



**RHODES UNIVERSITY**  
*Where leaders learn*

**Faculty of Law**

**LEGAL THEORY 1**

**2021**

**FOUNDATIONS OF LAW  
AND  
INTRODUCTION TO LAW**

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## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Welcome to **Legal Theory 1 (LT1)**. This main subject has two components, each constituting a stand-alone course. The courses are *Foundations of Law* (taught in the first semester) and *Introduction to the Study of Law* (taught in the second semester). The information in this outline has been compiled to assist you in knowing what to expect in your LT1 courses. Please read it carefully to understand and appreciate the contents. If you have a query on the administrative aspect of the LT1 courses, contact the course coordinator. If the query concerns the content of the course, contact the relevant lecturer who is teaching that particular section where your query is based.

### **1.1. Overview**

LT1 is a major subject in the BA, B SocSci, BCom, B BusSci and BSc curricula. It involves the study of key fields of the South African legal system in the realm of public and private law, and thus forms an important stepping stone towards the LLB degree. LT1 is recognised as a credit for degrees in the Faculties of Humanities, Commerce and Science. The credits in LT1 courses exempt a candidate from the equivalent courses in the LLB curricula. Please refer to the Rhodes University Calendar for more information.

### **1.2. Credit value and NQF Level**

LT 1, two courses combined, carries 30 credits. This implies that the student must spend a total of at least 300 notional hours to master the learning outcomes of the two courses successfully. The courses is offered at NQF level 7.

NQF level 7 require students to demonstrate an integrated knowledge of the field of constitutional law and the ability to apply and evaluate the key concepts, theories, principles and rules of the field. Students are further expected to demonstrate an understanding of contestations in the field, apply the theory methods in the field in context, solve unfamiliar problems by identifying, analysing, evaluating and critically reflecting on complex problems. Additionally, students are expected to produce and communicate information in the form of well-formed arguments based on validated sources and express their own opinion based on that.

Students must be able to manage their own learning and take full responsibility for their own learning in an independent manner, and must also be able to work with other students.

### **1.3. Assumptions of prior learning**

- The student must have met the entrance requirements for the university and be able to communicate in written and spoken English at an NQF level 4 standard.
- The student must also be able to work and/or study independently and be capable of working in groups.
- The student must have basic computer literacy skills, especially under the current COVID-19 circumstances where teaching-and-learning is strictly online/remote.

## **2. GENERAL LEARNING OUTCOMES**

Upon the successful completion of the LT1 courses, the students should be able to:

- Provide insights into the nature and function of law;
- Provide modern sources of law;
- Provide an overview of the various systems of law around the world;
- Understand the hybrid nature of the South African legal system;
- Introduce students to the basic principles of a human rights regime;
- Provide an overview of the structure of the courts and the procedures observed in courts;
- Understand various means of alternative dispute resolution mechanisms (ADR);
- Provide a brief overview of the law of contract, delict (wrongs) and criminal law;
- Understand legal concepts and terminologies;
- Introduce students to the nature of legal reasoning; and
- Assist students in extracting principles from law reports and other source materials.

### **2.1. Critical outcomes**

Students will be able to:

- a) identify and solve problems
- b) work in a team
- c) organise and manage themselves
- d) collect, analyse and evaluate information
- e) communicate effectively
- f) recognise problem solving contexts
- g) participate as a responsible citizen

- h) explore education and career opportunities

## **2.2. Specific intended outcomes**

The Legal Theory 1 course is designed so that students successfully completing this course should be able to achieve the following outcomes:

### **FOUNDATIONS OF LAW (Taught in the first semester)**

- Outline and explain the different forms of dispute resolution in South African Law;
- Describe and explain the structure and officers of the South African courts;
- Provide an outline of criminal and civil procedure in South Africa;
- Explain the sources of the modern South African legal system;
- Describe and use the conventions of legal communication.

### **INTRODUCTION TO LAW (Taught in the second semester)**

- Describe and explain the nature and purpose of law;
- Understand legal concepts and terminology;
- Describe the nature and purpose of rights and duties in law;
- Provide an outline of some of the legal systems of the world; and
- Describe the divisions of law;
- Provide an outline of selected branches of public and private law (criminal law, contract and delict or law of wrongs); and
- Demonstrate an ability to apply legal principles and case law to selected factual situations.

## **3. TEACHING METHODS**

Lectures will be delivered using a combination of teaching styles which include the Socratic and semi-Socratic methods, using practical questions and real-life cases and examples as a basis for explaining concepts. PowerPoint slides, lecture recordings, case studies and supplementary reading materials may be supplied on RUconnected. Students are therefore urged to ensure that they join the relevant RUconnected sites for LT1 courses (Foundations of Law in the 1<sup>st</sup> semester and Introduction to Law in the 2<sup>nd</sup> semester). These sites are the most platforms that will be used as the primary mode of communication in these courses. Students will be provided with course materials and

they will be directed to any further reading during lectures through RUconnected. Additional sources of information will also be posted on RUConnected.

Students are expected to assume full responsibility for their learning by reading ahead of the lecture and consolidating notes afterwards. This means the extent of the student's learning and assimilation of knowledge at the end of the course will depend on the effort they put into the course.

#### **4. COURSE/MODULE CONTENT**

##### **4.1. Foundations of Law (1<sup>st</sup> Semester)**

The course content of this module comprises of the following sections:

- *Sources of South African law* (taught by Mr Mathiba & Ms Morudu);
- *Court Structures & Forms of Alternative Dispute Resolutions* (taught Ms Mguga);
- *Outline of Criminal and Civil Procedure* (taught by Ms Ndamase).

##### **4.2. Introduction to Law (2<sup>nd</sup> Semester)**

- An introduction to the nature and purpose of law
- An introduction to the nature and purpose of rights and duties
- An outline of the legal systems of the world
- Divisions of law and an outline of selected branches of public and private law [criminal law, contract, delict (wrongs)]

#### **5. RESOURCES**

**NB: Students are strongly encouraged to make use the Law library and the main library wherever possible for research in their assignments and tests.**

*Sustained reading is essential in a course of this type. Although there is no prescribed textbook, the following books are highly recommended:*

T Humby *et al* (ed) *Introduction to Law and Legal Skills in South Africa* (2012) Oxford University Press: Cape Town

HR Hahlo and E Kahn *The South African Legal System and its Background* (1985 reprint) Juta & Co: Kenwyn

D Kleyn and F Viljoen *Beginners Guide for Law Students* 5<sup>th</sup> ed (2018) Juta & Co: Kenwyn

Meintjies – Van der Walt *et al* (eds) *Introduction to South African Law: Fresh Perspectives* 2nd edition, (2011) Heineman: Cape Town

WJ Hosten *et al* (eds) *Introduction to South African Law and Legal Theory* 2nd edition, (1995) Butterworths: Durban

Dale Hutchinson and Chris James-Pretorius *The Law of Contract in South Africa* (2009) Oxford University Press: Cape Town

Max Loubser *et al* (ed) *The Law of Delict in South Africa* (2012) Oxford University Press: Cape Town

CR Snyman *Criminal Law* 5<sup>th</sup> ed, (2008) Lexis Nexis: Durban

The lecturers will prescribe reading at the appropriate times and students are required to supplement their notes from these (and other) books.

Students are strongly advised to spend time browsing through the books in the library. There is a vast array of material and familiarity with the layout of the library will pay dividends when research is undertaken for assignments.

Under normal circumstances, students would be supplied with a copy of the Constitution during the course of the first term in their tutorials and the student's account will be debited in the sum. This is **TBA**.

## 6. STUDENT ASSESSMENT

### 6.1. Foundations of law

<b>Outcomes</b>	<b>Assessment Criteria</b>
(On successful completion of this course you will be able to)	(What evidence must a student provide to show that they are competent?) The student must be able to:
<p><b>1. Outline and explain the different forms of dispute resolution in South African law.</b></p> <p><b>(a) Alternative Dispute Resolution</b></p> <p><b>(b) Litigation: Structure and officers of the Courts</b></p>	<p>1. Distinguish between the different forms of dispute resolution.</p> <p>2. Explain in relation to each of the forms of dispute resolution, what structures and officers are involved. See Foundations Handout for details.</p> <hr/> <p>1. Classify a particular factual situation as criminal or civil matter and decide the appropriate forum and procedure for obtaining a remedy or enforcing a right.</p>
<p><b>2. Explain the sources of the modern South African legal system.</b></p>	<p>1. Describe the basic values which underpin our legal system and practice of law.</p>

<b>3. Describe and use the conventions of legal communication to access and communicate information.</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Access reference works and cases in the law library</li> <li>- Extract the appropriate legal rules from source material</li> <li>- Read a case, extract and apply the principles contained in it</li> <li>- Write a case-note at an elementary level</li> <li>- Communicate legal issues verbally and in writing in the correct manner</li> <li>- Reference correctly and accurately according to basic referencing principles.</li> </ul>
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## 6.2. Introduction to Law

Outcomes	Assessment Criteria
<b>On successful completion of this course you will be able to:</b>	<b>(What evidence must a student provide to show that they are competent?) The student must be able to:</b>
<b>1. Describe and explain the nature and purpose of law.</b>	Identify, analyse, extract and apply basic legal principles to a simple set of facts.
<b>2. Understand legal concepts and terminology.</b>	Use of appropriate legal language to demonstrate conceptual understanding.
<b>3. Describe the nature and purpose of rights and duties in law.</b>	Distinguish the nature of rights and duties and provide an elementary explanation to a lay person.
<b>4. Demonstrate an understanding of the importance of comparative legal studies and be able to discuss and compare the major legal systems of the world.</b>	Undertake a basic comparative analysis and apply basic comparative methods.
<b>5. Describe the divisions of law.</b>	Classify and distinguish private and public law
<b>6. Provide an outline of selected branches of public and private law (criminal law, contract and delict).</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Classify factual situations according to the various branches of the law and to distinguish between a crime, a delict and a contract.</li> <li>- Decide the appropriate forum and procedure for obtaining a remedy or enforcing a right</li> </ul>

<b>7. Demonstrate an ability to apply legal principles and case law to selected factual situations.</b>	Apply the applicable law to the relevant facts and provide appropriate legal remedy.
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## 7. EXAMINATIONS

Examinations are compulsory.

- One three-hour exam paper will be written in June/July and the paper will be divided into two equal sections. Section A will be marked by Mr Mathiba and, while Section B will be marked by Ms Mguga and Ms Ndamase. The June/July paper will examine all the content covered in the Foundations of Law course.
- One three-hour paper, for Introduction to Law, will be written in November and the paper will be divided into two equal sections i.e. section A (50 marks) and section B (50 marks). The lecturers Introduction to Law will be announced in the second semester. The November paper will examine the work covered in the Introduction to Law course.
- A credit (CR) will be given if a candidate has passed both Foundations of Law and Introduction to Law irrespective of the year or examination in which they were passed.
- An aggregated credit (ACR) will be given if the candidate has an aggregated mark of at least 50% for Foundations of Law and Introduction to Law (i.e. 100 or more out of 200) and has obtained at least 35% in the course failed.
- To achieve an NCR a student must (i) have an aggregated mark of at least 50% for all component courses and (ii) must sit the examination for every component course (i.e. 100 or more out of 200).
- Normally aggregation may take place only in respect of examinations written in the same academic year. (Note: for this purpose, a supplementary or aegrotat examination in January/February of the following calendar year counts as an examination in the previous year.)
- After the completion of the November examinations, the Dean of Law may recommend to the Deans of Humanities, Commerce and Science that a student with an overall aggregation average of 49% be raised to 50% to enable the student to pass with an ACR or NCR or to qualify for a supplementary examination. Overall aggregation averages below 49% (i.e. less than 98 out of 200) will NOT be rounded up to 50% for this purpose.

If students wish to challenge the marks of the course work component, it must be done by the first Friday of the first and third terms in respect of June and November exams respectively.

Students who wish to be admitted to LLB 2 (the four-year LLB) must have at least 65% in LT1 as well as an overall average of 65% for three non-law courses studied in that



year. Students who do not meet these criteria must follow the five-year route.

Should students wish to review their exam scripts, the students must produce a copy of their academic transcript which reflects that their fees are up-to-date and make an appointment with the lecturer concerned.

For further information regarding supplementary examinations, please refer to the Faculty of Law Handbook.

## **TESTS**

There will be FOUR tests during the year i.e. two per semester course. Tests dates will be confirmed and communicated to student close to the dates. Students must check the RUconnected course sites regularly so they do not miss this important information.

Tests are compulsory and should be taken seriously. Tests assist borderline students and consolidate knowledge, making it easier to learn for the examinations. The marks for the four tests together with the tutorial assignment marks count towards a student's class record. The class record constitutes 30% of the final mark.

There will only be a make-up test for those students with a valid LOA (Leave of Absence).

**Note:** Weak tests and poorly researched essays will count against you and adversely affect your overall results.

## **8. EVALUATION**

The courses will be evaluated at regular intervals by way of student evaluations, teaching evaluations and peer evaluations of the staff lecturing the course conducted by other Law Faculty members and by external examiners/moderator's comments and reports on examination papers and the students' scripts.

## **9. TUTORIALS**

The class will be divided into groups for tutorial purposes. Each group will have be allocated a tutor. No permanent change of group may be made without the approval of Mr Mathiba. Should a student miss a scheduled tutorial this must be made up by arrangement with Mr Mathiba. Where students make up a tutorial, the onus is on the student to ensure his/her attendance is noted at the tutorial attended. The tutorial programme will be announced later. Do not report for any tutorials before being told to do so.

YOU ARE REQUIRED TO ATTEND 100% OF YOUR TUTORIALS UNLESS YOU HAVE A VALID LEAVE OF ABSENCE, FAILING WHICH STEPS MAY BE TAKEN AGAINST YOU FOR THE REMOVAL OF YOUR DP.

The tutorial programme forms part of the academic development component of Foundations of Law and Introduction to Law. The tutorial sessions will be led by tutors or graduate assistants in the Law Department and will usually cover topics to be dealt with in assignments. Students will be required to prepare written work (Tutorial Assignments) comprising no more than 1 500 words and not less than 1 000 words (excluding footnotes). If the essay does not meet this minimum requirement, the mark will be 0%. There will also be tutorial exercises in each semester, as well as additional class work during the course of the year and topics will be prescribed well before the due date. Assessment criteria and marking grids/guides will be given to the tutors and are to be attached by the students to their assignments when handed in. Your assignment must be accompanied by a cover page which you can find on the Faculty Handbook.

Tutorial Assignments also count towards the class work component which constitutes 50% of the final mark.

NOTE: Plagiarism, cheating or assisting a student in any test, tutorial assignment, essay or examination will result in disciplinary action being taken by the University against the student concerned.

You are welcome to ask your tutor or the coordinator if you have any issue.

## **10. SUPPLEMENTAL INSTRUCTION**

Supplemental instruction (SI) is a free, voluntary, student-driven programme to support courses which have a reputation for being demanding. SI enables students to master course content while developing effective learning and study strategies.

SI is available to all students and statistics show that students who regularly attend SI sessions tend to get better results than those who do not, irrespective of whether or not they are at the top or the bottom of the ability range.

More details will be shared on this at a later stage.

## **11. THE LAW LIBRARY**

Only students who have signed the required registration form will be allowed to borrow books from the library. Student cards must be produced in order to borrow a book. As a general rule, books may not be taken away from the library by Legal Theory 1 students.

If you are unsure about anything in the library, ask the person on duty. He/she is paid to listen to you and to help you.

SHORT LOAN is a reserved collection of textbooks and recommended books, by the lecturers. This ensures that essential reading material is available to students. You need your student card in order to take out items from the Short Loan section.

There will be a presentation by the Law Librarians in your lecture period in the second week of term. A copy of the presentation will be uploaded to RUconnected.

The process of short loan is as follows:

- Ask the library assistant to fetch the item for you.
- A maximum of 2 items may be taken at a time.
- A book or notes may be taken for an hour only.
- Items in high demand may be restricted to shorter periods of time, as specified by the Librarian.

Students who owe unpaid fines will not be permitted to make use of any Short Loan material. Fines for overdue Short Loan items are R2.00 per hour.

A compulsory library tutorial will be held during the first term to familiarise students with the Law Library. Further details will be given to students at the appropriate time.

**Any queries on Law Library can be directed to Ms Sindiswa Gule at [g.gule@ru.ac.za](mailto:g.gule@ru.ac.za)**

## **12. DP CERTIFICATES (*DULY PERFORMED CERTIFICATES*)**

The RU General Regulations read *inter alia* as follows:

*“Subject to any exceptions approved by Senate, a student shall not be admitted to an examination in any course unless the Head of the Department concerned has certified that the student has satisfactorily attended the class meetings for the course under examination, and has satisfactorily performed the work of the class.”*

The “work of the class” is a broad term including lectures, tests, tutorial attendance, tutorial assignments, court visits, written-work assigned by the tutors. Any other assignments or work prescribed by a lecturer in Legal Theory 1 will also fall under this definition.

Students in Legal Theory 1 must comply with the DP requirements in respect of each component of the course.

**PLEASE NOTE:**

- You are required to attend lectures. The Faculty of Law regards attendance at lectures as an inherent part of the course, similar to obtaining a pass mark in an exam. Your DP certificate will be at risk if you miss more than SIX lectures regardless of whether you have L.O.A.s or not, unless there are exceptional circumstances. You still need to apply for L.O.A.s at the Administrative office at the Law Faculty in the usual manner because this may assist you in establishing that exceptional circumstances exist.
- You are required to attend ALL your tutorials unless you have a valid LOA.

The decision to grant or refuse a DP Certificate will be made after consultation with the course lecturers. Should a student be aggrieved by a decision, the proper procedure is to approach the Dean of the Faculty of Law.

Please note that **NO** warning letter will be sent advising you that your DP certificate will be taken away.

For further information regarding DP's please see the Law Faculty Handbook.

### **13. STAFF INVOLVED IN LT1 COURSES**

**Course Co-ordinator:** Mr G Mathiba

**Lecturers:**

***First Semester:*** *Foundations of Law*

Mr G Mathiba

Ms L Morudu

Ms Y Ndamase

Ms S Mguga

***Second Semester:*** *Introduction to the Study of Law*

Mr G Mathiba

Prof J Campbell

Other staff to be announced

**Tutorial Co-ordinator:** Mr G Mathiba

**Academic development:** To be announced

**SI Leader:** Zusiphe Nkala [g16n3265@campus.ru.ac.za](mailto:g16n3265@campus.ru.ac.za)

**Graduate Assistants:** Chris Tobaiwa [g18t2597@campus.ru.ac.za](mailto:g18t2597@campus.ru.ac.za)  
Tamika Achary [g17r4707@campus.ru.ac.za](mailto:g17r4707@campus.ru.ac.za)

Please approach your lecturers if you have a problem with any aspect of the course. Mr Mathiba will assist with problems of an administrative nature. Queries relating to the content of the course should be referred to the relevant lecturer.

#### **14. LEGAL TERMS AND PHRASES**

When reading legal material there are a number of words and phrases that are seldom encountered in everyday language and which may not be familiar. Many of these terms are in Latin and when used in your writing should be underlined if handwritten or typed in italics. What follows is a list of those terms which you will probably encounter more frequently than others during the course of this year. Please note that this is not an exhaustive list and should you come across a term not included below you should consult one of the dictionaries in the law library. A good reference for this purpose is:

RD Claassen *Dictionary of Legal Words and Phrases* (1997), Butterworths: Durban

<i>a quo</i>	from which (the judgment of the court <i>a quo</i> means a judgment of a court of the first instance i.e. the court before which the matter was heard before it was brought to the present court).
<i>ab initio</i>	from the beginning
<i>absolution from the instance</i>	- an order made by a court when on the evidence it is unable to give judgment for either party
<i>ad idem</i>	of the same mind
affidavit	a sworn statement made by a person in writing
appeal	where a superior court reconsiders a matter decided by a lower court
<i>bona fide</i>	in good faith
<i>causa</i>	cause

<i>causal connection</i>	the relationship between a specific act and a particular result
<i>cause of action</i>	the facts giving rise to a legal claim
<i>cadit quaestio</i>	the question falls away
<i>compos mentis</i>	sane
<i>contra bonos mores</i>	contrary to good morals
<i>consensus</i>	consent or agreement
<i>contumelia</i>	insult
<i>cur ad vult</i>	the court wishes to consider its decision
<i>de bonis propriis</i>	out of his/her own pocket
<i>de facto</i>	the factual position
<i>de minimis non curat lex</i>	the law is not concerned with trivialities
<i>de novo</i>	anew
<i>ex facie</i>	on the face of it
<i>ex lege</i>	by operation of law
<i>ex parte</i>	as the only interested party
<i>ex post facto</i>	seen in retrospect
<i>genus</i>	class
<i>in casu</i>	in this case
<i>in esse</i>	existing
<i>infra</i>	below
<i>in re</i>	in the case of
<i>interdict</i>	a court order which forbids someone to act in a certain way
<i>in toto</i>	as a whole or in its entirety
<i>inter alia</i>	amongst others
<i>interim</i>	in the meantime
<i>intra vires</i>	within the authority
<i>iusta causa</i>	just cause
<i>litis contestatio</i>	the moment when the suit is instituted between the parties
<i>locus standi in iudicio</i>	capacity to litigate (i.e. the ability to sue or be sued in a court of law)
<i>mandamus</i>	(mandatory order) - court order compelling someone to do something
<i>mero motu</i>	spontaneously or of his/her own volition

<i>nexus</i>	link
<i>NO (nomine officii)</i>	in an official capacity
<i>obiter dictum</i>	remark in passing
<i>onus</i>	burden of proof
<i>pactum</i>	agreement
<i>per se</i>	in itself
<i>postea</i>	afterwards
<i>prima facie</i>	at first sight
<i>qua</i>	as
<i>quasi</i>	as if
<i>ratio</i>	ground or reason
<i>ratio decidendi</i>	reason for the decision
<i>res</i>	thing
<i>res ipsa loquitur</i>	it speaks for itself
<i>res judicata</i>	the matter has been judged and the case is therefore
closedrespondent	the opposing party in an application or an appeal
<i>viva voce</i>	orally
<i>sine</i>	without
<i>status quo ante</i>	the previous legal position
<i>stare decisis</i>	decided cases remain authoritative
<i>sub judice</i>	pending
<i>sui generis</i>	of its own kind
<i>supra</i>	above
<i>ultra vires</i>	beyond the powers
voetstoots	a term in a contract of sale whereby a seller sells and a buyer purchases a thing "as it stands" with all its defects.