

Transnational Organised Crime course 2020-21 (LAWS5231)

Trafficking in Firearms and Weapons

Applications are now open for LAWS5231, the Transnational Organised Crime course offered jointly by **UQ Law School** with the **University of Vienna** and the **University of Zurich** in Semester 1, 2021.

In this course, students undertake directed research on selected topics relating to transnational organised crime. In 2020–21 the focus is on trafficking in arms and weapons material.

About the course

Trafficking in arms and weapons material is, perhaps, one of the most notorious forms of organised crime, not least because of traditional concepts linking criminal organisations to threats and violence as well as to the international arms trade. Criminal organisations are widely believed to engage in the trafficking of firearms, ammunition, military equipment, weapons material, including nuclear material. Some of the conceptions have been fuelled by the movie industry and mass media and are not always backed up by real world examples. Importantly, corruption and other forms of collusion with government entities play an important role in enabling and facilitating trafficking in arms and weapons material, as do links between criminal elements and the arms industry.

In 2020-21, the Transnational Organised Crime course explores trafficking in arms and weapons material in all its dimensions, including the international and national legal frameworks against this phenomenon, its levels and characteristics in selected places, and enforcement and industry measures adopted to prevent and suppress this illicit trade.

The course is designed for students to conduct independent, guided research in an international context and to equip students with advanced research, communication, presentation, writing and team-work skills, specifically in this field of study. Students in this course gain a general understanding of the criminology, policies, and laws relating to this topic, liaise with key stakeholders in the field, and have an opportunity to present their research findings to an academic audience and publish their written material.

Students choose and commence their research projects in October 2020 and, for the following three months, undertake research under the supervision of the academic staff and meet regularly to discuss their research process and gain additional research and presentation skills training. During this period, students work at their home university. In addition, an online platform is used to enable communication between all participants, provide access to key reading and learning material, and to share resources and research findings.

In February, students and academic staff from the three participating universities come together for a period of one week to present their research projects and initial findings, attend workshops and lectures by the academic staff and guest presenters, critique each other's work, and develop a research plan for the next phase of their projects. The joint teaching will take place between 8 and 12 February 2021 (online or at the University of Zurich, depending on the circumstances).

From late February until late April 2021, students continue their research under the supervision of the academic staff and meet regularly at their home institution to further develop their academic writing skills and learn how to critically engage with the literature and develop observations and recommendations relevant to their projects. Students submit their research papers in early May for assessment.

How to apply

For further information about the course or to submit your application please email a.schloenhardt@uq.edu.au and include:

- a short statement stating why you want to join this course
- your full CV
- an unofficial academic transcript

Applications close on 30 September 2020.



Images from 2019-20 cohort.