Chair of African Legal Studies

Bayreuth, 24.11.2026

Special ILS Course (2 ECTS)

The Law School of the Future: Rethinking International Legal Education for Global Challenges

Date: 04 December 2026

Time: 10:00-13:00

Venue: S 48, RW II

Background

Contemporary global challenges such as climate change and disaster-induced migration, threats to the rule of law and fundamental rights, declining international cooperation, and accelerating digitalisation require law schools to rethink how law is taught. These interconnected challenges demand legal education that promotes social justice, democratic values, constitutionalism, and practical problem-solving. Traditional legal education in Sub-Saharan Africa and elsewhere often focuses on isolated legal concepts and doctrinal analysis, which may be insufficient to prepare students to address complex societal problems. It frequently privileges abstract legal reasoning over context, gives limited attention to socio-legal and interdisciplinary perspectives, and makes insufficient use of digital and practice-oriented teaching methods. Yet contemporary legal challenges require lawyers who are adaptable, digitally literate, and capable of engaging with insights from economics, environmental studies, technology, and the social sciences. The traditional law school, primarily concerned with teaching the law as it is, struggles to equip students with the competences needed to address climate justice, governance reform, migration, human rights, and digital transformation. This creates a growing mismatch between legal training and societal needs. The “Law School of the Future” must therefore adopt socio-legal, comparative, and digital approaches that connect legal knowledge to real-world challenges and translate them into innovative learning outcomes, teaching methods, and capacity-building strategies. This course is part of an emerging initiative “FUTURE.LAW”, a consortium of six African and two European universities about to start a long-term project.

Prof. Dr. Thoko Kaime
Chair of African Legal Studies, B IX, Room No. 42, Universitätsstr. 30, 95447 Bayreuth,
+49 921 55-4399, africanlegalstudies@uni-bayreuth.de
www.africanlegalstudies.uni-bayreuth.de

Tentative Timetable:

Time	Session	Facilitator
10:00-10:15	Opening: Remarks	Merlin Mitschker
10:15-11:00	The Law School of the Future: Challenges of Contemporary Legal Education	Prof. Williams Iheme
11:00-11:45	Decolonising and Transforming Legal Education	Dr. Lukiko Lukiko
11:45-12:00	Break	
12:00-12:45	Interactive Roundtable	Prof. Robert Nanima
12:45-13:00	Opinion Paper Briefing Workshop: Assessment Task Explanation	Merlin Mitschker

Course Overview:

The course shall be divided into two parts:

- First is the seminar session. The session is based on a workshop held on Friday, 04 December 2026, from 10:00-13:00. The venue is S 48 in RW II. The seminar will be based on pre-assigned readings. All participants are expected to complete the mandatory readings before the sessions.
- The second part is a reflection session at home. Participants will write a 1,500–2,000-word opinion paper on a contentious and timely topic related to law and belonging. The topic may be chosen freely but must address key themes of the session and speak to the respective module area (B-D). Submitted papers will be reviewed, and the best contributions will have the opportunity to be published on africanlegalstudies.blog.

Participation Criteria and Registration:

Students must participate in both the seminar and submit the opinion paper. In any event, a possible absence has to be announced timeously through the coordinator. The course amounts to 2 ECTS for the respective ILS elective module and is designed specifically for students in need of only 1 or 2 ECTS left to complete their ILS studies.

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Links:

e-learning: https://elearning.uni-bayreuth.de/course/view.php?id=50537

CMLife: https://my.uni-bayreuth.de/cmlife/s/courses/Ly91YnRAY21jby9hcGkvY291cnNlcy80MDAzMjE/overview

For questions, please consult the course coordinator Merlin Mitschker (merlin.mitschker@uni-bayreuth.de) with internationallegalstudies@uni-bayreuth.de in Cc.

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