
June 2025
Edition

Faculty of Laws Newsletter

Issue
No. 31

Undergraduate dissertations

This year, as in past years, we have well over a hundred dissertations to examine. Unlike past years however, we are rather late in concluding the grading of these dissertations, the reason being that by tradition we have always allowed students until immediately after the Easter Recess to submit their dissertations. Since this year Easter came very late, we commenced the dissertation examination process late.

This resulted in less time for us to examine the dissertations, which could be highly problematic when we have to grade the exam scripts as well. Everything has to be done to a deadline, because the final classifications have to be ready by the end of July 2025. By then all dissertations and all exam scripts must be graded and marks passed on to Faculty Administration. In view of this, I urge the Examiners to make an extra effort, to hand in your dissertation individual reports to the Chair of the Board, who must then draft and circulate their collective report, in a timely manner. Your cooperation is essential for the system to run as smoothly as humanly possible.

As for the future, to avoid a repeat, we are thinking of establishing a fixed date, probably in mid-April, by when the dissertations must be handed in, irrespective of Easter Recess. This will give the Examiners more time to finish their dissertations, before they have to start correcting exam scripts.

On a related note, Faculty Board on 23rd May discussed, among other things, what position to take if a dissertation exceeds the stipulated word count. The decision taken, was that the Board of Examiners may, at its discretion, stop reading. The BOE is not obliged to do so, but it may.

Memo from Registrar on AI (adoption of European Code)

We are surrounded by Artificial Intelligence, whether we like it or not: it is everywhere, so we might as well embrace it. Personally, I use AI for inspiration,

for instance when I am required to deliver a speech at an event dealing with a topic I know next to nothing about. I ask AI (that is, the ‘brand’ of AI which came with my MS Office package, or the one which somehow made its way into my cellphone) and it delivers a reply within seconds. When I tried it, this led to valid ideas, which I double check before using, against other sources. It has truly proven a great help, recently even translating a document for me, to a high standard. Why exert myself unnecessarily when we have such tools at our disposal? Of course, we have to make correct use of AI, and in this regard the UM Academic Registrar has issued a circular, drawing our attention to the following two documents:

European code of conduct for Research Integrity
<https://www.um.edu.mt/1/x0JDR>

Living Guidelines on the Responsible use of Generative AI in Research
<https://www.um.edu.mt/1/mhSaQ>

Academics are invited to click the above links and give these two documents due consideration.

Recent visit and collaboration with the Judicial Studies Committee

On 27th May Prof. Dr Damjan Kukovec, Judge, General Court of the European Union, recently visited the Faculty of Laws and delivered a presentation to Academics, on the Rule of Law at EU level, on contemporary challenges, and on possible remedies.



Prof Kukovec delivered a very intriguing presentation and engaged in discussion on a range of topics including the significance of preliminary reference procedures as a tool for dialogue and involvement of Member States (especially smaller ones) in European Law's interpretation and application, and the possible effects of Artificial Intelligence with particular reference to predictive technologies, on the courts. He even left a copy of his Powerpoint presentation with the Dean, for dissemination purposes.

On the following day the Professor, accompanied by Dr Joseph Bugeja, delivered a presentation to the Maltese Judiciary, at an initiative organised by the Judicial Studies Committee.

Dr Therese Comodini Cachia lecturing at Ghent University

At the invitation of [Prof. Yves Haeck](#), Dr Comodini Cachia delivered a lecture on 'Freedom of Expression and the Protection of Journalists in Context'.



Dr Comodini Cachia discussed some of the tools that are needed for journalists to be able to perform their role as public watchdogs.

Policy, Politics & Governance at UM is honoured to announce the launch a new Master course - MA in Ombudsman Law and Governance. This course is an interfaculty initiative by **Faculty of Economics, Management & Accountancy - University of Malta** and the Faculty of Laws with the support of the **Office of the Ombudsman - Malta**. The Course is on a part-time evening mode and is targeted to both Maltese and international students who are keen in public administration, human rights, governance, political studies and public law. The new course kicks off this October 2025. More information from <https://www.um.edu.mt/courses/overview/pmaolgpet5-2025-6-o/>

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International Conference on Governance and Sustainability

The [University of Malta Maritime Platform](#) organised an **International Conference on Governance and Sustainability** (7-9 May 2025) at the Old University Campus, Valletta. This brought together leading academics, policymakers, and industry professionals to engage with the pressing challenges and innovations shaping ocean governance today. Hosted by the **University of Malta Maritime Platform**, the conference focused on bridging the gap between academic research and practical implementation, offering a space for dialogue on sustainable development in marine and maritime sectors.



With panel discussions addressing legal frameworks, climate resilience, maritime security, technological innovation and socio-economic impacts, the event served as a catalyst for forward-looking recommendations. Participants emphasized the need for integrated governance models that balance ecological protection with economic activity and

applauded the Platform's initiative in fostering collaboration across disciplines and borders. This was also highlighted in the speeches of the various Ministers and MPs who opened or closed the sessions. The success of the conference underscores Malta's growing role as a hub for maritime policy and sustainability.

The Faculty of Laws was heavily involved in the organization and delivery of this conference. Patricia Vella de Fremeaux (herself a member of the UMP) and Felicity Attard co-chaired the important panel on Governance, with Tiziana Filletti contributing to this panel with a well-received presentation on 'The Effective Implementation of ESG (Environmental, Social and Governance) goals in light of International Corporate Governance Principles within Malta's Maritime Industry. Simone Borg was a welcome panellist in the breakout sessions, where she gave an illuminating contribution within the Environmental Panel Discussion Group. Patricia Vella de Fremeaux and Felicity G. Attard contributed with a study on 'Sustainability and Governance in Maritime Migration: The Role of Law, Knowledge, and Cooperation'

Further information on this important event can be found here:

<https://www.um.edu.mt/newspoint/news/2025/05/successful-marine-and-maritime-conference-attracts-global-attention>

Have you got any news to share? If you have any item of relevance to this newsletter, feel free to inform us about it. You may contact any member of the editorial board, these being Prof Tonio Borg, Prof Ivan Sammut, Ms Rowena Leontijevic and Prof Ivan Mifsud. The Board reserves the right to refuse to publish an item submitted to it for its consideration.