

EXACT Report on Prof. Wessel Course

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Introduction

The aim of this course - European Union Institutional Law, was to introduce students to the new institutional set-up of the European Union on the basis of reforms brought about by the Lisbon Treaty. It addressed the (new) functions of the old and new institutions as well as rules on decision making within the Union. It also focussed on the policy instruments available to the EU Institutions. In response to students needs, the course gave much attention to the external dimension of EU Institutions and laws. Overall, the general framework of EU Institutions and laws were studied in three block weeks seminar scattered across four months period.

Course Relevance

The course was of much relevance to the EXACT Fellows who are all researching in the field of EU External activities. This course provided the general overview of the institutional set-up of the EU and how competences are distributed across different policy fields. Getting to know the impact and the interrelations between different institutions, actors and the treaty provisions guiding their functions and how all these internal dynamics of the Union play out in its external relations with other global actors were really most helpful for the fellows.

Course Structure

This course was structured in three major block seminars in addition to a final one day conference of paper presentations by all Fellows which concentrated on the legal underpinnings of their research interests.

The First Block Seminar: 14-15 October 2010

This seminar took place from 14-15 October 2010 with the main topics on “**General EU Institutional Law**”. The fellows were introduced to the legal institutional framework of the EU, Principles of Primacy and Direct Effect of EU Law vis-a-vis national constitutional sovereignty. This was designed to incorporate lectures from the Visiting Scientist and student participation through required reading and group work and debates.

Second Block Seminar: 17-19 November 2010

The second seminar was on the theme-EU External Relations Laws scheduled from 18-19 November 2010. Series of sessions were held on the “**Fundamentals of EU External**

Relations Law” on the basis of Treaty Provisions as well as based on International Law. These seminars were particularly interesting for students especially the legal personality of EU and its relations with International Organisations. These seminars also incorporated simulation and debates in international law especially in the framework of World Trade Organisation laws and United Nations and the interplay of the *EU Legal order* and its actions on the international scene. The final session of this seminar was allocated for discussion on proposed legal analysis papers to be presented by the end of the course by all fellows. This helped the fellows to identify key legal questions on EU External actions relating to their areas of research.

Third Block Seminar: 16-17 December 2010

The third major seminar on this course took place from 16-17 December 2010. The focus of this seminar was on the legal frameworks of EU Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and EU Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). The Visiting opened the sessions with introductory lectures, followed by interactive sessions on current global affairs and group exercises. Time was allocated to discuss the fellows draft papers on the legal aspects of their research with the Visiting Scientist providing academic guidance.

EU Institutional Law Conference in University of Twente, Netherlands

As the final session of the EU Institutional Law course, on the 16th January 2011, all 12 fellows participated in a one day conference in the University of Twente, Netherlands, where they presented their written papers. This conference highlighted diverse legal issues of EU External Law with expert feedback on them.

View on Tutoring

The fellows have generally had a very good impression of the Visiting Scientist. He was seen as very responsive to early feedbacks given to him which lead to restructuring of the initial modules to meet students needs. He was always very prepared with adequate teachings aids such as power point presentations and plans of group work.

Evaluation

Testimonials from Fellows on this course are largely positive pointing to the new knowledge and skills gained from the diversity of topics covered and the design of the course that incorporated student participations and presentations of papers. The course offered a good overview of EU Institutional law, decision-making dynamics. However, some fellows were of the view that the course could have been more beneficial should it have covered more case laws of EU External actions. The time for the course was also deemed to be inadequate as more time was needed to cover more policy areas. Notwithstanding these shortcomings, the general impression of the EU Institutional Law course tutored by Prof A. Wessel was very positive.