, the student must follow a continuous evaluation system with revaluable and non-revaluable activities specified in the evaluation section.

III.-Learning outcomes

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CG02. Students must be able to apply acquired knowledge to professional work and posses the skills that can be demonstrated by means of reasoning and defence, as well as problem-solving.
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.
CE15. Students must be capable of analysing the legal and political consequences of the decisions made by the different international protagonists within the framework of the rules and institutions recognised by States.

- 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.

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IV.-Contents

IV.A.-Syllabus

PROGRAMME
LESSON 1: Introduction. Concept, purposes and sources of Criminal Law.
LESSON 2: Concept, principles, purposes and sources of International Criminal Law (II).
LESSON 3: General Principles and Fundamentals of International Criminal Law.
LESSON 4: International Crimes (Sustantive Criminal Law). The elements of international crimes (war crimes; crimes against humanity; genocide; torture as a discrete crime; aggressions; terrorism).
LESSON 5: Prosecution and Punishment by national Jurisdiction. Legal international cooperation –extradition.Principle of universal justice. Criteria for the spatial application of Spanish Criminal Law.
LESSON 6: Prosecution and Punishment by international Courts. International judicial assistance and cooperation in criminal matters. Nüremberg and Tokyo, Ad Hoc Courts.
LESSON 7: Statute of Rome. The judicial proceeding at the International Criminal Court.
LESSON 8: European Law influences on International Criminal Law.

IV.B.-Training activities

Type	Title
Test and/or exams	Examen práctico-teórico
Practical sessions	Prácticas/ realización de un trabajo
Group work	Realización de trabajo en grupo

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V.-Student workload	
Theoretical sessions	22
Resolution of exercises, problems, case studies, etc.	6
Practical sessions in experimental, technological and clinical laboratories, fieldwork, etc.	0
Tests and/or exams	2
Academic tutorials	5
Related activities: conferences, seminars, etc.	4
Preparation of theoretical sessions and self-study	18
Preparation of practical tasks, exercises, case studies, projects, etc.	8
Preparation for tests and/or exams	25
Total student workload	90

VI.-Methodology and academic programme		
Type	**Period**	**Content**
Practical sessions	Week 11 to Week 12	Discussions and practical activities, face to face.
Theoretical sessions	Week 1 to Week 1	Simulación de casos reales y prácticos sobre crímenes internacionales que los alumnos resolverán durante las sesiones de clases.
Theoretical sessions	Week 1 to Week 2	Presentation of the subject,explanation of the evaluation system and of the methodology and theme 1.
Theoretical sessions	Week 2 to Week 35	Explanation of all the topics by synchronous video conference, during the class schedule.
Group work	Week 3 to Week 30	Discussions and group work, face to face.

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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

The final grade will be the result of a continuous evaluation system based on the following percentages, both in the January Evaluation and June Evaluation:
Regular evaluation:
-Practices 20%. On the one hand, the student, both for the ordinary and the extraordinary call, will have to carry out the practices/research work proposed by the teacher, and in the way he/she determines and participate in the chats and forums. **This assessment criterion will be 20% and can not be reevaluated.**
-Workgroup 20%. The students will make a presentation in working groups on a topic related to international law. The presentation will be theoretical and practical, with a final debate on the assigned topic. **This assessment criterion will be 20% for the ordinary and the extraordinary call and can not be reevaluated.**
-Exam 60%. On the other hand, the second assessment criterion will consist of passing the final exam. The final exam in International Criminal Law will consist of tests that combine practical and theoretical issues. In each case, a series of questions corresponding to the different topics that make up the program will be asked. This exam will have an assessment of 60% of the final mark and **will be reevaluated**. In order for these percentages to come into play, the final exam must be passed with a score of more than 5 out of 10.
Only in exceptional and especially motivated cases, the professor may incorporate adaptations. In any case, the modifications must be duly communicated at the beginning of the course to students through Aula Virtual.
Extraordinary evaluation: Students who fail to pass the ordinary evaluation, or do not present, will be the object of an extraordinary evaluation to verify the acquisition of the competencies established in the guide, only of revaluable evaluation activities.
Advanced session exam: In the appropriate cases according to the provisions of the URJC Learning Outcomes Assessment Regulations, students may request to be assessed in advance. Regarding the advanced exam, the percentages will be as follows: 40% the completion of a theoretical and practical work on the subjects of the course, and 60% the completion of a final exam. In order to pass the course in the advanced session, it will be necessary to achieve a final grade of at least 5 in the weighted average of the two parts (practical written work and final exam).

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.

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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.

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VIII.-Teaching resources and materials
Basic bibliography
AMBOS, Kai. The first judgment of the International Criminal Court (Prosecutor v. Lubanga): A comprehensive analysis of the legal issues. *International Criminal Law Review*, 2012, vol. 12, no 2, p. 115-153.
Gil Gil, A y Maculan, E. Derecho Penal Internacional, Dykinson,2019.
García Sánchez, B.: La extradición en el ordenamiento jurídico español, internacional y comunitario, Granada, 2005, Edit. Comares.
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Cassese, A. International Criminal Law, 2, Oxford University Press, third edition 2013.
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Satzger, H.: International and European Criminal Law, C.H. Beck, Hart, Nomos, 2012
AMBOS, Kai. *Treatise on international criminal law: Volume III: International criminal procedure*. Oxford University Press, 2024.
Consultation bibliography
Cassese A.; Acquaviva G.; Fan M. & Whiting, A. International Criminal Law: Cases and Commentary, Oxford, 2011.
YELA UCEDA, M. *La protección de los derechos de los refugiados desde el punto de vista del Derecho Internacional Penal.* Madrid: Aranzadi, 2023.
YELA UCEDA, M. *La violencia de género y la persecución hacia las mujeres: desafíos de la protección internacional*. Madrid: Aranzadi, 2023 (monografía exclusiva en formato online).

IX.-Professors	
Name and surname	MERCEDES YELA UCEDA
E-mail address	mercedes.yela@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	1
Number of sexennia	1
No. of positive evaluations by Docentia	2

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