

International Law

Academic year 2026-2027

Emotions and International Law

DI195 - Autumn - 6 ECTS

Tuesday 14h15 - 16h00

Course Description

This course offers an introduction to the study of emotions in international law. The course draws from emotions research in other disciplines, particularly domestic law and international relations. Throughout the course, we will consider various understandings of emotion and ways of studying emotion in different areas of international law. An overarching objective of the course is acknowledging and evaluating the inevitable influence of emotions on law.

> PROFESSOR

[Anne Saab](#)

[Office hours](#)

> ASSISTANT

[Office hours](#)

IMPORTANT

Regular attendance is compulsory, and any absence must be promptly communicated to the teacher. In the event of missing more than two sessions, students are expected to provide well-documented justifications for unforeseeable circumstances (e.g. illness, accident, death of a relative), directly to the Direction of Studies. Failure to justify absences beyond two sessions will result in the assignment of code N.

Students are also reminded of the following legal rules:

The teacher owns the **copyright** on the material they created for this course. As such, any reproduction or distribution of this document, in whole or in part, as well as of any other material created by the teacher for the course, is prohibited unless permission is granted by the author.

Recording (as video or audio) a course without the consent of the teacher and other participants is strictly forbidden.

A note on using **generative AI**:

Students are encouraged to use AI in a responsible manner. They must comply with the Institute's [Rules and Good Practices for Ethical Use of Artificial Intelligence in Academic Work](#).

Syllabus

COURSE ASSESSMENT:

Students in the course will be assessed on the basis of:

- Three reflection papers (max 500 words) submitted between sessions 2-11 (30%)
- Final essay (3000-4000 words) due on 18 December 2026, 23:59h (70%)

Guidelines for the reflections papers and final essay can be found in Annex I and will be made available on Moodle and clarified during the first class.

COURSE MATERIALS:

The course readings and materials will be made available on Moodle as much as possible. Those readings not on Moodle will be available in the library and/or accessible via electronic books or journals.

COURSE OUTLINE:

SESSION 1 – INTRODUCTION TO THE COURSE (15 September 2026)

Readings:

- Anne Saab, "Emotions and International Law." *ESIL Reflections* 10, no. 3 (2021).
- Interview with Susan Bandes, Law and Society Association Annual Meeting, Denver, 6 June 2024: <https://emotions-and-international-law.com/interviews/>.

SESSION 2 – LAW'S RATIONALIST ASSUMPTION (22 September 2026)

Readings:

- Pierre Schlag, *The Enchantment of Reason* (Duke University Press, 1998): 1-18.
- Massimo Pigliucci, "[Reason vs Emotions? Three Models.](#)" *Medium*, 22 May 2020.
- Gerry Simpson, *The Sentimental Life of International Law: Literature, Language, and Longing in World Politics* (Oxford University Press, 2021): 1-54.
- Susan A. Bandes, Jodee Lynne Madeira, Kathryn D. Temple, and Emily Kidd White, eds., *Research Handbook on Law and Emotion* (Edward Elgar, 2021): Introduction, 1-12.

SESSION 3 – THE MANY TURNS TO EMOTIONS (29 September 2026)

Readings:

- Antonio Damasio, *Descartes' Error: Emotion, Reason, and the Human Brain* (Avon Books, 1994): Introduction + Chapters 10 & 11.
- Jonathan Haidt, "The Emotional Dog and Its Rational Tail: A Social Intuitionist Approach to Moral Judgment," *Psychological Review* 108, no. 4 (2001): 814–34.

- Martha C. Nussbaum, *Upheavals of Thought: The Intelligence of Emotions* (Cambridge University Press, 2001): Introduction + Chapter 1.
- Simon Koschut, "[Emotions and International Relations](#)," Oxford Research Encyclopedias, International Studies Association and Oxford University Press, 20 April 2022.

SESSION 4 – WAYS OF STUDYING LAW AND EMOTION (6 October 2026)

Readings:

- Kathryn Abrams and Hila Keren, "Who's Afraid of Law and the Emotions?", *Minnesota Law Review*, 1-106:1 (2010): 1997-2021.
- Terry A. Maroney, "Law and Emotion: A Proposed Taxonomy of an Emerging Field", *Law and Human Behavior* 119 (2006).
- Susan A. Bandes and Jessica M. Salerno, "Emotion, Proof and Prejudice: The Cognitive Science of Gruesome Photos and Victim Impact Statements", *Arizona Law Journal* 46 (1003) (2014), pp.1007-1009 only.
- Kate Rossmanith, Sharyn Roach Anleu, and Katie Barclay, "How Do Researchers Study Emotion in and around Law?", *Emotions and Society* 7(2) (2025): 163-180.

SESSION 5 – EMOTIONS IN/AND INTERNATIONAL LAW (13 October 2026)

Readings:

- Vesselin Popovski, "Emotions in International Law," in Yohann Araffin, Jean-Marc Coicaud, and Vesselin Popovski, eds., *Emotions in International Politics* (Cambridge University Press, 2015).
- Emily Kidd White, "Images of Reach, Range, and Recognition: Thinking about Emotions in the Study of International Law," in Susan A. Bandes, Jodee Lynee Madeira, Kathryn D. Temple, and Emily Kidd White, eds., *Research Handbook on Law and Emotion* (Elgar, 2021), 492–513.
- Anne Saab, "Engaging with Emotions in International Law," in Andrew A. G. Ross and Simon Koschut (eds) *Oxford Handbook of Emotions in International Relations* (Oxford University Press, 2025).

SESSION 6 – JUDICIAL EMOTIONS: EMPATHY AND ANGER (20 October 2026)

Readings:

- Terry Maroney, "The Persistent Cultural Script of Judicial Dispassion," *California Law Review* 99, no. 629 (2011): 629–81.
- Susan Bandes, "Empathetic Judging and the Law," *Cardozo Law Review De Novo* (2009): 133–48.
- Stina Bergman Blix and Åsa Wettergren, *Professional Emotions in Court: A Sociological Perspective* (Routledge, 2018): Chapter 1, 1-33.
- Sharyn Roach Anleu and Kathy Mack, *Judging and Emotion: A Socio-Legal Analysis* (Routledge, 2021): Chapter 3, 61-87.
- Terry A. Maroney, "Angry Judges," *Vanderbilt Law Review* 65 (2012): 1207–1286.
- Anna Spain Bradley, *Human Choice in International Law* (Cambridge University Press, 2021): Chapter 4, 37-52.

SESSION 7 – EMOTIONS, CONFLICT, AND INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW (27 October 2026)

Readings:

- Nele Verlinden, "To Feel or Not to Feel: Emotions and International Humanitarian Law," in Mats Deland, Mark Klamberg, and Pal Wrangé, eds., *International Humanitarian Law and Justice: Historical and Sociological Perspectives* (Routledge 2018).
- Rebecca Sutton, "How the Emotions and Perceptual Judgments of Frontline Actors Shape the Practice of International Humanitarian Law," in Susan A. Bandes, Jodee Lynne Madeira, Kathryn D. Temple, and Emily Kidd White, eds., *Research Handbook on Law and Emotion* (Edward Elgar, 2021), 477–91.
- Emiliano Buis, "[Beyond Law, Beyond Reason: The Role of Emotions in Generating Compliance with International Humanitarian Law](#)," *Armed Groups and International Law*, 19 October 2020.
- Mitt Regan and Kevin Mullaney, "Emotion, Ethics, and Military Virtues," *Journal of Military Ethics* 22, no. 3–4 (2023): 256–57.

SESSION 8 – THE EMOTIONAL DYNAMICS OF MIGRATION (3 November 2026)

Readings:

- Sara Ahmed, *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, 2nd ed. (Edinburgh University Press, 2014 [2004]): Introduction, 1-19; Chapter 3, 62-81.
- Emma Hutchison, Roland Bleiker, David Campbell and Xzarina Nicholson, "The Visual Dehumanization of Refugees," *Australian Journal of Political Science*, 48, no. 4 (2014): 398–416.
- Jozef Robles, "[Agents of Affect: The Emotional Interactions Between Immigrants and Immigration Agents](#)," Faculty of Law Blogs, University of Oxford, 9 September 2024.
- Interview with Hilary Evans Cameron as part of the SNF-funded "Emotions and International Law" project, 18 October 2024, <https://emotions-and-international-law.com/interviews/>

SESSION 9 – SHAME, STIGMA, AND GLOBAL HEALTH (10 November 2026)

Readings:

- Bianca Naude, "COVID–19 Travel Bans and the Reactivation of Colonial Trauma in Africa," *International Affairs* 99, no. 3 (2023): 1109–1126.
- Rosebell Kagumire, "[The Colonial Undertones of Omicron Travel Bans](#)," *Al Jazeera*, 6 December 2021.
- Antonio Lasalvia, Luca Bodini, Davide Pace, Morena Colombi, Mattia Marco Caruson, Tine Van Bortel, and Chiara Bonetto, "Experienced Discrimination and Internalized Stigma among People Infected with SARS-CoV-2 and Surviving COVID-19: Association with Anxiety, Depression, and Insomnia Symptoms," *Journal of Community Psychology* 52, no. 7 (2024): 910–28.
- Günter Kampf, "COVID-19: Stigmatising the Unvaccinated Is Not Justified," *The Lancet*, 398, no. 1031 (2021): 1871.
- Joana Mendonça and Ana Patrícia Hilário, "Touching the Cornerstone: An Illustrative Example of the Effects of Stigma and Discrimination on Vaccine-Hesitant Parents," *Public Health in Practice* 6, no. 100438 (2023).

SESSION 10 – EMOTIONS AND CLIMATE CHANGE LAW (17 November 2026)

Readings:

- Anne Saab, "Discourses of Fear on Climate Change in International Human Rights Law," *European Journal of International Law* 34, no. 1 (2023).
- Anne Saab, "Anxiety, Anger, and Hope in High-Profile Youth Climate Litigation," forthcoming.
- Panu Pikhala, "Towards a Taxonomy of Climate Emotions," *Frontiers in Climate* 3, no. 738154 (2022): 1–22.
- Tobias Brosch, "Affect and Emotions as Drivers of Climate Change Perception and Action: A Review," *Current Opinion in Behavioral Sciences* 42 (2021): 15–21.
- Åsa Wettergren, "Emotionalising Hope in Times of Climate Change," *Emotions and Society* 7, no. 1 (2025): 133–51.

SESSION 11 – TECHNOLOGY, LAW, AND EMOTION (24 November 2026)

Readings:

- Clive Hamilton, "[Geoengineering: Our Last Hope, or a False Promise?](#)," *The New York Times*, 26 May 2013.
- Albert van Wijngaarden, Adrian Hindes, and Chloe Colomer, "[Plans to Cool the Earth by Blocking Sunlight are Gaining Momentum but Critical Voices Risk Being Excluded](#)," *The Conversation*, 29 October 2024.
- Pat Thomas, "[Frankenfoods—Chewing Over a Polarized Debate](#)," *A Bigger Conversation*, 18 December 2024.
- Joanna L. D. Wilson, "[AI, War and \(In\)Humanity: The Role of Human Emotions in Military Decision-Making](#)," *Humanitarian Law and Policy*, ICRC Blog, 20 February 2025,.
- Speech by Cordula Droege, Chief Legal Office ICRC, at the UN Security Council in September 2025: <https://www.instagram.com/reel/DPFKhIvDHDz/>.
- Marco Sassoli, "Autonomous Weapons and International Humanitarian Law: Advantages, Open Technical Questions and Legal Issues to be Clarified," *International Legal Studies* 90 (2014): 318.
- Valentin Jeutner, "Empathy at War: The Distinction Between Reasonableness and the Reasonable Military Commander Standard," in Nobuo Hayashi and Carola Lingaas, eds., *Honest Errors? Combat Decision-Making 75 Years After the Hostage Case* (T. M. C. Asser Press, 2024): 233–60.

SESSION 12 – GUEST LECTURE BY PROFESSOR ANNA SPAIN BRADLEY (1 December 2026)

Readings: TBC

SESSION 13 – ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSION ON EMOTIONS, INTERNATIONAL LAW, AND JUSTICE (8 December 2026)

Readings:

- Amia Srinivasan, "The Aptness of Anger" in Susan A. Bandes, Jodee Lynne Madeira, Kathryn D. Temple, and Emily Kidd White, eds., *Research Handbook on Law and Emotion* (Edward Elgar 2021).
- Martha C. Nussbaum, *Political Emotions: Why Love Matters for Justice* (Harvard University Press, 2013).

- Maria Giannacopoulos, "Without Love There Can Be Law but No Justice," *Globalizations* 17, no. 7 (2020): 1085.
- "LSE Law, Society and Economy Working Papers: Special Issue on "Hope in Law"," 15 December 2025, <https://www.lse.ac.uk/law/news/2025-12/hope-in-law>.

Annex I

Assessment guidelines

1. Three reflection papers (30%)

Each student must submit three reflection papers of max.500 words (+/-10% flexibility) from sessions 2-11. Only one reflection paper may be submitted per session and students can choose which three session they write their reflections for. The reflection papers must engage with the topic/readings of that session. Submission folders will be made available on Moodle.

2. Final essay (70%)

Students must submit a final course essay on a topic of choice broadly related to the course.

- The topic of the essay must be related to the course. Students may expand on one of the topics/themes discussed during the course. They may also choose a topic not discussed specifically in the course, but nonetheless related.
- The final essay must be between **3000-4000 words**, including footnotes but excluding bibliography.
- Students must submit a topic proposal and brief outline via Moodle by 23 October 2026.
- **The final discussion paper is due on Friday 18 December 2026, 23:59h.** A submission folder will be available on Moodle.
- Any referencing style can be adopted, used correctly and consistently. (Frequently used citation styles include [OSCOLA](#), [Harvard style](#), and [Chicago style](#).)
- Please submit your discussion paper in **pdf format**.
- Please include a cover page with your name, the title of your paper, the name of the course, and the date.