UCL SUMMER SCHOOL

LAW, LAWYERS AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Key Information

Module code ISSU0045
Taught during Session One: Monday 1 July - Friday 19 July 2019
Module workload 45 teaching hours plus approximately 100 study hours
Module leader Jacqueline Kinghan
Department Faculty of Laws
Credit 15 UCL credits, 7.5 ECTS, 4 US
Level Level 1, first year Undergraduate
Pre-requisites Standard entry requirements
Assessment Presentation (20%)
            Essay (80%)

Module Overview

This module will consider the role that law plays in society, with a particular focus on the ways in which lawyers can achieve social change. The module is rooted broadly in law and social sciences and will be richly interdisciplinary in its approach. It will introduce students to conceptions of social justice and to the lawyer-client relationship. Thereafter, students will consider the role of charities and NGOs in advocating and campaigning on social welfare and human rights. They will critically reflect on practical scenarios and real life campaigns and will be challenged to think about the law, and its limitations, in responding to social need. By the end of the module students will be able to question their assumptions about the ways in which the law is constructed and understood in society, as well as the ways in which lawyers achieve, or might fail to achieve, social justice.

Week One:

Introduction to Social Justice
• Introduction to Law and Society
• What is Social Justice?
• Accessing the Courts
• Excursion – Court Visit 1

Week Two:

The Role of Lawyers in Society
• Lawyers and Clients
• Legal Ethics and Access to Justice
• Pro Bono & Corporate Social Responsibility
• Excursion – Court Visit 2

Please note that this module description is indicative and may be subject to change.
Week Three:
Advocacy and Campaigns
- Public Interest Law
- Lawyers and Social Change
- Advocacy and Campaigns
- Case Study Workshop & Presentation

Module Aims
The module aims to introduce students to the role of legal institutions, and the lawyers working within them, in responding to concerns about social justice and equality. It will further introduce students to the significance of human rights in shaping social policy and will facilitate an understanding of the role of NGOs and charities in providing legal advice and campaigning on access to justice and social justice issues. The module intends to foster students’ awareness of the inter-relationship between law and broader social justice issues and will provide an introduction to ethical awareness and practical problem solving in professional legal practice. Finally, the module introduces students to the UCL Grand Challenges theme of Justice and Equality in both theory and practice, while being alive to current social, economic and political context.

Teaching Methods
The module will be mostly seminar based, complemented by lectures. Students will engage in classroom debates and will also participate in an advocacy workshop, where they will design a campaign around a strategic legal case. Students will also have the opportunity to participate in simulated lawyer-client interviews on relevant social welfare / human rights issues. Students will engage in private reading for seminars, which will inform their research essay to be submitted for assessment. Finally, students will undertake two court visits and will thereafter participate in two reflective tutorials on issues faced by litigants in court. Student support will be provided via seminars/tutorials and weekly office hours.

Learning Outcomes
Upon successful completion of this module, students will:
- Be able to critically evaluate the role of the law in addressing social justice issues
- Understand and be able to describe the role of the lawyer and / or legal NGO within the wider justice system
- Be able to apply theory critically to analyse human rights / access to justice campaigns and case studies and evaluate their impact;
- Have developed team working, communication and presentation skills;
- Have employed appropriate problem solving techniques in practical case study scenarios.

Assessment Methods
- 10 minute presentation (20%)
- 2,500 word essay (80%)

Key Texts
Scott L. Cummings, The Paradox of Professionalism: Lawyers and the Possibility of Justice (CUP, 2011)
Austin Sarat and Stuart Scheingold, Cause Lawyering: Political Commitments and Professional Responsibilities (OUP, 1998)
Austin Sarat and Stuart Scheingold, The Cultural Lives of Cause Lawyers (CUP, 2008)
David Miller, Principles of Social Justice (HUP, 1999)
Kate Nash, The Cultural Politics of Human Rights (CUP, 2009)