SDI-EUA 2110

**The Law and Institutions of the European Union**

**Total number of lectures: 10 hours**

**Credits: 6 credits**

**Examining: exam, final examination**

**Lecturer: Dr. Töttős Ágnes**

**Themes:**

The course intends to raise and explain the basic issues of the operation, the institutional composition and the policy instruments of the European Union. As the result of half a century of gradual progress and expansion, the EU has emerged as the defining framework for the understanding of European politics and economic integration. The directions and meaning of European political, economic and social transformations cannot be properly grasped without the identification of the rules and organisational machinery, the policy tools and political division of responsibilities within the European system of multilevel governance.

The outlined course of examination opens with the contours of the historical context and the evolution from the foundation to the current state of the European Union with an overview of the deepening and widening of integration. It continues with the definition of the political and constitutional nature of this particular “European creature”. Then, the focus shifts onto the determination of the principal institutional features, the characteristics of the legal system and the decision-making mechanism of the European Union.

The main topics of the course

1. The evolution of integration and the emergence of the EU constitutional order: from regional free-trade association to political and economic union
2. Primary sources of EU law: layers of fundamental accords (Rome, Single European Act, Maastricht, Amsterdam, Nice, Lisbon and accession treaties) and international agreements
3. The characteristics of the secondary sources of EU law: regulation, directive, decision, recommendation and opinion as legislative acts of community institutions
4. The application of EU law in Member States: implementation, direct effect and direct applicability, proportionality and legal certainty
5. The principal institutions of the European Union (I.): the Council of the EU - its functions, operational methods and levels, and its supportive organisational structure (General Secretariat)
6. The principal institutions of the European Union (II.): The European Commission – composition, responsibilities, functions, instruments of action, agencies under its direction
7. The principal institutions of the European Union (III.): The European Parliament and its election, members, organisation, competencies and its place in the institutional balance
8. The principal institutions of the European Union (IV.): The European Court of Justice (ECJ): jurisdiction, procedure and its place in the system of judicial remedies on the basis of EU law
9. Decision- and law-making process: legislative procedures (ordinary and special legislative procedures), voting system within the Union (unanimity and qualified majority), delegation and comitology
10. Multilevel governance in the EU: sovereignty, supra-nationality and subsidiarity in the division of roles and competencies (exclusive, shared, complementary) among the main institutions, community method and intergovernmental co-ordination
11. Unity, flexibility and transformation in the EU: enlargement, multi-speed integration and enhanced co-operation
12. The foreign relations and international legal status of the EU: representation, accords with third parties (states and international organisations) and means of external impact

Required reading:

* Allan F. Tatham: EC law in practice - a case-study approach, HVG-ORAC, 2006 (Chapter I-III.)
* Horváth Zoltán: Handbook on the European Union, HVG-ORAC, 2012 (Foruth Edition) (Sections indicated by the lecturer)
* Gráinne de Búrca – Paul Craig: EU law – text, cases, materials, Oxford University Press (Fith edition), 2011 (Chapters 1-10.)
* Alan Hardacre: How the EU Institutions Work and... How to work with the EU Institutions, John Harper Publishing, 2011

The European Union after the Treaty of Lisbon, Edited by: Diamond Ashiagbor, Nicola Countouris, Ioannis Lianos, Cambridge University Press, 2012