"International Human Rights Law in a Nutshell: A Podcast Seminar"
International Law Seminar winter term 2021/2022
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Key Dates and Facts

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TIMELINE

11th October, 16.40 (6.DS)

(Preliminary Meeting, GER/52/U)

8nd November, 16.40 (6. DS)

(Introductory session)

10th December

(submit first draft of the script; not graded, for your fellow students to critique)

20th December

(submit individual critique of two scripts of other groups)

21st January

(submit final podcast script and podcast)

28th and 29th January

(final session with discussion)

EXAMINATION

1. Podcast script (25%)

2. Final session with discussion (25%)

3. Produced podcast (50%)

Note: After the introductory session you might consult with your advisor, if necessary (limited to one consultation per group).

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Guidelines: "How to create a good podcast"

The following guidelines should help the students to understand what we generally consider a "good" podcast. Each individual group will have, depending on the topic chosen, a different approach or concept on how to successfully integrate the topic in a podcast. Examples from last year's seminar can be found on Völkerrechtsblog (https://voelkerrechtsblog.org/listen-space-law/; https://voelkerrechtsblog.org/listen-a-very-short-history-of-public-international-law/). These podcasts could serve as instructor examples for your work – please do not copy their approach as it is. Please consider the following guidelines and tips as they will be considered in grading your work.

Table of Contents

I.   Choosing a topic

The objective of the podcast is to successfully **explain core concepts in international human rights law 'in a nutshell' and connect them to current research and current developments in world politics** (e.g. clarification of the legal background of these developments and role and relevance of public international law in this context). The objective is to illustrate the relevance of core concepts of international human rights law beyond the university context and the so called "academic ivory tower".

- Choose one of the suggested seminar topics
- Find a podcast topic that rests on and combines **three pillars:**

   1. Core concepts, issues and challenges in international human rights law (in relation to your chosen seminar topic)

   2. Current legal research on these core concepts, issues and challenges (for example international law blogs)

   3. Current developments in international politics connected to your seminar topic

- Please keep these three pillars/elements in mind when choosing a topic, since these will guide the grading process

II.   Developing a concept

A well-thought through concept is one of the most important features that will make your podcast successful and will make people want to listen to it. Try to be as creative as possible but keep in mind the three pillars mentioned before and the guiding questions below.

Guiding questions to think about your concept:

- What is the core topic/core concept of the podcast?
- Who is the target group? (e.g. students, lay audience, academia)
- What is the time frame of the podcast?
- What is the core objective of the podcast?
- How can a complex topic be made accessible?
- Who should talk in the podcast? (e.g. you and your interview partner)

III.   Conducting an expert interview

We would like to encourage you to conduct an **'expert interview'** in your podcast (interview can be virtual via zoom, skype etc.). This does not mean that it necessarily has to be an interview in the strict sense, it could also be a talk etc. Experts in the field can be legal researchers, politicians,

doctoral candidates and others depending on the topic you chose. Please consider sending out interview requests as early as possible, since it might take time to get an affirmative answer and find a date for the interview. We know that this might be a challenge but we would like you to do your best in finding an interview partner. Think about who would be an asset to your podcast and how/on which aspect you would conduct the interview and why.

IV.   Developing a methodology

Developing a convincing methodology that creates a good listening experience and animates listeners to want to know more is part and parcel of a successful podcast – therefore you need to think about and develop your own didactical concept and linguistic style.

Didactics

- A podcast should be short and informative.
- The length of the podcast should be 15 to max. 20 minutes.
- Key question: How can the information material be limited to the essentials and structured in a productive manner?
- The creation of a specific format/setting/framework can be helpful
- The information provided in the podcast should be structured and arranged adequately and be comprehensible (e.g. create a "narrative" that runs through the podcast).

Linguistic style

- Focus here: The experience of the listeners!
- A podcast is mostly listened to individually over headphones, which creates an "intimate" setting: Try to take listeners with you in addressing them directly.
- Try to be serious, honest, authentic and arouse interest without being patronizing (informality, personal, effortless).
- Always introduce and thank people who speak in the podcast.
- Use clear sentence constructions and establish clear linguistic references.
- Take breaks while speaking!
- Use linguistic structuring aids (such as summaries, marking of topic changes), one possibility is to structure by acoustic signals (speaker change, music).

We would like the beginning, closing and title of the podcast to be consistent throughout the groups. Please start with: "Welcome to International Human Rights Law in a Nutshell – the ZIS

Podcast series". Please end with: "This was today's episode of International Human Rights Law in a Nutshell – the ZIS Podcast series. Thank you for listening, we hope to have you with us again next time. Stay safe!"

V.   Preparing the podcast script

All the points mentioned so far should be taken into account when writing your podcast script. In writing your script take a movie script as an example. You should write down in full sentences everything you as the podcast's hosts intend to say (including the introduction, your questions etc.) as well as an outline of the answers you expect. Also write down music, pauses etc. so the students who will read your script will be able to criticize it accordingly. **The script should be 14 pages long and reflect the legal research you have done concerning your topic. Therefore, please prepare footnotes and a bibliography accordingly always taking into account the three main pillars. Keep in mind that the script reflects your research and can be more detailed.** Your script may differ from the produced podcast but can also be a written-out version of your podcast as long as it clearly contains the legal research done.

Please hand in your first draft of the script on 10th December, so your fellow students can criticize it. The final (!) scripts (after receiving criticism from your fellow students) should be handed in on 21st January together with the final podcast.

VI.   Criticizing other podcast scripts

You as an **individual (!) student** will be asked to **criticize 2 other podcast script** before they are recorded. In keeping in mind all you learned about a good podcast experience while researching for your own podcast please write **2 pages of constructive criticism for each podcast. It should build around the three main pillars of the podcast and should look at the overall concept of the podcast as well as the legal research conducted**. Thus, you are expected to offer feedback for example on gaps in the research or misunderstandings regarding the legal scholarship as well as point out missing factors. The exact content, however, depends on the scripts you receive. Keep in mind that these critiques are aimed towards strengthening your fellow students' scripts as well as broadening your own knowledge. **Please hand in your critique on 20nd December.** Additionally, please take the criticism you receive yourself into account when proceeding with producing your podcast. Every podcast script will receive at least two different feedbacks. Keep in mind that your feedback has to be formal, constructive and academically sound.

VII.   Producing the podcast: technological considerations

Technological considerations should always be in the back of your mind when thinking about your podcast. Many resources and tips can be found online. The following resources considered as a selection and recommendation. You are free, however, to use different tools. See also the teaching videos by Prof Alexander Lasch concerning podcast production at the TU Dresden that can be found online: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8xDtUXQ4Tb8.

Recording

- Software for recording: Audacity (freeware)

Cutting

- Software for cutting: Audacity (freeware)

Conducting (expert) interviews

- Microphone: Audio quality is critical to listener experience (good examples are Rode NT1 or Rode Podcaster – those can be connected to your laptop via USB) but standard head-phones (such as the one included with most smartphones) or laptop microphones will work fine as well.
- The best audio quality will be reached by conducting interviews in person. This, however, requires microphones. Skype and Zoom are good alternatives for conducting and recording interviews.

VIII.   Final Session

In the final session we will listen to each of the podcasts and discuss. Please prepare at least **three discussion questions** in relation to your podcast and be ready to give feedback to each other. The discussion in the final session and your prepared questions will be graded (25%).

IX.   Additional resources

Examples of podcasts with relation to international law as inspiration:

Besides the podcasts that have been produced and published last year, see the following:

EJIL: Talk! https://www.ejiltalk.org/ejil-the-podcast/

FAZ Einspruch: https://www.faz.net/podcasts/f-a-z-einspruch-podcast/

ETH Zurich: Talking Law & Economics https://podcasts.apple.com/us/podcast/talking-law-and-economics-at-eth-zurich/id1482285633?ign-mpt=uo%3D4

Völkerrechtsblog: https://voelkerrechtsblog.org/article-categories/podcast/

Recht politisch: https://open.spotify.com/show/4gT0JnBSMmbJ18NcdiIaS1

X. Seminar Procedure

1) Preliminary meeting 11th October

- Introduction to the seminar and the seminar procedure
- arrangement of students (maybe groups depending on number of participants)
- topic allocations

2) Introductory session 8th November

- Introducing guidelines for a successful podcast and clarify questions
- A short introduction to "Audacity"

3) Working phases

Each group may consult their advisors during the working phase. Consultations are usually limited to one consultation per group. Nevertheless, more consultations can be offered if circumstances demand.

a) podcast planning and scripting

- Research
- Designing the concept
- Finding experts
- Write the script and upload it for other students to criticize (the script will not be graded yet!) until 10th December

b) consultation phase (among each other)

- each individual student writes a 2-page criticism on podcast scripts of other students until 20nd December
- each student acknowledges criticism of other groups and consults with adviser if necessary

c) production phase

- finalize the script
- produce the podcast

upload podcast and final script (both graded) until 21st January

4) Final session (28th and 29th January 2022)

- Listening to the podcasts and discussion
- Prepare at least <u>three discussion questions</u> relating to your podcast