



Client Consultation Competition

Activity type

Extracurricular, competition

Activity duration

4 months

GCEd elements

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complex problem-solving, conflict resolution, perspective-taking, active listening

ILOs

- To develop client interviewing skills
- To structure a client interview to make it as effective as possible
- To understand and appreciate the client's problems, needs, and expectations
- To learn to integrate legal knowledge within an empathetic yet objective setting of a client interview
- To learn to improvise in response to unforeseen factual revelations and accordingly adjust legal advice
- To develop strategies for the client and help them understand the associated consequences
- To work together as a team
- To recognise moral and ethical issues with a legal dimension and deal with them

Teacher preparation

The coach must familiarise themselves with the legal profession in the Netherlands and with the area of law that is chosen as a theme of that particular year (both at Dutch and international levels, with special attention for the common law system). The coach also selects reading materials on that area of law for the students. The coach must be present in every coaching session, must design all factual scenarios (i.e. client memorandum) for the actors to be able to perform and instruct actors on what is expected from them. In addition, the coach must offer feedback immediately after the interview is completed. Each session extends for 2 hours: 45' for the interview and the remaining time for feedback and teaching. The coach must secure actors for every coaching session. Actors are mainly faculty members, though students that competed in prior years are also invited to act. Actors bring different dimensions to the coaching session, and are expected to offer feedback to the team. The coach also undertakes readings on the 11 criteria that are assessed in the competition, while developing strategies to generate awareness on the team members of how they perform in those criteria. The coach must be familiar with the different roles of the participants (i.e., judges, actors, students, and coaches) in light of those criteria. Feedback by the coach to the students is of the essence and requires preparation on how to offer, assess, and implement feedback, in a constructive manner, securing that teams reach their maximum potential by the time of the competition. The preparation of the coach has – when compared with other courses – a significant coordination component, since it involves multiple actors, students, and the team members during a period that extends through four months.

Student preparation

Law students must familiarise themselves with the area of law that is chosen as the theme of that particular year. Additionally, as the Dutch team, the students must acquaint themselves with relevant components of Dutch law. They must also learn to balance their knowledge of that area with related fields as and when it comes up in a practical setting. The students participate in practice sessions, posing as lawyers in front of 'clients' (actors), acting in accordance with limited facts and their own improvisation. While practising, students anticipate being assessed by a jury composed of a judge, a professional lawyer, and a counsellor.

Flow

Registered teams of students undergo coaching and eventually compete at the Dutch national rounds. Qualifying teams then represent the Netherlands at the international rounds alongside delegations from, for instance, the United States, Canada, England and Wales, Scotland, Australia, New Zealand, Eire, Northern Ireland, India, Nigeria, Turkiye, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Netherlands, Ukraine, Finland, Germany, Switzerland and Croatia.

Assessment

During the coaching sessions, students are assessed by the coach. During the competitions, students' performance is assessed by a jury of two practising lawyers and a counselor (e.g. social worker, psychologist). In both settings, students are evaluated according to specific criterions that focus on the listening, questioning, planning, teamwork, and analytical skills of the students. In the Dutch national competition, they are graded on a scale of 1 to 5 for each of eleven criterions.

Contact

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