YONG PUNG HOW SCHOOL OF LAW

Year 2024/25 Term 1

LAW 416 INTERNATIONAL MOOTS I

Convenor:	Associate Professor Chen Siyuan
Principal practice round assistants:	Assistant Professor Nicholas Liu, Aaron Yoong, Joel Fun, Daniel Liu, Dennis Saw, Daniel Ho, Jayakumar Suryanarayanan, Louis Lau, Andrew Chia, Huo Jiongrui, T Abirami, Ruth Tan, Reinvs Loh, Chen Lixin
Email:	siyuanchen@smu.edu.sg
Office:	6828 0378

COURSE DESCRIPTION

SMU has an excellent track record in international moot competitions, having regularly placed in the top three the international championship final of major international moots such as the Jessup (2013–2014, 2022–2023), Vis (2015, 2016, 2021, 2023), Vis East (2015–2018, 2020, 2022), Price (2010, 2013, 2015–2020, 2022. 2024), International Criminal Court (2015–2019, 2021–2022, 2024), International Humanitarian Law (2010–2014, 2016, 2018–2019, 2022–2023), and Frankfurt (2015, 2017, 2019, 2022–2024) competitions. This course is the first phase of the programme (the other phase being International Moots II) that equips students with the necessary skills for law school's most demanding but also most rewarding experience: participating in the world's most prestigious moot court competitions.

This course builds on the basic skills taught in Legal Research and Writing and any other mooting skills students have picked up in previous domestic and regional moot court competitions. This course provides excellent holistic training for students who are interested in any career in law. Students who wish to take part in international moot court competitions will have to apply successfully for this module or seek special dispensation from the course convenor, while students who have taken this course may be eligible to do another competition a second time (and earn an additional 1.0 modular credit in the process).

Students will be given a common moot problem that involves a hypothetical dispute between two international entities on a number international law issues. Students will be taught how to mount an analytical framework for dealing with such international law disputes. Students will then be expected to submit a substantial written memorial towards the end of the course. Throughout the course, lectures, consultations, and practice rounds will be organised for the students to hone their research, writing and oral advocacy skill. The course will end when the students make their oral arguments before a panel of moot coaches (*ie*, the selection of mooters for International Moots II).

In summary, this will effectively be an intensive course that does not span the usual 12 weeks (see class schedule). Students must be mentally prepared to work extremely hard during these short few weeks, and are advised to plan their timetables strategically. We will meet two to three times a week, for 2 to 3 hours per lesson. Former mooters from all legal sectors will be roped in to help guest judge the practice rounds, and their feedback will be factored in for both grading and the formation of teams.

The Covid-19 situation appears to have stabilised and instruction for the mandatory sessions will therefore adopt the in-person format. If things change, this course may need to be conducted online. Students should rest assured, however, that there is still value in mastering online advocacy. The instructors have had experience in online hearings both for mooting and real-life court purposes. The international moots that SMU may participate in for International Moots II this AY are:

- Jessup (Washington DC)
- Vis (Vienna)
- Vis East (Hong Kong)
- Price (Beijing and Oxford)
- International Criminal Court (Hague)
- Frankfurt (Frankfurt)
- IP (Oxford)
- Air or Refugee/Migration (varies)
- Fletcher (varies)
- PAX or SAM (Europe)
- Stetson (Philippines and Florida)
- WTO (Asia and Geneva)
- Red Cross (Hong Kong)
- Lachs (varies)

SMU reserves the right to modify the list of competitions depending on the circumstances and availability of personnel.

PRE-REQUISITES AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

There are no pre-requisite courses, but students who have studied – or will be studying in AY 2024/25 – any of the following or equivalent (in any law school) should consider applying their knowledge in a practical setting: public international law, international human rights law, international humanitarian law, international commercial arbitration, international investment law, or international trade law. This course is only open to students who have not qualified to practice law in any jurisdiction, because the moot competitions we are targeting are only open to such students.

RECOMMENDED TEXT AND READINGS

For a start, a recent edition of any public international law textbook Additional readings may be assigned via eLearn or email and separate reading lists. Students will be given further instructions along the way as to what sort of additional library and/or online research is required for the course. Web links of videos of past mooters will also be given from time to time.

ASSESSMENT METHOD

Class participation (8–10 mins per speaker; rounds that count depend on total)	: 32%
Memorial (Up to 3000 words including footnotes; pleadings only) *	: 34%
Oral argument (Up to 12 mins per speaker)	: 34%
Final examination	: **None; 100% CA**

* equivalent to meeting Research Paper requirement, if applicable

Please note that while students may be placed in groups or pairs for various assignments or practice rounds throughout the course, all students will be graded on an individual basis for the memorial and selection round.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

All acts of academic dishonesty (including, but not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, facilitation of acts of academic dishonesty by others, unauthorized possession of exam questions, or tampering with the academic work of other students) are serious offences.

All work (whether oral or written) submitted for purposes of assessment must be the student's own work. Penalties for violation of the policy range from zero marks for the component assessment to expulsion, depending on the nature of the offence.

When in doubt, students should consult the instructors of the course. Details on the SMU Code of Academic Integrity may be accessed at https://smu.sharepoint.com/sites/oasis/SitePages/DOS-WKLSWC/UCSC.aspx or *OASIS -> CAMPUS LIFE & EXCHANGE -> CONDUCT & DISCIPLINE -> UNIVERSITY COUNCIL OF STUDENT DISCIPLINE -> SMU CODES OF CONDUCT.*

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ACCESSIBILITY

SMU strives to make learning experiences accessible for all. If you anticipate or experience physical or academic barriers due to disability, please let me know immediately. You can also contact the university's disability services team if you have questions or concerns about academic provisions: DSS@smu.edu.sg.

Please be aware that the accessible tables in our seminar room should remain available for students who require them.

DIGITAL READINESS FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING (DRTL)

As part of emergency preparedness, instructors may conduct lessons online via the Zoom platform during the term, to prepare students for online learning. During an actual emergency, students will be notified to access the Zoom platform for their online lessons. The class schedule will mirror the current face-to-face class timetable unless otherwise stated.

OVERVIEW OF CLASS SCHEDULE

Lesson	Topic	Assignments
1	• Basics of written and oral (international tribunal) advocacy • Basics of international law and memorial writing • Video analyses of past competitions	• Moot problem is released • Sides are assigned • Optional readings assigned
2	• Brainstorming on moot problem • Meet-the-author discussion	
3	• Class split into 4–6 groups of 7–11; oral practice #1, 8–10 minutes per speaker	Answer questions and give feedback. Some may be chosen to co-judge
4	• Class split into 4–6 groups of 7–11; oral practice #2, 8–10 minutes per speaker	Answer questions and give feedback. Some may be chosen to co-judge
5	• Class split into 4–6 groups of 7–11; oral practice #3, 8–10 minutes per speaker	Answer questions and give feedback. Some may be chosen to co-judge
6	• Class split into 4–6 groups of 7–11; oral practice #4, 8–10 minutes per speaker	Answer questions and give feedback. Some may be chosen to co-judge
7	• Class split into 4–6 groups of 7–11; oral practice #5, 8–10 minutes per speaker	Answer questions and give feedback. Some may be chosen to co-judge
8	• Consultations for memorial	
9a	• Selection round A, 12 minutes per speaker	• Memorials exchange • Memorials due
9b	• Selection round B, 12 minutes per speaker	• Memorials exchange • Memorials due
9c	• Selection round C, 12 minutes per speaker	• Memorials exchange • Memorials due
9d	• Selection round D, 12 minutes per speaker	• Memorials exchange • Memorials due