



**JESSUP INTERNATIONAL LAW MOOT COURT COMPETITION**  
**SPRING 2026 COURSE SYLLABUS**

Course Number: Law 126-001

Course Title: **JESSUP INTERNATIONAL LAW MOOT COURT COMPETITION**

Credit Hours: 2

Grading Mode: Letter Grade

Meeting Time(s): Mondays and Wednesdays 8-10:30pm

Meeting Mode: In person

Exam Time(s): Memorial due January 12, 2026, Competition March 4-8, 2026

Exam Mode: Final Paper (Memorial) and Oral Argument

Prerequisite(s): None

Corequisite(s): None

Instructor(s):

Sarah Smerling

Contact Information and Office Hours:

[ssmerlin@gmu.edu](mailto:ssmerlin@gmu.edu)

Office Hours: Mondays at 7pm or upon request

Reading(s) & Supplement(s):

Suggested Supplement (not required)

Akehurst's Modern Introduction to International Law by Peter Malanczuk

ISBN: 9780415111201

**Course Overview:**

The purpose of this course is to prepare students for effective participation in the 2026 Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition. The course is divided into two parts:

(1) contribution to the team's written memorials and (2) preparation for oral arguments at the national and global Jessup competition. The team members and team advisers will agree upon the division of topics to be covered by each student team member in the memorials and in the oral arguments.

Students must read all competition materials, including the *compromis* and documents contained within the First and Second Batch Materials provided by the International Law Students Association (ILSA). Students must also familiarize themselves with the ILSA Guide to International Moot Court Competition and the Official Rules of the 2023 Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition. In the course of preparing the team's written memorials, students are expected to effectively utilize both primary and secondary source materials.

#### Course Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, students will be able to argue fundamental principles of international law as they apply to a hypothetical fact pattern and will have gained an appreciation for how disputes are resolved before the International Court of Justice.

#### Grading Policies:

	Oral Argument Participant	Brief Writer
Contribution to Team Memorial	40%	40%
Preparation for and Performance at Oral Rounds	50%	20%
General Participation, including attendance at team meetings and administrative aspects of preparing for the competition	10%	40%

**Classroom Policies:** Students may use laptops at counsels' table but may not do so at the podium when presenting their oral argument.

**Attendance:** Per AR 3-1.4, "maintenance of matriculation requires regular class preparation, participation and attendance, registration in the course of study required for the student's program (full-time or part-time), successive registration for each fall and spring term of each academic year until study is completed, and compliance with all other relevant requirements."

**Absences:** Per AR 4-1.1, "if a student is absent for any reason for more than 20 percent of the sessions of a course, the student is not eligible for credit in that course. A student who is not present for at least 75 percent of a session of the course is absent from that session."

### Participation & Preparation:

Students are expected to come to class prepared for oral argument each session. Students should familiarize themselves with the Jessup Moot Court Competition [rules](#) before the start of the semester and should reference them as they go.

### Use of Technology & AI:

*Moderate Use Policy:* Generative AI tools may be used in this course for the following purposes, and with the following guidelines. Students may use AI in this course to conduct research in preparation of their memorials and oral arguments, but may not use AI as the primary source for text of written assignments. Students must tailor their use of AI to be consistent with the Jessup Moot Court Competition Rules. Students must use AI tools responsibly, verify facts presented by AI, disclose when AI tools are used to create course work product, properly cite any AI tools utilized, and should be prepared to produce the transcript of prompts and responses upon request. Misuse will be treated as a violation of academic standards.

## Course Schedule & Assignments

### Week 1:

Date: January 14, 2026

Topic: Introduction to the International Court of Justice and Oral Argument 1

### Week 2:

Date: January 19, 2026

Topic: No Class (Martin Luther King Jr. Day)

Date: January 21, 2026

Topic: Oral Argument 2

### Week 3:

Date: January 26, 2026

Topic: Discuss Assignment and Oral Argument 3

Assignment(s): Watch the 2019 [Jessup](#) International Rounds World Championship and be prepared to discuss it.

Date: January 28, 2026

Topic: Oral Argument 4

### Week 4:

Date: February 2, 2026

Topic: Oral Argument 5

Date: February 4, 2026

Topic: Oral Argument 6

### Week 5:

Date: February 9, 2026

Topic: Oral Argument 7

Date: February 11, 2026  
Topic: Oral Argument 8

Week 6:

Date: February 16, 2026  
Topic: Oral Argument 9

Date: February 18, 2026  
Topic: Oral Argument 10

Week 7:

Date: February 23, 2026  
Topic: Oral Argument 11

Date: February 25, 2026  
Topic: Oral Argument 12

Week 8:

Date: March 4-8 Jessup International Law Moot Court Competition  
Atlanta, GA

Week 9:

Date: March 9-15, 2026 Spring Recess

Week 10:

Date: March 16, 2026  
Topic: Debrief of Competition

## Student Resources

[Antonin Scalia Law School Academic Regulations](#)

[GMU Common Course Policies Addendum](#)

[Mason Square Services](#)

[Mason Square Police](#)

Van Metre Hall, Room 110

Emergency - Dial 911

Escort Services - 703-993-8070

Dispatch – 703-993-2810

[Student Support and Advocacy Center \(SSAC\)](#)

Mason Square Sexual Assault Services:

Van Metre Hall, Room 222D

703-993-8186

Notice of Mandatory Reporting of Sexual Assault, Sexual Harassment, Interpersonal Violence, and Stalking:

As a faculty member, I am designated as a “Non-Confidential Employee,” and must report all disclosures of sexual assault, sexual harassment, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per University Policy 1202. If a student wishes to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703 -380-1434 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. Students may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703 -993-8730, or emailing [titleix@gmu.edu](mailto:titleix@gmu.edu).

[Mason Square Clinic](#)

Van Metre Hall, Room B102

703-991-2831

[Counseling and Psychological Services](#)

[Student Health Services](#)

[Student Disability Services](#)

[Student Conduct](#)

[University Life](#)