Business and Legal Environments in China
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Course Description

Given China’s incomparable level of involvement in international trading and investment, the development of business law and policy raised the interest of both scholars and entrepreneurs around the globe. This course is designed to provide a general introduction to the business and legal environments in China. It incorporates social, political, historical, economic and legal perspectives to examine five main topics within the theme of this course. After introducing the cultural heritage and history of China, this course will focus on the process, challenges and influences of the 1978 Market Reform. Particular attention will be paid to the development of competition law and policy, environmental law and trade policy. The debate on the reform of legal system, including the use of various legal instruments will also be presented. The last part of this course will explore the specific business culture in China, such as understanding the concept of Guanxi, and the importance of developing social network when doing business in China.

This course will be conducted on the assumption of students have no prior background knowledge. Students participated in this course are expected to gain a general understanding of the economic, business and legal environments in China. Students are expected to appreciate the cultural heritage and tradition, history, and specific characteristics of the Chinese legal system, therefore to be able to analyze the current Chinese business law and policy from a multidisciplinary perspective.

Structure

This course focuses on five main topics and the basic structure of the course is as follows.

1. A Brief Introduction to the Chinese Legal System
   1.1 A Brief Introduction to Chinese History, Politics and Culture (1)
   1.2 A Brief Introduction to Chinese History, Politics and Culture (2)
   1.3 Chinese Legal System
2. The 1978 Market Reform
   2.1 The Market Reform
   2.2 The Influence of the 1978 Market Reform
   2.3 A discussion
3. Economic Law and Policy in China
   3.1 Competition Law
   3.2 Environmental Law
   3.3 Company Law, Commercial Law and Trade Policy
4. The Enforcement Instruments of Economic Law and Policy
   4.1 Judicial vs. Administrative Enforcement
   4.2 Legal Decision Making: Centralization vs. Decentralization
4.3 Fines or Imprisonment
5. Doing Business in China
   5.1 Guanxi and Business Culture
   5.2 Social Network
   5.3 Dispute Resolution in China

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Essay Topics

This course requires to submit an essay (2000-3000 words) and the essay will be evaluated according to the course policy. There is no requirement for the topic of the essay; however, the topic should be generally related to the contents of the course.

As a suggestion, please find a list of essay topics below.

1. Economic Growth and the Development of Legal Institutions in China
2. Influence and Challenges of the 1978 Market Reform
3. Cultural Heritage, Confucianism and Rule of Law in China
4. Guanxi, Social network and Doing business in China
5. Globalization and Chinese Competition Law/Environmental Law/Administrative Law

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Reading List

There is no required reading for this course. The reading materials listed below are supplementary, and further resource lists will be provided during the course.

1. A Brief Introduction to the Chinese Legal System

2. The 1978 Market Reform
3. Economic Law and Policy in China


4. The Enforcement of Economic Policy


5. Doing Business in China

