

# LEGAL GERMAN

Course Coordinator: Dr. Deirdre Byrnes

Contact Details: Room AMB-2003, Arts Millennium Building  
Tel.: +353 91 492014  
Email: [deirdre.byrnes@universityofgalway.ie](mailto:deirdre.byrnes@universityofgalway.ie)

Legal German is an optional module on the Bachelor of Civil Law, Law and Human Rights, Law, Criminology and Criminal Justice, Law and Business, and Law and Taxation programmes. It is taught at two levels – beginners and advanced. The course seeks to develop language skills, in particular the ability to express ideas and argue convincingly in oral and written German and to work with a specialised legal and commercial vocabulary. It also fosters cultural awareness through familiarisation with the legal and political institutions of the German-speaking world, analysis of literary texts, and an introduction to twentieth-century German history.

## Beginners German

The Beginners German course (GR1004) covers the basic elements of grammar and vocabulary, while also introducing students to the German legal system and to the contemporary society and institutions of the German-speaking world. Students must obtain a minimum of 65% in order to progress to Advanced German in the second year.

## Advanced German

### GR 106 First Year Legal German

The first year course is designed to consolidate and develop existing language skills. Topics include young people in Germany and multiculturalism. Students are introduced to aspects of the German legal system, including legal education, the organs of state, the Constitution and Contract Law.

### GR 208 Second Year Legal German

The acquisition of a specialised commercial vocabulary is an important aspect of the second year course. Students are introduced to the German Civil Code (*Bürgerliches Gesetzbuch*); they also learn about the development of the European Union and its institutions. A “Law and Literature” seminar in Semester 1 analyses selected literary texts with a legal and/or socio-historical dimension. In Semester 2 one class per week is devoted to preparing students for the year abroad.

### Year Abroad (Erasmus+)

Following completion of the second year, Legal German students have the opportunity to spend two semesters studying law and language at the partner universities of Würzburg ([www.uni-wuerzburg.de](http://www.uni-wuerzburg.de)), Göttingen ([www.uni-goettingen.de](http://www.uni-goettingen.de)) or Leipzig ([www.uni-leipzig.de](http://www.uni-leipzig.de)).

*I participated in the Erasmus+ programme and chose to study in the world-renowned Georg-August-Universität in Göttingen. During this year, I studied a diverse range of language and law modules through German. My Erasmus experience and the language skills gained have created an infinite number of career opportunities for me and have proven to be a decisive factor in interviews. From an academic, language and personal development perspective, I truly cannot recommend Erasmus and Legal German highly enough!*

A. O' Brien, Bachelor of Corporate Law International graduate, 2018

### GR 317 Final Year Legal German

In the final year, particular emphasis is placed on the ability to express ideas convincingly. Regular assignments and a presentation facilitate the development of opinions on contemporary legal, political and social issues. Topics include the Constitution, the federal state, intellectual property, immigration and citizenship laws.

## Why study German with Law at University of Galway?

- The Legal German course develops transferable skills, including presentation skills, oral and written expression, and case and text analysis.
- Two different legal systems are compared and contrasted.
- The seminar format facilitates group discussion and debate.
- The extensive use of authentic materials, such as newspaper and magazine articles and multimedia language applications, ensures the contemporary focus of the curriculum.

## What the students say:

*Opting for Legal German in first year of the Bachelor of Corporate Law degree was undoubtedly the best decision I made while at university. Not only did it bring variety and richness to the education I received; it brought an international dimension to my degree which opened up so many opportunities, including being accepted onto the Washington Ireland Program, studying at the University of Würzburg, working as a legal intern in Germany, and giving me a competitive advantage in interviews for various careers. Now as I commence my career as an Area Manager with Aldi, I am confident that my proficiencies in German will continue to be my secret to success, an edge that grants me the ability to progress. Dr. Byrnes has been a pillar for my classmates and me during our years at NUI Galway and I speak for us all when I say that we could not have imagined doing as well as we have done without her unwavering support.*

J. Richter, Bachelor of Corporate Law International graduate, 2018

*I can only recommend taking Legal German as part of your degree. Apart from the general advantage of taking a foreign language to third level, the opportunity to experience an Erasmus year in the heart of Europe really sets graduates apart from others. I can say from experience that it is one of the more talked about topics in interviews! The course is very well structured and diverse, which gave me the chance to engage in topics and opportunities that I would normally not have been afforded – anything from presentations and essay-writing to interview skills. I definitely enjoyed the constant comparative element between the two legal systems, something that I got to study in more depth over the course of my Erasmus year. Without a doubt, Legal German has opened up so many doors for me...the most recent one into a job in Berlin!*

T. Baynes, Bachelor of Civil Law International graduate, 2018

*Apart from the obvious communicative benefits of having a second European language, studying German brings with it a new-found cultural appreciation, which really develops during the Erasmus Year. The course itself is diverse – from studying the German legal system to reading famous German literature in Second Year, while also being able to learn about the Civil Law system. A law degree prepares students for a wide range of careers in any case – especially when this is combined with a language! I have now been accepted to do a postgraduate course in Comparative Law – I am sure this is almost entirely due to the experience of studying both legal systems so closely.*

*I can truly say that if you do choose to study Law along with German, it will be one of the most worthwhile and rewarding experiences of your college life!*

K. Crampton, Bachelor of Civil Law International graduate, 2016