

# LA217-30 Social Theory of Law

**24/25**

**Department**

School of Law

**Level**

Undergraduate Level 2

**Module leader**

Henrique Carvalho

**Credit value**

30

**Module duration**

20 weeks

**Assessment**

40% coursework, 60% exam

**Study location**

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

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## Description

### Introductory description

This module provides an introduction to contemporary theories and debates about law as a part of modern society.

[Module web page](#)

### Module aims

The module is jointly taught by members of the School of Law and the Department of Sociology. It provides an introduction to contemporary theories and debates about law as a part of modern society. During the course of the module main schools and theorists of relevance to an understanding of the role of law in modern society will be discussed.

### Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

critical legal theories

law and capitalism

human rights theory

feminist jurisprudence

law and liberalism

theories of justice

legal pluralism

law and discourse

legal positivism

systems theory of law

## **Learning outcomes**

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Understand the social, political and historical context in which social theories of law have emerged
- Apply their knowledge in critical discussions and comparisons of theoretical approaches
- Identify and use primary and secondary theoretical materials in books and journal articles
- Critically evaluate the analytical potentials and limits of theoretical concepts Critically assess domestic origins and international relevance of theoretical concepts
- Arrive at their own positions from which they understand social theories of law through analysis and critique
- Express their own position within the complexities of the relevant arguments in writing, as well as orally
- Work in teams, taking account of expressed opinions and dealing with them effectively, word processing skills
- Being able to critically analyse and compare main concepts in social theory of law
- Demonstrate an in-depth knowledge and understanding of theoretical approaches in the area of social theory of law

## **Indicative reading list**

Recommended readings: R. Banakar, M. Travers (eds.), *Law and Social Theory*. Second edition. Oxford: Hart 2013 and R. Nobles, D. Schiff, *A Sociology of Jurisprudence*. Oxford: Hart 2006.

Suggested background readings: R. Nobles, D. Schiff, *Observing Law through Systems Theory*. Oxford: Hart 2012 and S. Veitch, E. Christodoulidis, M. Goldoni, *Jurisprudence. Themes and Concepts*. Third edition. London and New York: Routledge 2018.

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

## **Interdisciplinary**

This module is taught jointly with the Sociology department and provides an introduction to contemporary theories and debates about law as part of a modern society.

## Subject specific skills

No subject specific skills defined for this module.

## Transferable skills

No transferable skills defined for this module.

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## Study

### Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	36 sessions of 1 hour (12%)
Seminars	14 sessions of 1 hour (5%)
Private study	250 hours (83%)
Total	300 hours

### Private study description

Private study.

## Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

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## Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

### Assessment group D5

	Weighting	Study time
2500 word essay	40%	
Essay on a given topic		
Online Examination	60%	
~Platforms - AEP		

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## Weighting

## Study time

- Online examination: No Answerbook required

## Feedback on assessment

Coursework feedback via Tabula. Exam feedback given in one to one sessions in October by student request, with generic feedback posted to Moodle.

[Past exam papers for LA217](#)

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## Availability

### Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 2 of ULAA-ML34 BA in Law and Sociology (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M135 Undergraduate Law and Sociology
- Year 2 of ULAA-ML33 Undergraduate Law and Sociology

This module is Optional for:

- USOA-L301 BA in Sociology
  - Year 2 of L301 Sociology
  - Year 2 of L301 Sociology
  - Year 2 of L301 Sociology
  - Year 2 of L304 Sociology with Specialism in Research Methods
- UIBA-MN34 Law and Business Four Year (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 3 of MN34 Law and Business Studies Four Year (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 4 of MN34 Law and Business Studies Four Year (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M130 Undergraduate Law
- ULAA-M300 Undergraduate Law
  - Year 2 of M300 Law
  - Year 3 of M300 Law
- ULAA-M105 Undergraduate Law (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 2 of M105 Law (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 2 of M105 Law (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 3 of M105 Law (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 3 of M105 Law (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M131 Undergraduate Law (4 Year)
- ULAA-M106 Undergraduate Law (4 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 2 of M106 Law (4 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 3 of M106 Law (4 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 4 of M106 Law (4 year) (Qualifying Degree)

- ULAA-M104 Undergraduate Law (Year Abroad)
  - Year 2 of M104 Law (Year Abroad)
  - Year 4 of M104 Law (Year Abroad)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M132 Undergraduate Law (Year Abroad)
- ULAA-M108 Undergraduate Law (Year Abroad) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 2 of M108 Law (Year Abroad) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 2 of M108 Law (Year Abroad) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 4 of M108 Law (Year Abroad) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 4 of M108 Law (Year Abroad) (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 3 of UIBA-MN31 Undergraduate Law and Business Studies
- UIBA-MN32 Undergraduate Law and Business Studies
  - Year 3 of MN32 Law and Business Studies (Four-Year)
  - Year 4 of MN32 Law and Business Studies (Four-Year)
- UIBA-MN37 Undergraduate Law and Business Studies (Qualifying Degree) with Intercalated Year
  - Year 4 of MN37 Law and Business Studies (Qualifying Degree) with Intercalated Year
  - Year 5 of MN37 Law and Business Studies (Qualifying Degree) with Intercalated Year
- UIBA-MN35 Undergraduate Law and Business Studies with Intercalated Year (3+1)
  - Year 3 of MN35 Law and Business Studies with Intercalated Year (3+1)
  - Year 4 of MN35 Law and Business Studies with Intercalated Year (3+1)
- UIBA-MN36 Undergraduate Law and Business Studies with Intercalated Year (4+1)
  - Year 4 of MN36 Law and Business Studies with Intercalated Year (4+1)
  - Year 5 of MN36 Law and Business Studies with Intercalated Year (4+1)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M133 Undergraduate Law with French Law
- Year 2 of ULAA-M10A Undergraduate Law with French Law (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M134 Undergraduate Law with German Law
- Year 2 of ULAA-M10C Undergraduate Law with German Law (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 3 of ULAA-M110 Undergraduate Law with Humanities (3 Year)
- Year 2 of ULAA-M136 Undergraduate Law with Humanities (3 Year)
- ULAA-M113 Undergraduate Law with Humanities (4 Year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 2 of M113 Law with Humanities (4 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 3 of M113 Law with Humanities (4 year) (Qualifying Degree)
- ULAA-M115 Undergraduate Law with Social Sciences (3 Year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 2 of M115 Law with Social Sciences (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 2 of M115 Law with Social Sciences (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
- UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 3 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 3 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
- Year 4 of UPHA-V7MX Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law (with Intercalated Year)
- Year 2 of USOA-L314 Undergraduate Sociology and Criminology

This module is Unusual option for:

- UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law

- Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
- Year 3 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
- Year 3 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
- Year 4 of UPHA-V7MX Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law (with Intercalated Year)

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 4 of ULAA-M10A Undergraduate Law with French Law (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 4 of ULAA-M10C Undergraduate Law with German Law (Qualifying Degree)
- Year 4 of ULAA-M113 Undergraduate Law with Humanities (4 Year) (Qualifying Degree)
- ULAA-M115 Undergraduate Law with Social Sciences (3 Year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 3 of M115 Law with Social Sciences (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)
  - Year 3 of M115 Law with Social Sciences (3 year) (Qualifying Degree)

This module is Option list B for:

- USOA-L301 BA in Sociology
  - Year 2 of L305 Sociology with Specialism in Cultural Studies
  - Year 2 of L303 Sociology with Specialism in Gender Studies
  - Year 2 of L302 Sociology with Specialism in Social Policy
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL15 Undergraduate History and Sociology (with a term in Venice)
- Year 2 of UPOA-ML13 Undergraduate Politics and Sociology

This module is Option list D for:

- Year 2 of UHIA-VL13 Undergraduate History and Sociology
- Year 2 of UHIA-VL15 Undergraduate History and Sociology (with a term in Venice)

This module is Option list E for:

- UPHA-V7MW Undergraduate Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law
  - Year 2 of V7MW Politics, Philosophy and Law