

TRAFFICKING IN ARMS AND WEAPONS MATERIAL

UQ/U:VIE/UZH TRANSNATIONAL ORGANISED CRIME PROGRAM 2020–21

SYLLABUS – DRAFT ONLY

Current as on 21 September 2020



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Course description

Short summary

In this course, students undertake directed research on selected topics relating to transnational organised crime. In 2020–21 the focus is on trafficking in arms and weapons material, including criminology, international law, criminal law, and law enforcement.

The course is designed for students to conduct independent, guided research in an international context and to equip students with advanced research, communication, presentation, writing and team-work skills, specifically in this field of study. Students in this course gain a general understanding of the criminology, policies, and laws relating to this topic, liaise with key stakeholders in the field, and have an opportunity to present their research findings to an academic audience and publish their written material.

The joint Transnational Organised Crime program at the Universities of Queensland, Vienna, and Zurich

Purpose

The joint Transnational Organised Crime program at the University of Queensland (Brisbane, Australia), the University of Vienna (Austria), and the University of Zurich (Switzerland) involves an international network of emerging and established scholars working within a structured research and learning framework to produce high quality research outcomes on a topic of current, international concern. The research is coordinated by professorial, mid-level and junior academic staff who guide and supervise undergraduate and postgraduate students who are engaged in research-based learning for academic credit.

The objectives of this initiative are to:

- Foster international research and learning cooperation and build strategic partnerships;
- Produce research outcomes (including presentations, books, articles, and websites) on topics of contemporary significance relating to transnational organised crime in the fields of criminal law, criminology, criminal procedure, international criminal law, and associated fields;
- Train undergraduate and postgraduate students in presentation skills, research techniques, academic writing and publication in their field of study;
- Build linkages between undergraduate, postgraduate, and doctoral students and academic staff, both locally and internationally, and create a continuing network of emerging and established scholars;
- Develop a recognised research capacity and an environment suitable for competitive grant applications and industry linkages;
- Promote higher research degrees; and
- Enhance the undergraduate and postgraduate student learning experience.

Concept

Under the overarching theme of 'transnational organised crime', every year a specific research topic of particular significance is chosen by the programme coordinators. In 2020–21 the focus is on trafficking in arms and weapons material.

A total of 18 students, six from each university, participate in, and complete the programme for academic credit each year. The participating students are supervised by a minimum of three academic staff who coordinate the teaching component of the programme, guide the research process, supervise the participating students, and, supported by other experts and guest presenters, deliver training on presentation skills, academic writing, and critical analysis of the literature in this field of study. At the end of the student learning component, the academic staff compile, edit, and publish the research outcomes.

Schedule and organisation

Students in the discipline of law (third year or higher) from the participating institutions apply for participation in the programme and will be vetted through a selection process, taking into account, inter alia, students' academic performance, prior research experience, foreign language abilities, and statement of interest.

Students choose and commence their research projects in October and, for the following three months, undertake research under the supervision of the academic staff and meet regularly to discuss their research process and gain additional research and presentation skills training. During this period, students work at their home university. In addition, an online platform is used to enable communication between all participants, provide access to key reading and learning material, and to share resources and research findings.

In February, students and academic staff from the three participating universities come together for a period of one week to present their research projects and initial findings, attend workshops and lectures by the academic staff and guest presenters, critique each other's work, and develop a research plan for the next phase of their projects. In February 2021, the joint teaching will take place at the University of Zurich, Switzerland between 8 and 12 February 2021.* Student presentations (duration 50 mins each including presentation, discussion, and feedback) are graded according to academic standards (of their home institution). Students obtain extensive feedback with instructions for the further direction of their research projects.

From February until late April, students continue their research under the supervision of the academic staff and meet regularly at their home institution to further develop their academic writing skills and learn how to critically engage with the literature and develop observations and recommendations relevant to their projects. Students submit their research papers in early May for assessment by the academic staff.

In May and June, academic staff and students collaborate to edit papers for publication. This offer only extends to papers of a suitable quality.

* Should travel to Switzerland not be possible at that time, alternative dates or arrangements will be made.

Course coordinators and contact details

University of Queensland

Professor Dr Andreas Schloenhardt

School of Law

W469 Forgan Smith Building, St Lucia Campus, Brisbane Qld 4072, Australia

a.schloenhardt@uq.edu.au, phone: 07 3365 6191

University of Vienna

Professor Dr Susanne Reindl-Krauskopf

Rechtswissenschaftliche Fakultät, Institut für Strafrecht und Kriminologie

Schenkenstrasse 4, 1010 Wien, Austria

Susanne.reindl@univie.ac.at, phone: 01 4277 34611

Professor Dr Andreas Schloenhardt

Rechtswissenschaftliche Fakultät, Institut für Strafrecht und Kriminologie

Schenkenstrasse 4, 1010 Wien, Austria

andreas.schloenhardt@univie.ac.at, phone: 01 4277 34618

Dr Monika Stempkowski

Rechtswissenschaftliche Fakultät, Institut für Strafrecht und Kriminologie

Schenkenstrasse 4, 1010 Wien, Austria

monika.stempkowski@univie.ac.at, phone: 01 4277 34623

University of Zurich

Professor Dr Christian Schwarzenegger

Rechtswissenschaftliches Institut

Treichlerstrasse 10, 8032 Zurich, Switzerland

christian.schwarzenegger@rwi.uzh.ch, phone: 044 634 3063

Dr Gian Ege

Rechtswissenschaftliches Institut

Treichlerstrasse 10, 8032 Zurich, Switzerland

gian.ege@rwi.uzh.ch, phone: 044 634 3063

Learning platform, research library, online communication and cooperation

The Moodle learning platform of the University of Vienna will be used for staff and students to communicate and collaborate with each other and to build an electronic library of key primary and secondary sources. Regular cooperation and exchange

between all participants will take place through this platform beyond the main teaching dates set out below.

Focus: Trafficking in arms and weapons material

Introduction and background

Trafficking in arms and weapons material is, perhaps, one of the most notorious forms of organised crime, not least because of traditional concepts linking criminal organisations to threats and violence as well as to the international arms trade. Criminal organisations are widely believed to engage in the trafficking of firearms, ammunition, military equipment, weapons material, including nuclear material. Some of the conceptions have been fuelled by the movie industry and mass media and are not always backed up by real world examples. Importantly, corruption and other forms of collusion with government entities play an important role in enabling and facilitating trafficking in arms and weapons material, as do links between criminal elements and the arms industry.

In 2020-21, the Transnational Organised Crime course explores trafficking in arms and weapons material in all its dimensions, including the international and national legal frameworks against this phenomenon, its levels and characteristics in selected places, and enforcement and industry measures adopted to prevent and suppress this illicit trade.

Research topics 2020–21

Students participating in this course can choose their research topic from the list of topics set out below. These topics seek to capture the many criminological, psychological, international and domestic law facets and perspectives of this topic. Students are required to present their research findings in class during the course days in February 2021 and submit a written, fully referenced research paper by 5 May 2021.

In 2020–21 the research topics focus on criminal law, international law, and criminological aspects of trafficking in arms and weapons material.

(1) International frameworks

The following topics examine international concepts and frameworks relating to trafficking in arms weapons material. This includes topics concerning controversies over definitions and concepts of different kinds of weapons et cetera, topics critically examining the development, content, and application of relevant international treaties, and topics critically exploring the mandate and work of selected international and non-governmental organisations.

- 1.1. Definitions of arms, weapons, military equipment, ammunition et cetera: concepts and controversies*
- 1.2. United Nations Protocol against the Illicit Manufacturing of and Trafficking in Firearms, their Parts and Components, and Ammunition*
- 1.3. Arms Trade Treaty*
- 1.4. International law relating to illegal trade in weapons material and military equipment (excluding firearms and firearms ammunition): An Overview
- 1.5. International law relating to illegal trade of nuclear material*
- 1.6. Mandate and role of United Nations agencies concerning firearms*

- 1.7. The Wassenaar Arrangement on Export Controls for Conventional Arms and Dual-Use Goods and Technologies*
- 1.8. Small Arms Survey and other global non-governmental organisation working on firearms control*
- 1.9. Mandate and work of the IAEA concerning illegal trade in and criminal use of nuclear material*

(2) Domestic offences

The following topics identify, outline, and critically examine relevant criminal offences, their elements, and their interpretation by the courts and academic literature.

- 2.1. Criminal offences in Australian law relating to illegal trade in firearms and ammunition
- 2.2. Criminal offences in Austrian law relating to illegal trade in firearms and ammunition
- 2.3. Criminal offences in Swiss law relating to illegal trade in firearms and ammunition
- 2.4. Criminal offences in Australian law relating to illegal trade in military equipment and weapons material
- 2.5. Criminal offences in Austrian law relating to illegal trade in military equipment and weapons material
- 2.6. Criminal offences in Swiss law relating to illegal trade in military equipment and weapons material

(3) Criminological perspectives

The following topics explore selected criminological aspects of trafficking in arms and weapons material. In general, these projects seek to document the scale and manifestations of selected crime types (in specific locations).

- 3.1. Levels and characteristics of the illegal trade in military equipment and weapons material in Europe
- 3.2. Organised crime and trafficking in firearms, their parts and components, and ammunition (global)
- 3.3. Organised crime, terrorism, and the illegal trade in nuclear material: historical and current perspectives
- 3.4. Corruption and trafficking in arms and weapons material
- 3.5. Gun-related crime in Australia: overview and recent developments
- 3.6. Levels and characteristics of trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition in Australia
- 3.7. Gun-related crime in Austria: overview and recent developments
- 3.8. Levels and characteristics of trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition in Austria
- 3.9. Gun-related crime in Switzerland: overview and recent developments
- 3.10. Levels and characteristics of trafficking in firearms, their parts and components and ammunition in Switzerland

(4) Enforcement and procedure

The following topic examines the role and investigative tools and methods used by/available to law enforcement agencies to detect and combat trafficking in arms and weapons material.

- 4.1 Law enforcement and investigation measures relating to trafficking in firearms: a toolkit of international best practice

(5) Industry perspectives

The following topics provide some insight into the legal firearms and ammunitions markets and into the legal and regulatory measures taken to keep this industry free from criminal elements and to ensure that firearms and ammunition do not end up in the hands of criminal elements,

- 5.1 Levels, characteristics, and regulations concerning firearms and ammunition manufacturing and sale in Australia
- 5.2 Levels, characteristics, and regulations concerning firearms and ammunition manufacturing and sale in Austria
- 5.3 Levels, characteristics, and regulations concerning firearms and ammunition manufacturing and sale in Switzerland

Discussant

Each student will act as the discussant of another student's research project. The role of the discussant is to offer support and feedback and provide some peer review of draft presentations and research papers. The discussant will provide oral feedback on the presentation of the research project and may provide written feedback on a draft of the research paper. Discussants will be assigned after the initial planning meetings in October.

Schedule 2020–21

Application and selection process

Students in the discipline of law (third year or higher) from the participating institutions are invited to apply for participation in the programme. Students from other relevant disciplines, including, inter alia, international relations, sociology, political science, and journalism, psychology who are not also enrolled in a law degree should contact the course coordinator at their home institution to check their eligibility.

Prerequisites for law student applicants

UQ Successful completion of LAWS2113 or LAWS2700 (Criminal Law) with a grade 5 or higher

U:Vie at least three years (six semester) of study; successful completion of Modulprüfung Strafrecht by 1 October 2021 is desirable but not mandatory; doctoral candidates and students from other disciplines may also apply.

UZH Successful completion of Strafrecht 1 and 2

Application documents

Application documents must include:

- cover letter not exceeding one page including statement of interest
- full curriculum vitae
- (unofficial) academic transcript (Sammelzeugnis)

Students must submit their application before the deadline stipulated below (c.o.b.) to the course-coordinator at their home institutions.

Selection process

Student applicants will be vetted through a selection process, taking into account, inter alia, students' academic performance, prior research experience, foreign language abilities, their statement of interest relating to the format and topic of the programme, and their availability to conduct the research and complete the milestones required by this programme. Students may be asked to participate in a group or individual interview.

Travel stipends

U:Vie Each successful applicant will receive a travel stipend of EUR 500.

UQ t.b.d.

Timetable 2020–21

(all times are local)	University of Queensland	University of Vienna	University of Zurich
Deadline for student applications	30 September 2020	4 October 2020	5 October 2020
Course introduction, allocation of research topics	8 October 2020 5:00–6:30pm online (zoom)	6 October 2020 2:00–4:00pm Seminarraum, Schenkenstrasse 4	5 October 2020 4:00–5:30pm Room TBD
Get-to-know zoom meeting	October 2020 t.b.d.	October 2020 t.b.d.	October 2020 t.b.d.
Research training	26 October 2020 4-600pm online (zoom)	28 October 2020 2:00–5:00pm Room TBD	November 2020 Time t.b.a. Room t.b.a.
Discussion of research outline	14 December 2020 5:00–7:30pm online (zoom)	7 December 2020 2:00–5:00pm Seminarraum, Schenkenstrasse 4	December 2020
Academic presentation training	14 January 2021 12:00–3:00pm Room TBD	22 January 2021 2:00–5:00pm Seminarraum, Schenkenstrasse 4	December 2021 Time t.b.a. Room t.b.a.
Latest arrival in Zurich	7 February 2021	7 February 2021	n.a.
Joint teaching dates, Zurich Room TBD, University of Zurich		Monday, 8 February 2021, 10:00am-3:30pm Tuesday, 9 February 2021, 10:00am-3:30pm Wednesday, 10 February 2021, 10:00am-3:30pm Thursday, 11 February 2021, 10:00am-3:30pm Friday, 12 February 2021, 10:00am-3:30pm	
Earliest departure from Zurich	13 February 2021	13 February 2021	n.a.
Debrief and further development of research project	26 February 2021 1:00–3:00pm Room TBD	TBD	TBD
Academic writing, critical engagement with literature	19 March 2021 1:00-4:00pm Room TBD	TBD	TBD
From paper to publication	27 April 2021 4:00-6:00pm Room TBD	TBD	TBD
Submission of research paper	5 May 2021 2:00pm	5 May 2021 2:00pm	5 May 2021 2:00pm
Publication meeting	Late May	Early June	Late May

(all times are local)	University of Queensland	University of Vienna	University of Zurich
	Time t.b.d.	Time t.b.d.	Time t.b.d.
	Room t.b.d	Room t.b.d	Room t.b.d

Joint teaching dates, Zurich, February 2021

Note: should the dates in February 2021 not be feasible due to travel restrictions, alternative arrangements/dates will be announced.

Sunday, 7 February 2021

Arrival of participants

6:00pm Informal welcome drinks

Monday, 8 February 2021

10:00am Introduction
 10:30am interactive session
 12:00pm Lunch break
 12:40am Student presentation
 1:30pm Student presentation
 2:20pm Coffee break
 2:35pm Student presentation
 3:25pm Reflection, outcomes of the day
 7:30pm Welcome dinner

Tuesday, 9 February 2021

10:00am Guest presentation
 10:45am Coffee break
 11:00am Student presentation
 11:50pm Student presentation
 12:40am Lunch break
 1:10pm Student presentation
 2:00pm Student presentation
 2:50pm Student presentation
 3:40pm Reflection, outcomes of the day

Wednesday, 10 February 2021

10:00am Student presentation
10:50am Student presentation
11:40am Coffee Break
12:00pm Student presentation
12:50pm Break
2:00pm Local excursion

Thursday, 11 February 2021

10:00am Guest presentation
11:00am Coffee break
11:15am Student presentation
12:05pm Student presentation
12:55pm Lunch break
1:40pm Student presentation
2:30pm Student presentation
3:20pm Reflection, outcomes of the day

Friday, 12 February 2021

10:00am Student presentation
10:50am Student presentation
11:40am Lunch break
12:10pm Student presentation
1:00pm Further work: research papers and publication
2:00pm Course evaluation and discussion
2:30pm Close

Assessment

The assessment involves two pieces: a presentation and a research paper. To receive a passing grade, both pieces must be attempted.

Marks and grades will be awarded according to the following scale.

University of Queensland		University of Vienna		University of Zurich	
Grade	Marks	Grade	Marks	Grade	Marks
7 – high distinction	85–100	1+	95-100	6 – ausgezeichnet	85-100
		1 - sehr gut	91-94		
		1-	87-90		
6 - distinction	75–84	2+	83-86	5.5 - sehr gut	79-84
		2 - gut	79-82		
		2-	75-79	5 - gut	72-78
5 - credit	65–74	3+	71-74		
		3 befriedigend	67-70		
		3-	63-66		
4 - pass	50–64	4+	58-62	4 - genügend	51–60
		4 genügend	54-57		
		4-	50-53		
3–1 - fail	49–0	5 – nicht genügend	49-0	3.5-1 – nicht genügend	50–0

Presentation

(UQ + UZH: 40% of final grade; U:Vie: assessment for winter semester)

All students must work on a designated research topic and present their research findings in class. Each topic will be assigned a specific presentation date and time; these are not negotiable.

Students present their projects in a 20-minute presentation, followed by 20 minutes of discussion and 10mins of feedback.

Students have the option to work together on one topic and present as a team. Research papers, however, must be written and submitted individually.

Grading criteria:

- Outline, introduce, explain the research topic;
- Critically analyse and explore relevant issues;
- Structure and weight relevant issues;
- Develop alternative strategies and recommendation for reform;
- Visualise and communicate research outcomes clearly;
- Discuss topical issues in an open forum; and
- Conduct in-depth research using information and literature of highest quality.

Presentations must be held in English only.

Research paper

(UQ + UZH: 60% of final grade; U:Vie: assessment for summer semester, sowie Möglichkeit der Approbation)

Each student must submit an individual, written report of his/her research topic (fully footnoted and referenced according to the *Australian Guide to Legal Citation* (University of Melbourne, 4th edition). All papers must have an introduction, conclusion and a bibliography. The word limit for the papers is 7000 words (for UQ students, and UZH students choosing 6 ECTS; higher requirements apply for students choosing 12 or 18 ECTS for their Masters Thesis at UZH); 50,000 characters (minimum requirement for U:Vie Diploma students)]. The assessment is, however, based on quality, not quantity.

Grading criteria:

- Identify, scope, introduce, and state the significance of the research project;
- Critically analyse and explore relevant issues;
- Structure and weight relevant issues;
- Develop alternative strategies and recommendation for reform;
- Communicate clearly and efficiently in a written paper; and
- Conduct in-depth research using information and literature of highest quality.

Students have a choice to write their paper either in English, French or German.

Due date for submission: 5 May 2021, 2:00pm (14:00) local time.

