



SOUTH-WEST UNIVERSITY 'NEOFIT RILSKI'

FACULTY OF LAW AND HISTORY

Department 'Civil Law Sciences'

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INFORMATION PACKAGE OF DOCTORAL EDUCATION

SCIENTIFIC FIELD: 3. SOCIAL, ECONOMIC AND LEGAL SCIENCES

PROFESSIONAL FIELD: 3.6. LAW

DOCTORAL PROGRAM: ROMAN LAW

EDUCATIONAL AND SCIENTIFIC DEGREE: DOCTOR

LEVEL ACCORDING TO THE NQF: 8

PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATION: RESEARCHER

DURATION OF STUDY: 3 (three) or 4 (four) years

FORM OF STUDY: FULL-TIME / INDEPENDENT / PART-TIME

ANNOTATION

The program is designed in accordance with new opportunities for enhancing the knowledge and skills of doctoral students and is oriented toward the adoption of established best practices and experience in the field of Roman Law. As a result, doctoral candidates are provided with numerous opportunities to participate in specialized courses and trainings aimed at improving their professional qualifications and competencies. The dynamic development of science and technology in the global economy, along with the increasing need for deeper specialization and higher qualifications in a globalized market, necessitates research on a wide range of scientific and practical issues that directly influence doctoral education. One of the main objectives of the program is the practical application of the doctoral students' scientific research. Throughout their studies, doctoral candidates gradually develop skills and abilities to explore and analyze topics in the field of Roman Law, to draw scientifically grounded conclusions, to navigate current academic information, to analyze judicial practice, and to perform comparative legal studies with foreign legislations.

Doctoral students in "Roman Law" are trained in the traditional forms of study: full-time, part-time, and independent preparation. Their training is carried out through the compulsory and elective courses included in the curriculum of the Doctoral Program in Roman Law and specified in the individual study plans. In addition to the mandatory courses, depending on the chosen research topic within the scientific field of Roman Law or another related discipline, such as "Methodology and Methods of Legal Research," "English Language," and "Project Preparation and Management," doctoral students may also choose from elective courses including "Philosophy of Law," "General History of Law," "Canon Law," "Scientific and Research Ethics," and "Concept and Interpretation of Legal Text".

The doctoral training includes the following activities:

1. Research activities, including participation in scientific projects.
2. Attendance and participation in academic courses (lectures, seminars, etc.).
3. Teaching and expert activities, as well as participation in scientific forums (national and/or international).
4. Engagement in administrative activities and the academic life of the host institution.
5. Taking examinations as specified in the individual study plan.
6. Preparation and defense of a doctoral dissertation.

During their studies, doctoral students in "Roman Law" acquire, in accordance with the National Qualifications Framework of the Republic of Bulgaria:

- Knowledge (theoretical and/or factual)

During their studies, doctoral students acquire knowledge about the **historical development and the contemporary state of Roman Law**, its institutions, and the trends in its evolution. They gain an understanding of the **main civil law institutions and their regulatory framework** through:

- Developing skills for applying a **scientific approach and research methodology** in their academic work.

- Building the ability to **expand and modify existing knowledge** in the field of Roman Law and its interaction with other branches of legal science.

- Acquiring knowledge of the **methodology of teaching legal disciplines**.

- Gaining **specialized and systematic knowledge** for conducting critical analysis and synthesizing new ideas.

- **Formulating and presenting** research findings and conclusions effectively.

- Skills (cognitive and/or practical)

Doctoral students in the program:

1. Master the **methodology of scientific research** and its application through the lens of specific scientific and practical problems.
2. Develop **competence in understanding and applying research techniques** used in complex academic studies.
3. Acquire **skills for working with scientific tools and apparatus**.
4. Build the ability to **identify, extract, and analyze scientific and practical problems**.
5. Develop the capacity to **make informed judgments on complex issues** in the field of Roman Law, even in the absence of complete data, and to present their ideas and conclusions clearly and effectively to both specialists and non-specialists.
6. Gain **specialized skills in using various information sources**, as well as advanced **computer and language proficiency**, aimed at ensuring personal information literacy and facilitating professional communication with scholars from other countries.

- Autonomy and Responsibility

Doctoral students in the program act independently and responsibly to:

1. Develop **individual creative thinking**.
2. Conduct **current scientific and applied research**.
3. Formulate, argue, and defend **their own scientific ideas and conclusions**.
4. Prepare and publish **original scientific works**.
5. Fulfill the activities outlined in their **individual study plans**.
6. Carry out the **tasks assigned by their academic supervisor and the host department**.

- Learning Competence

Doctoral students in the program develop the ability to **systematically and consistently acquire a significant body of knowledge and skills** that correspond to modern scientific, academic, and professional practices and achievements. They gain the following learning competencies:

- **Locating relevant scientific literature** and collecting data on the legal branches studied, sub-branches, institutions, phenomena, trends, and processes.

- Conducting **independent theoretical and empirical research**.

- **Transferring and disseminating acquired knowledge** to others at a later stage—such as students, experts, and professionals.

- Communicative and Social Competences

The qualities acquired by doctoral students during their training in the program are associated not only with their theoretical knowledge and values but also with the **development and enrichment of their communicative and social competences**. These are cultivated through interactions with academic supervisors, consultants, and colleagues at the Faculty of Law and History of South-West University “Neofit Rilski,” as well as through opportunities for scholarly communication with peers from other universities, delivering presentations, and engaging with members of the legal community. Doctoral students enhance their communicative and social skills through:

1. Participation in various **scientific forums** in Bulgaria and abroad — conferences, symposia, seminars, and research sessions.
2. Participation in **national and international research projects**.
3. Engagement in **doctoral mobility programs**, including within the **Erasmus+ program**.
4. Participation in **professional specializations and internships abroad**.
5. Involvement in **teaching activities**, among others.

- **Professional Competences**

Doctoral students in the program:

1. Master the **methodology of scientific research**, the techniques of academic inquiry, and the methods of teaching legal disciplines.
2. Acquire **high-level scientific, linguistic, computer, and internet-based skills**, aimed at ensuring personal information literacy and facilitating professional communication with scholars and experts in Bulgaria and abroad.
3. Present their **ideas and conclusions competently, clearly, and persuasively** to both specialists and non-specialists.
4. Conduct **high-level scientific and applied research**, thereby contributing to the advancement of legal science.

SECTION I.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY (ROMAN LAW)

I. Compulsory Academic Disciplines

Doctoral students are required to study in depth the compulsory courses depending on the chosen topic within the scientific field — Roman Law or another relevant discipline — as well as *Methodology and Methods of Legal Research*, *English Language*, and *Project Preparation and Management*.

The doctoral training includes independent study, attendance at lectures and seminars, and other academic activities. The completion of the training concludes with an examination before a committee that includes the academic supervisor, in accordance with the individual study plan. The examination grade is reported to the Council of the Department of Civil Law Sciences and is recorded in the official documents related to the implementation of the doctoral student’s individual work plan.

II. Elective Academic Disciplines

Doctoral students, during their course of study, may choose one of the following disciplines: Philosophy of Law, General History of Law, Canon Law, Scientific and Research Ethics, or Concept and Interpretation of Legal Texts. Doctoral training includes independent study, attendance of lectures and seminars, and other academic activities. The program concludes with an examination before a committee that includes the academic supervisor, in accordance with the individual study plan. The examination grade is reported to the Department Council of Civil Law Sciences and is included in the official documentation for the implementation of the doctoral student's individual study plan.

Methods of Instruction and Assessment, and Language of Instruction:

The training is fully in accordance with the current legislation and the Internal Regulations for the Development of the Academic Staff at South-West University "Neofit Rilski." The educational process is conducted through lectures and independent study by the doctoral students. The lecturer provides explanations and guidance regarding the subject matter of the studied discipline, the relevant legal framework, the necessary academic literature, and any questions that arise during the doctoral students' independent work related to the course material.

The language of instruction is Bulgarian.

SECTION II. RESEARCH ACTIVITY *(MAIN ACTIVITIES OF DOCTORAL STUDENTS RELATED TO THE PREPARATION OF THE DISSERTATION AND TO THEIR SCIENTIFIC DEVELOPMENT)*

During their scientific training and the development of their dissertation, doctoral students in **Roman Law**:

1. Participate in **seminars and discussions** on didactic and academic issues.
2. Prepare **reports and presentations** (related to their dissertation topic or other relevant subjects within the doctoral program) for scientific events, discussions, conferences, and round tables.
3. Take part in the **development and implementation of research projects**.
4. Attend meetings of the **Department of Civil Law Sciences**, contributing to discussions on theoretical and practical issues.
5. Conduct **independent research** during the preparation of their dissertation.
6. Analyze the **necessity and possibilities for changes in national legislation**.

The main research activities forming part of the dissertation preparation include:

- Studying and reviewing academic literature.
- Developing and presenting dissertation research **concepts**.
- Formulating the **research problem and scientific thesis**.
- Conducting bibliographic research and organizing sources.
- Describing and systematizing **previous studies** in the dissertation field.

- Defining **research objectives and tasks**, choosing the research approach and methodology.
- Justifying the selected **methods and techniques**.
- Developing a **conceptual draft of the dissertation**.
- Discussing the **dissertation project** in two stages.
- Presenting the **research concept and tools**.
- Carrying out **research work** – preparing and publishing a study, article, or scientific communication.
- Participating in **research projects**.

Doctoral students in Roman Law may also engage in **teaching and methodological activities**. The final stage of their scientific training involves **familiarization with the dissertation defense procedures** before a scientific jury and **preparation for the defense**.

Roman law

ECTS credits: 5

Academic Hours: 45 (lectures) / 105 (self-study)

Form of Assessment: Examination

Course Status: Compulsory

Type of Examination: Written

Methodological Guidance:

Department: Civil Law Sciences

Faculty: Faculty of Law and History

Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Konstantin Tanev, PhD.

Annotation:

The course encompasses the deepening and expansion of legal-historical, theoretical, and comparative-legal knowledge, addressing the practical need for a thorough understanding of the processes that shaped contemporary private law institutions in the context of the unification trends in the law of European countries and the European Union. It aims to provide doctoral students with profound knowledge and practical skills in private law analysis, focusing on the historical development, current status, and possibilities for unified interpretation of the diverse national legal systems sharing a common origin in Roman law. The course emphasizes the role of Roman legal tradition as a foundation for legal harmonization and comparative analysis within Europe. Through this preparation, graduates of the faculty are expected to establish themselves as leading experts within the educational and legal space of the European Union.

Methodology and Methods of Legal Research

ECTS credits: 5

Academic Hours: 45 (lectures) / 105 (self-study)

Form of Assessment: Examination

Course Status: Compulsory

Type of Examination: Written

Methodological Guidance:

Department: Civil Law Sciences

Faculty: Faculty of Law and History

Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Manol Stanin, PhD.

Annotation:

The curriculum is designed to introduce the fundamental principles of the methodology and methods of scientific research, as well as the information support necessary for conducting academic studies. The course aims to provide doctoral students with opportunities for deeper, more focused, and well-structured research work. It presents the key stages of the research process—from identifying a

scientific problem to organizing and conducting empirical and theoretical studies. The discipline also supports the development of effective planning, analytical, and organizational skills essential for high-quality scientific inquiry and successful completion of doctoral research.

Project Preparation and Management

ECTS credits: 5

Academic Hours: 45 (lectures) / 105 (self-study)

Form of Assessment: Examination

Course Status: Compulsory

Type of Examination: Written

Methodological Guidance:

Department: Civil Law Sciences

Faculty: Faculty of Law and History

Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Ivan Todorov

Department: 'Finance and Accounting'

Faculty: Faculty of Economics

Annotation:

The discipline "Project Preparation and Management" introduces doctoral students to the fundamental principles and stages of project development and implementation, with particular emphasis on programs funded by the European Union. Its goal is to provide in-depth knowledge of effective project planning, management, and budgeting. The course develops skills for analyzing regulatory documents, preparing project proposals, and applying monitoring and control methods. Training combines lectures, case studies, and independent work, while assessment is based on practical assignments. The expected outcome is that doctoral students will acquire practical competencies for designing, executing, and evaluating projects within both academic and professional contexts.

English Language

ECTS credits: 5

Academic Hours: 60 (lectures) / 90 (self-study)

Form of Assessment: Examination

Course Status: Compulsory

Type of Examination: Written

Methodological Guidance:

Department: Civil Law Sciences

Faculty: Faculty of Law and History

Lecturers: Assoc. Prof. Dafina Kostadinova, Assoc. Prof. Ivanka Sakareva, Assoc. Prof. Yana Chankova,

Faculty of Philology, **Department** of German and Romance Studies

Annotation:

The English Language Course for Doctoral Students is an intensive program held after the summer semester and structured according to proficiency levels aligned with the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (A1–C1). Its primary goal is to enhance language competence by developing the four key skills—reading, writing, listening, and speaking—with a strong focus on academic communication. The course includes modules in grammar, vocabulary, written exercises, translation, and academic writing, as well as specialized terminology tailored to each doctoral student's field of study. The expected outcome is that participants will acquire the ability to comprehend, produce, and present academic texts and presentations in English, and demonstrate competence in ethical source use and citation within the academic context.

Ethics of Scientific Research

ECTS credits: 4

Academic hours: 30 (lectures) / 15 (self-study)

Form of Assessment: Examination

Course Status: elective

Type of Examination: Written

Methodological Guidance:

Department: Civil Law Sciences

Faculty: Faculty of Law and history

Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Manol Stanin, PhD.

Annotation:

The course examines ethical issues in relation to the development of scientific research in contemporary society. It emphasizes the importance of ethical standards in academic inquiry and highlights the positive impact of research on social progress. The primary goal is for doctoral students to recognize the significance of ethical norms in conducting research, as well as to analyze and address practical problems through both scientific and ethical approaches. Throughout the course, special attention is given to the ethical components embedded in current national and supranational legal frameworks governing research activities.

Philosophy of Law

ECTS credits: 4

Academic hours: 30 (lectures) / 15 (self-study)

Form of Assessment: Examination

Course Status: elective

Type of Examination: Written

Methodological Guidance:

Department: Civil Law Sciences

Faculty: Faculty of Law and history

Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Manol Stanin, PhD.

Annotation:

The course is designed to provide doctoral students with knowledge about the fundamental qualities of law, which are influenced by phenomena existing independently of it yet reflected within it—such as freedom, justice, morality, natural rights, coercion, interest, purpose, evaluation, and legal consciousness. By applying this meta-legal approach, the philosophy of law offers criteria essential for understanding the nature and function of various legal systems. The discipline also explores the relationships between these intrinsic qualities of law and external societal phenomena such as the rule of law, civil society, and the legal state. Furthermore, it examines the interaction between law and politics, law and the state, and law and governmental authority. Ultimately, the philosophy of law provides a conceptual foundation that deepens the understanding of legal issues and complements the study of other branches of legal science, including general legal theory.

General History of Law

ECTS credits: 4

Academic hours: 30 (lectures) / 15 (self-study)

Form of Assessment: Examination

Course Status: elective

Type of Examination: Written

Methodological Guidance:**Department:** 'Civil Law Sciences'**Faculty:** Faculty of Law and history**Lecturer:** Assoc. Prof. Konstantin Tanev, PhD.**Annotation:**

The course offers a historical overview of the development of legal science from antiquity to the present day. It examines law across various geographical and temporal contexts, conducting comparative analyses of different legal systems. Its main objective is to provide doctoral students with an in-depth understanding of genesis and evolution of legal thought. The course familiarizes students with the legal systems of Ancient Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, Byzantium, and the Western Roman Empire, as well as with the development of Canon and Ecclesiastical Law. It encourages comparative study of European legal systems and traditions. Doctoral students are expected to acquire skills in historical and comparative legal analysis, enabling them to conduct independent research on different stages of legal development. The discipline is closely connected to Roman Law, as historical knowledge is essential for accurate interpretation of Roman legal texts, and it also enhances understanding of the interrelations between law, economics, and politics across different historical periods.

Canon Law**ECTS credits:** 4**Form of Assessment:** Examination**Type of Examination:** Written**Methodological Guidance:****Department:** 'Civil Law Sciences'**Faculty:** Faculty of Law and history**Lecturer:** Assoc. Prof. Konstantin Tanev, PhD.**Academic hours:** 30 (lectures) / 15 (self-study)**Course Status:** elective**Annotation:**

The course examines the origin, development, and legal structure of the Christian Church. Its primary goal is to provide doctoral students with an in-depth understanding of the historical interaction between the Church and law, as well as the distinction between Canon Law and Ecclesiastical Law. The program covers Divine and Church legislation, exploring the role of the Church as both a supranational organization and a legal entity. The expected outcome is that doctoral students will acquire a comprehensive understanding of the system of Ecclesiastical Law and its influence on the evolution of legal science. The discipline is closely connected with Roman Law, General History of Law, and Philosophy of Law, since the Church played a crucial role in preserving and developing the Roman legal tradition.

Concept and Interpretation of Legal Text**ECTS credits:** 4**Form of Assessment:** Examination**Type of Examination:** Written**Methodological Guidance:****Department:** 'Civil Law Sciences'**Faculty:** Faculty of Law and history**Academic hours:** 30 (lectures) / 15 (self-study)**Course Status:** elective

Lecturer: Assoc. Prof. Konstantin Taney, PhD.

Annotation:

The course aims to develop skills for the proper understanding and interpretation of Roman legal texts. It covers the analysis of legal and non-legal sources, as well as the methods for their exegetical and historical interpretation. The course provides knowledge of ancient written monuments, Justinian's Digest, the Roman legal tradition, and the development of Natural Law. The expected outcome is for doctoral students to acquire the ability to work with legal texts and to understand their influence on modern legal codifications. The discipline is closely related to Roman Law, Latin Language, Canon Law, General History of Law, and Private International Law, making it a fundamental component of legal-historical research.