

TRAN3843 - Legal Translation: Special Topics

Course learning outcome

1. Students should be able to understand the nature of the legal language and realise its complexity, while also appreciating the trend of plain, simple English in legal communication.
2. Students should be able to handle legal translation competently, knowing where to look for useful resources and how to use them appropriately.
3. Students should also have their writing skills improved after learning the common language strategies employed in legal texts to structure an argument.

Course syllabus

1. Legal text as a genre 法律文本作為語體的一種（其語言特色探討）
2. Types of legal texts 法律文本種類
3. Features of the Common Law system 普通法的法制特色
4. Some basic legal concepts 基本法律概念
5. Legal language and the complex sentence structure (How to analyse the latter) 法律語言與法律複雜句子結構分析
6. The rhetoric of the legal language – How it indicates concessions and conditions 法律語言修辭技巧分析（條件與讓步關係的表達）
7. The nature of legal vocabulary (How legal terms are culture-specific, their “fluidity” in meaning and how its determination can be highly context-dependent) 法律文本用字特色（論字眼在法律文本中的特殊意義）
8. The mechanics of legal texts (The use of italics, punctuations, and capital letters etc.) 斜體，標點及大寫在法律文本中的應用
9. The layout of legal texts 法律文本的鋪排與格式
10. Is there such a thing as “good” legal writing? (On the use of plain English) 簡明英語在法律文本中的應用及其優點

Assessment type and percentage

Assessment Type	Percentage
1. Essays	45%
2. Other	10%
3. Short answer test or exam	45%

Feedback for evaluation

Students are welcome to provide their feedback on the course through 歡迎學生透過以下途徑發表課程意見

- mid-term questionnaires 學期中問卷調查
- end-of-term questionnaires 學期尾問卷調查
- emails 電郵

Required readings

None

Recommended readings

1. Department of Justice. Bilingual Laws Information System.
<http://www.legislation.gov.hk/index.htm>
2. Department of Justice. The Legal System in Hong Kong.
<http://www.doj.gov.hk/eng/legal/index.htm> (Also comes in a Chinese version in both simplified and traditional Chinese characters.)
3. Chinese-English Glossary of Legal Terms
<http://www.legislation.gov.hk/chi/glossary/homeglos.htm>
4. English-Chinese Glossary of Legal Terms
<http://www.legislation.gov.hk/eng/glossary/homeglos.htm>
5. 中華人民共和國中央人民政府門戶網站. <http://big5.gov.cn/gate/big5/www.gov.cn/> (Also comes in an English version.)
6. Goodrich, Peter. (1987). *Legal Discourse: Studies in Linguistics, Rhetoric and Legal Analysis*. London: Macmillan Press.
7. Tiersma, Peter M. (1999). *Legal Language*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
8. Sarcevic, Susan. (1994) 'Translation and the Law: An Interdisciplinary Approach', in Mary Snell-Hornby, Franz Pöchhacker and Klaus Kaindl (eds.) *Translation Studies: an Interdiscipline*, Amsterdam: John Benjamins, 301-308.

Other useful resources will be recommended/distributed throughout the course.