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Course title: AMERICAN LEGAL SYSTEM

ECTS credit allocation (and other scores): 4

Semester: spring

Level of study: First-cycle programmes, second-cycle programmes and long-cycle programmes

Branch of science: social sciences (law, political science and public administration, communication and media studies, security studies)

Language: English

Number of hours per semester: 15

Course coordinator/ Department and e-mail: dr hab. Edyta Sokalska/Law and Administration

Faculty/edyta.sokalska@uwm.edu.pl

Type of classes: classes and lectures

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#### Substantive content

CLASSES: The evolution of the American legal system. The Constitutional Convention and governmental structure of the United States provided for in the Constitution of 1787. Interpretations of "Living Constitution" in the American legal and political discourse. Sources of law. Kinds of law. Legal procedure. The federal and state court system. Judicial selection. The presentation of the legal system of the chosen American states (historical aspects, state administration, state constitution, state court system).

LECTURES: Introduction to the course. Main content and bibliography, methodology of the course, evaluation process. Historical roots of the American federal administration and English influences on the American legal system. The nature of the American legal system in connection with the American administrative division. The historical background of the United States patent law. Historical Background and the Main Ideas of the American Uniform Commercial Code of 1952. The tradition of ADR (Alternative Dispute Resolution) as an alternative form of justice in the American legal culture.

Learning purpose: The main goal of the course is to know and understand the background of the American legal system (English influences, sources of law, the federal and state court system and judicial selection).

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On completion of the study programme the graduate will gain:

Knowledge: Students acquired knowledge on the American legal system. Students broadened their knowledge concerning the American legal culture.

Skills: Students are able to interpret some American legal text. Students know how to use some American legal terms.

Social Competencies: Students are open to the problems concerning the American legal system. Students are conscious of the acquired knowledge.

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Basic literature:

1. J. V. Calvi, S. Coleman, *American Law and Legal Systems*, Routledge, New York- Abingdon 2016;
2. W. Burnham, *Introduction to the Law and Legal System of the United States*, West Academic Publishing 2016;
3. G.P. Fletcher, S. Sheppard, *American Law in a Global Context. The Basics*, Oxford University Press, New York 2005;
4. L.M. Friedman, *American Law in the Twentieth Century*, Yale University Press, New Haven 2004.

Supplementary literature:

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1. E. Sokalska, *Legal and Political Dimensions of American Federalism: Development and Interpretations*, Wydawnictwo Uniwersytetu Warmińsko-Mazurskiego w Olsztynie, Olsztyn 2018;
2. L.M. Friedman, *A History of American Law*, Touchstone, New York 2005;
3. S.H. Gifis, *Dictionary of Legal Terms*, Barrons Educational Series, New York 2008;
4. M. Englander, C. Karnow, *How the Courts Work: A Plain Explanation of the American Legal System*, Vandeplas Publishing, New York 2008.
5. Abadinsky H., *Law, Courts and justice in America*, Waveland Press, Long Grove 2014.

The allocated number of ECTS points consists of: 3

Contact hours with an academic teacher: 40 (lectures, classes, individual consultations)

Student's independent work: 35 (preparation for classes, preparation of individual presentation concerning the chosen American state)