



COURSE UNIT (MODULE) DESCRIPTION

Course unit (module) title	Code
Legal Challenges of Contemporary Hybrid Conflicts	

Lecturer(s)	Department(s)
Coordinator: Dr. Alaa Al Aridi Other(s):	Vilnius University, Faculty of Law, Department of Public Law Sauletekio av. 9, Building 1, LT-10222, Vilnius, 405 room, phone (8 5) 2366175, e-mail: vtkatedra@tf.vu.lt

Study cycle	Type of the course unit (module)
Second	Optional

Mode of delivery	Course unit delivery period	Language(s) of instruction
Face-to-face	9 (autumn) semester	English

Requirements for students	
Pre-requisites: Familiarity with public international law	Co-requisites (if any): none

Number of credits allocated	Total student's workload	Contact hours	Self-study hours
5	133	32	101

Purpose of the course unit (module): programme competences to be developed		
This course is structured to provide a comprehensive analysis of the legal frameworks that apply to modern hybrid conflicts, to develop abilities to identify and systemically analyse the legal challenges presented by hybrid warfare in the 21st century, with a focus on the role of cyber-attacks, non-state armed groups, and lawfare, ethical and moral implications. Students will be well-equipped to address these complex challenges at the international level.		
Learning outcomes of the course unit (module)	Teaching and learning methods	Assessment methods
Students will be able to identify and describe the various forms of hybrid warfare, including the use of cyber-attacks, non-state armed groups, and lawfare.	The teaching method for this course will be interactive, combining traditional lectures, seminars (group discussions, case studies, guest speakers, and simulations) and individual studies (analyses of relevant legal frameworks and academic literature, preparation of a research project).	Will be based on theoretical knowledge, group presentations, class participation, case studies, and a final research project focused on applying legal principles to real-world scenarios related to the course.
Students will develop the ability to analyze and apply legal frameworks related to hybrid warfare, such as state responsibility, attribution, principles of IHL and the prohibition on the use of force.	The teaching method for this course will be interactive, combining traditional lectures, seminars (group discussions, case studies, guest speakers, and simulations) and individual studies (analyses of relevant legal frameworks and academic literature, preparation of a research project).	Will be based on theoretical knowledge, group presentations, class participation, case studies, and a final research project focused on applying legal principles to real-world scenarios related to the course.
Students will be able to analyze the role of cyber-attacks in contemporary conflicts, including the legal challenges of attribution and response.	The teaching method for this course will be interactive, combining traditional lectures, seminars (group discussions, case studies, guest speakers, and simulations) and individual studies (analyses of relevant legal frameworks and academic literature, preparation of a research project).	Will be based on theoretical knowledge, group presentations, class participation, case studies, and a final research project focused on applying legal principles to real-world scenarios related to the course.
Students will be able to critically evaluate the use of non-state actors in hybrid warfare, including private military contractors and terrorist groups, from a legal and ethical perspective.	The teaching method for this course will be interactive, combining traditional lectures, seminars (group discussions, case studies, guest speakers, and simulations) and individual studies (analyses of relevant legal frameworks and academic literature, preparation of a research project).	Will be based on theoretical knowledge, group presentations, class participation, case studies, and a final research project focused on applying legal principles to real-world scenarios related to the course.
Students will be able to develop legal	The teaching method for this course will be	Will be based on theoretical

effective responses to hybrid warfare, drawing on their knowledge of legal frameworks and practical case studies	interactive, combining traditional lectures, seminars (group discussions, case studies, guest speakers, and simulations) and individual studies (analyses of relevant legal frameworks and academic literature, preparation of a research project).	knowledge, group presentations, class participation, case studies, and a final research project focused on applying legal principles to real-world scenarios related to the course.
Students will improve communication skills through group presentations and class participation, including the ability to articulate legal arguments clearly and persuasively.	The teaching method for this course will be interactive, combining traditional lectures, seminars (group discussions, case studies, guest speakers, and simulations) and individual studies (analyses of relevant legal frameworks and academic literature, preparation of a research project).	Will be based on theoretical knowledge, group presentations, class participation, case studies, and a final research project focused on applying legal principles to real-world scenarios related to the course.
Students will improve time management skills through the completion of individual assignments and the final research project, which requires students to plan and prioritize their work effectively in order to meet deadlines.	The teaching method for this course will be interactive, combining traditional lectures, seminars (group discussions, case studies, guest speakers, and simulations) and individual studies (analyses of relevant legal frameworks and academic literature, preparation of a research project).	Will be based on theoretical knowledge, group presentations, class participation, case studies, and a final research project focused on applying legal principles to real-world scenarios related to the course.

Content: breakdown of the topics	Contact hours							Self-study: hours and assignments	
	Lectures	Consultations	Seminars	Practical sessions	Laboratory activities	Internship/work placement	Contact hours	Self-study hours	Assignments
1. Introduction to hybrid warfare and its impact on international law	3			1			4	10	Analysis of the relevant legal framework, including case-law and academic literature, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic of study. The topic will cover also the interplay between IHL and IHRL and will include a practical session to address a general overview of Hybrid warfare in the context of international law.
2. Non-state actors and their role in hybrid warfare	1			1			2	8	Preparation to participate in a group discussion on the ethical and legal implications of using non-state actors in hybrid warfare.
3. Cyber-attacks and their legal implications	2		2				4	10	Analysis of the relevant legal framework, including case-law and academic literature, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic of study.
4. The role of the UN and other international organizations in addressing hybrid warfare	2						2	8	Analysis of the relevant legal framework, including case-law and academic literature, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic of study.
5. Law on use of force and modern threats	4						4	10	Analysis of the relevant legal framework, including case-law and academic literature, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic of study.
6. Challenges in applying international humanitarian law to hybrid warfare	4						4	10	Analysis of the relevant legal framework, including case-law and academic literature, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic of study.
7. Lawfare and the use of legal systems in hybrid warfare	2						2	10	Analysis of the relevant legal framework, including case-law and

									academic literature, to gain a comprehensive understanding of the topic of study.
8. Case studies of hybrid warfare in Syria, Ukraine, and other conflicts				3			3	8	Preparation to participate in a group discussion on the case study and legal challenges, remedies and possible gaps in law.
9. Guest speakers from international organizations and government agencies			3				3	8	Preparation to participate in a group discussion on the case study and legal challenges, remedies and possible gaps in law.
10. Final research project and it's presentation		4					4	19	Conduct a research project on a specific aspect of hybrid warfare and prepare to present your findings to the class.
Total	18	4	5	5			32	101	

Assessment strategy	Weight, percentage	Assessment period	Assessment criteria
In class participation and presentations	20%	Between weeks 8 and 10	Conducted throughout the semester: Students will give group in-class presentations on a topic related to hybrid warfare and international law, which will be followed by a class discussion. The presentation should demonstrate an understanding of the topic and an ability to present information in a clear and concise manner. Assessment criteria: The student's ability to critically assess complex legal issues related to hybrid warfare, effectively communicate their findings to others in a clear and concise manner, capability to provide correct answers to questions, formulate problems and suggest (search for) solutions.
Case study	20%	Due in week 6	Students will be given a case study related to hybrid warfare and international law and will be asked to analyze and evaluate the legal implications of the case. The analysis should be 1500-2000 words long and should demonstrate a deep understanding of the legal framework. Assessment criteria: Identification of key legal issues, analysis and evaluation of arguments, clarity of expression, and originality.
Research paper	60%	At the end of the course	Students will be required to conduct independent research on a topic related to hybrid warfare and international law. The paper should be 3000-4000 words long and should demonstrate a comprehensive understanding of the topic. Assessment criteria: -Content: thorough problem analysis, creativity in approach, proper application of sources, critical analytical thinking, and clear formulation of conclusions and recommendations. -Structure and style: clear and effective organization of the paper, proper use of language, precise and accurate wording, appropriate use of source references, and ethical citation practices. -Presentation: an engaging, efficient, and persuasive presentation of the research, adhesive language. -Participation: active and constructive participation in class discussions, providing correct answers to questions, contributing thoughtfully to problem-solving and critical analysis, and offering insightful and constructive feedback to peers.

Author	Year of publication	Title	Issue of a periodical or volume of a publication	Publishing place and house or web link
Compulsory reading				
A. Sari	2019	Legal Resilience in the Era of Gray Zone. Conflicts and Hybrid Threats		Exeter Centre for International Law
Michael Schmitt	2017	Tallinn Manual 2.0 on the International Law Applicable to Cyber Operations		Cambridge University Press.
Aurel Sari	2018	Blurred Lines: Hybrid Threats and the Politics of International law		Hybrid CoE

Hitoshi Nasu	2019	Asia Pacific Perspectives on International Humanitarian law (Part III)		Cambridge University Press
Peter R. Mansoor	2012	Hybrid Warfare, Fighting Complex Opponents from the Ancient World to the Present		Cambridge University Press
S. Syapin, E. Tsybulenko Ed	2018	The Use of Force against Ukraine and International Law. (Chapter II)		Springer
Recommended reading				
Alexander Lott	2022	Hybrid Threats and law of the Sea. (Chapter 3)		BRILL
Ohlin, J.D., & Govern, K.	2019	The Oxford Handbook of International Law and Armed Conflict		Oxford University Press.
Report Prepared by the ICRC	2015	International Humanitarian Law and the Challenges of Contemporary Armed Conflicts		ICRC

*Treaties, Conventions, and Case laws will be included in the lectures.