UNIVERSITY OF ZURICH · FACULTY OF LAW

Law and Economics

Seminar · Fall Term 2026

Prof. Dr. Dr. Yoan Hermstrüwer, Dr. Mark Steiner and PD Dr. Peter McColgan

1 Dates

Date	Time	Topic
Friday, 25 September 2026	14:00–18:00	Introduction
Friday, 13 November 2026	14:00–18:00	Property Law & Tort Law
Friday, 20 November 2026	14:00–18:00	Criminal Law & Legal Process
Friday, 4 December 2026	14:00–18:00	Environmental Law & Public Law
Friday, 11 December 2026	14:00–18:00	Contracts & Competition Law
Friday, 18 December 2026	14:00–18:00	Intellectual Property / Privacy Law & Commodification

All sessions are held on Friday afternoons and take place in person.

2 Assignment

Every student prepares a written paper and a set of presentation slides.

The paper is a short, scientific comment on a research article falling within the scope of one of the units below. It is a comment rather than a summary: it should take a position on the article and argue for it.

The presentation, unlike the comment, focuses on the main findings of the research article, so that the other participants are able to discuss it.

Length of the comment: 2,500–3,000 words, excluding footnotes, bibliography and front matter.

Presentation: a maximum of 10 slides, presented in 10 minutes and followed by a 10-minute discussion.

Deadline for the paper and the slides: **Wednesday, 11 November 2026, 23:59 CET.**

Detailed requirements on form and content are set out in a separate document, the Guidelines on Legal Writing, available on OLAT.

3 Topics

Each paper below is a separate topic. Refer to a topic by its code — for example 2B — when you apply.

Property Law

1A *R. H. Coase,* The Problem of Social Cost

1B *O. Bar-Gill / C. Engel,* Bargaining in the Absence of Property Rights: An Experiment

1C *C. R. Plott / K. Zeiler,* The Willingness to Pay–Willingness to Accept Gap, the "Endowment Effect", Subject Misconceptions, and Experimental Procedures for Eliciting Valuations

Tort Law

2A *F. A. Sloan / B. A. Reilly / C. Schenzler,* Effects of Tort Liability and Insurance on Heavy Drinking and Driving

2B *M. J. Shukaitis,* A Market in Personal Injury Tort Claims

2C *G. Dari-Mattiacci / L. A. Franzoni,* Innovative Negligence Rules

Criminal Law

3A *J. A. Miron / J. Zwiebel,* The Economic Case against Drug Prohibition

3B *I. Ehrlich,* The Deterrent Effect of Capital Punishment: A Question of Life and Death

3C *U. Gneezy / A. Rustichini,* A Fine Is a Price

Legal Process

4A *J. Rachlinski / A. Wistrich,* Judging the Judiciary by the Numbers

4B *E. Helland / A. Tabarrok,* The Fugitive: Evidence on Public versus Private Law Enforcement from Bail Jumping

4C *J. Kleinberg / H. Lakkaraju / J. Leskovec / J. Ludwig / S. Mullainathan,* Human Decisions and Machine Predictions

4D *B. Chen / Y. Hermstrüwer / P. Langenbach / A. Stremitzer / K. Tobia,* Mitigating the Judicial Human–AI Fairness Gap

Environmental Law

5A *R. L. Revesz / M. A. Livermore,* Retaking Rationality: How Cost-Benefit Analysis Can Better Protect the Environment and Our Health

5B *G. E. Metcalf / J. H. Stock,* The Macroeconomic Impact of Europe's Carbon Taxes

5C *O. Deschênes / M. Greenstone / J. S. Shapiro,* Defensive Investments and the Demand for Air Quality: Evidence from the NOx Budget Program

Public Law

6A *G. Stigler,* The Theory of Economic Regulation

6B *A. Chilton / M. Versteeg,* Rights without Resources: The Impact of Constitutional Social Rights on Social Spending

6C *A. Abdulkadiroğlu / T. Sönmez,* School Choice: A Mechanism Design Approach

Contracts

7A *S. Brams / J. Mitts,* Law and Mechanism Design: Procedures to Induce Honest Bargaining

7B *I. Ayres / A. Schwartz,* The No-Reading Problem in Consumer Contract Law

7C *O. Ben-Shahar / O. Bar-Gill,* Rethinking Nudge: An Information-Costs Theory of Default Rules

Competition Law

8A *P. Cramton / E. Kwerel / G. Rosston / A. Skrzypacz,* Using Spectrum Auctions to Enhance Competition in Wireless Services

8B *J. M. Newman,* Antitrust in Zero-Price Markets: Foundations

8C *J. Campbell / A. Goldfarb / C. Tucker,* Privacy Regulation and Market Structure

8D *A. Ezrachi / M. E. Stucke,* Artificial Intelligence & Collusion: When Computers Inhibit Competition

Intellectual Property Law & Privacy Law

9A *S. Shavell / T. van Ypersele,* Rewards versus Intellectual Property Rights

9B *C. Buccafusco et al.,* Experimental Tests of Intellectual Property Laws' Creativity Thresholds

9C *A. Acquisti / L. K. John / G. Loewenstein,* What Is Privacy Worth?

Commodification

10A *G. S. Becker / J. J. Elías,* Introducing Incentives in the Market for Live and Cadaveric Organ Donations

10B *J. Moraga / H. Rapoport,* Tradable Refugee-Admission Quotas and EU Asylum Policy

10C *A. E. Roth,* Repugnance as a Constraint on Markets

10D *H. Gao / V. Petrova,* Do Prostitution Laws Affect Rape Rates? Evidence from Europe

4 Application Procedure

Deadline for applications: Wednesday, 30 September 2026.

All students who wish to prepare a paper send an email to **lst.hermstruewer@ius.uzh.ch** with the following information:

1. Name, matriculation number and field of study (law or economics)
2. Preferred topic
3. Second choice of topic
4. Third choice of topic

Example

John Smith, 11-111-111, law
Preference: 2B
Second option: 3A
Third option: 7A

Topics are assigned by **Sunday, 4 October 2026**. Please note that preferences cannot always be respected.

5 Submission

Deadline for the submission of both the paper and the slides: **Wednesday, 11 November 2026, 23:59 CET.**

Send both by email to lst.hermstruewer@ius.uzh.ch, mark.steiner@lgt.com and p.mccolgan@hu-berlin.de.

Paper: Word (.docx) or PDF
Slides: PowerPoint (.pptx) or PDF

6 Program

Friday, 25 September 2026

Introduction to Law and Economics, and information about the course.

Friday, 13 November – Friday, 18 December 2026

On each of these days two topic blocks are covered, with two presentations in each — approximately four presentations per day. Each topic block has the following structure:

1. Introduction to the topic by the instructors (approx. 30 min)
2. Presentation by student 1 (10 min)
3. Student commentators and plenary discussion (10 min), based on the three or four questions prepared by student 1
4. Presentation by student 2 (10 min)
5. Student commentators and plenary discussion (10 min)

7 Grading

Component	Weight
Comment paper	**40 %**
Presentation (slides)	**20 %**
Oral participation	**40 %**

The paper must be assessed with a pass grade (at least 4.0) for a participant to pass the course. An insufficient paper grade cannot be compensated by the grade obtained for the presentation or for oral participation.

Because of time constraints, not all students will be able to give their prepared presentation in class; only selected students present. To ensure fair evaluation, the slides are assessed on the slides alone. Delivering them in class does not factor into this element of the grade.

Oral participation is assessed through the quality and consistency of the contributions made. Since not all students present, every student is expected to engage actively in the discussion of the session covering their assigned topic, and participation in that session weighs heavily. Beyond it, students are expected to contribute meaningfully in all sessions, whether or not they are presenting that day; this ongoing participation makes up the majority of the oral participation grade. How actively and thoughtfully you contribute over the term determines this grade, not your presentation alone.

Final grade

(paper × 0.4) + (slides × 0.2) + (oral participation × 0.4), with the paper at 4.0 or above.

8 Contact

Prof. Dr. Dr. Yoan Hermstrüwer lst.hermstruewer@ius.uzh.ch (please contact yoan.hermstruewer@ius.uzh.ch in urgent cases)

Dr. Peter McColgan p.mccolgan@hu-berlin.de

Dr. Mark Steiner mark.steiner@lgt.com

Applications and submissions go to lst.hermstruewer@ius.uzh.ch. Course materials, including the Guidelines on Legal Writing, are available on OLAT.