



Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani University

Ph.D. Program in Law

Program Title:	Law
Program Director	Professor Dimitry Gegenava
Language of Instruction:	Georgian
Degree Awarded	Doctor of Law / Doctor Juris (Ph.D.)
Program Volume	60 ECTS
Date of Program Approval & Protocol No.	26.04.2021 №05-21
Date of Program Update & Protocol No.	01.09.2025 №04-25

Program Objectives

The Ph.D. Program in Law aims to:

- (A) Conduct in-depth scientific analysis on current issues in legal theory and practice, producing results-oriented research and creating new knowledge.
- (B) Train researchers and academic staff oriented toward addressing the dynamic challenges of law.
- (C) Contribute to the development of Georgian and comparative law and jurisprudence through the production of high-quality scholarly works.

Learning Outcomes

Graduate:

- (A) Identifies relevant issues in modern law and jurisprudence, determines research needs, selects appropriate research methods, and anticipates expected results.
- (B) Investigates complex legal problems and formulates original, comprehensive, and well-founded conclusions.

- (C) Designs and delivers university-level courses and conducts lectures and seminars using modern and innovative teaching methods.
- (D) Engages in academic discussions and research activities in law and interdisciplinary fields related to law.
- (E) Produces and publishes high-level academic and qualification works based on comparative legal methodology and the analysis of primary and secondary legal sources.
- (F) Upholds academic integrity and takes responsibility for their own research and works produced under their supervision, contributing to the development of Georgian and comparative law and jurisprudence.

Admission Requirements

The prerequisite for admission to the program is a Master's academic degree in Law. If the Master's degree in Law has been obtained on the basis of completing a Master's program with less than 120 ECTS credits, it is mandatory for the candidate to also hold a Bachelor's academic degree in Law.

For admission to the doctoral program, it is necessary to have an interview with the relevant field commission and knowledge of the English language at not less than B2 level, or knowledge of one of the Western European languages (German or French) at not less than B2 level and knowledge of the English language at not less than B1 level. Other prerequisites for admission to the doctoral program, as well as the criteria for the evaluation of the applicant by the field commission, shall be determined by the *Regulation on Doctoral Studies* of Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani University, approved by the Rector of Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani University (hereinafter – Doctoral Studies Regulation).

Admission to the Ph.D. Program in Law through the mobility procedure is possible twice a year, within the time limits and in accordance with the procedures established by the legislation of Georgia. An applicant for mobility must meet all the mandatory prerequisites for admission to the doctoral program.

Admission or transfer to the Ph.D. Program in Law from a recognized foreign higher education institution shall be carried out within the time limits and in accordance with the procedures established by the legislation of Georgia.

An applicant shall be exempt from English/German/French language testing if he/she submits a certificate confirming knowledge of the English/German/French language at not less than B2 level, or if he/she has completed a full or partial Bachelor's or Master's program in English/German/French. The recognition of the certificate or the completed courses shall be ensured by the Language Center of Sulkhan-Saba Orbeliani University.

Accepted English language (B2) proficiency certificates and scores:

TOEFL PBT	≥ 513
TOEFL IBT	≥ 65
IELTS	≥ 5.5
Cambridge Exam	≥ FCE.

Accepted German language (B2) proficiency certificates and scores:

Goethe Zertifikat B2; TestDaF B2; DSH Certificate B2; Telc Deutsch B2; TestAS B2

Accepted French language (B2) proficiency certificates and scores:

Teaching and Learning Methods

- ☒ Lectures ☒ Group work ☒ Practical work ☒ Seminars ☒ Instruction using electronic resources
☒ E-learning ☒ Other

Student Knowledge Assessment System

The mastery of the study component provided for by the Ph.D. Program in Law implies the active participation of students in the learning process and is based on the principle of continuous assessment of the acquired knowledge. In the implementation of the Ph.D. Program in Law, the level of achievement of the student's learning outcomes is assessed in accordance with the assessment system approved by Order No. 3 of 5 January 2007 of the Minister of Education and Science of Georgia, *On the Rule for Calculation of Credits of Higher Educational Programs*.

In the study component of the Ph.D. Program in Law, the assessment of the level of achievement of the student's learning outcomes includes the assessment forms – midterm (one-time or multiple) and final assessment (a particular course may be based on a different principle), the sum of which constitutes the final assessment (100 points).

Midterm and final assessments (assessment forms) include assessment component(s) that determine the method(s) of assessing the student's knowledge and/or skills and/or competences (oral/written examination, oral/written quiz, homework, practical/theoretical work, etc.). An assessment component unites homogeneous methods of assessment (test, essay, demonstration, presentation, discussion, completion of practical/theoretical tasks, work in a group, participation in discussion, preparation of a research paper, preparation of components of a research paper). The assessment method(s) are measured by assessment criteria, i.e., the unit of measurement of the assessment method, which determines the level of achievement of the learning outcomes.

Each assessment form and component has a specific share in the total score (100 points) of the final assessment, which is reflected in the specific syllabus and is communicated to the student at the beginning of the academic semester. It is not allowed to award credits using only one assessment form (midterm or final assessment). A student is awarded credits only in the case of receiving a positive assessment.

In the implementation of the Ph.D. Program in Law, the minimum competence threshold for midterm and final assessments is indicated in the specific syllabus and is communicated to the student at the beginning of the academic semester. The assessment system allows for:

Five types of positive evaluations:

(A) Excellent	91-100 points
(B) Very good	81-90 points
(C) Good	71-80 points
(D) Satisfactory	61-70 points
(E) Sufficient	51-60 points

Two types of negative evaluations:

(FX) Fail – Retake	41–50 points, meaning the student needs more work to pass and is given the right to retake the exam once through independent preparation;
(F) Fail	40 points and below, which means that the student’s work is insufficient, and the course must be retaken.

In the study component of the educational program, in case of receiving an FX grade, the additional examination shall be scheduled no earlier than 5 calendar days after the announcement of the final examination results. The score obtained by the student in the additional examination shall not be added to the score received in the final assessment. The score obtained in the additional examination shall be considered the final assessment and shall be reflected in the final grade of the educational program’s study component. If, taking into account the score obtained in the additional examination, the student receives 0–50 points in the final assessment of the educational component, the student shall be assigned a grade of F – 0 points.

Doctoral Dissertation (Thesis) Assessment

For the assessment of the dissertation, five types of positive and two types of negative grades are used.

Positive assessment of the dissertation is carried out according to the following system:

- A. Excellent (*Summa cum laude*) – an outstanding work – 91 points and above (max. 100 points);
- B. Very Good (*Magna cum laude*) – a result that exceeds the set requirements in all respects – 81–90 points;
- C. Good (*Cum laude*) – a result that exceeds the set requirements – 71–80 points;
- D. Average (*Bene*) – a result that fully meets the set requirements – 61–70 points;
- E. Satisfactory (*Rite*) – a result that, despite shortcomings, still meets the set requirements – 51–60 points.

Negative assessment of the dissertation is carried out according to the following system:

- A. Unsatisfactory (*Insufficienter*) – a result that fails to meet the set requirements due to significant shortcomings – 41–50 points;
- B. Completely Unsatisfactory (*Sub omni canone*) – a result that completely fails to meet the set requirements – 40 points and below.

In the case of receiving a positive assessment, the dissertation is considered successfully defended.

In the case of receiving an (*Insufficienter*) grade, the doctoral student is granted the right to submit a revised dissertation within one year. For this purpose, the student has the right, within one month from the announcement of the result, to submit to the Secretariat of the Dissertation Council a written request for revision of the dissertation and for a repeated defense.

In the case of receiving a (*Sub omni canone*) grade, the doctoral student loses the right to submit the same dissertation and the doctoral student status is terminated.

Employment Field

The employment field of a Doctor of Law is diverse. In addition to those institutions and agencies where it is possible to be employed with any qualification in the field of law, a Doctor of Law is additionally eligible to work in higher education institutions (in the academic positions of Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, and Professor), in research organizations, and in international academic associations.

A doctoral academic degree automatically exempts the holder from the notarial examination, and, subject to meeting other requirements established by law, a Doctor of Law may become a notary without taking the exam.

Opportunities for Further Study

Doctor of Law may actively participate in post-doctoral programs, obtain post-doctoral research and teaching grants both at the national and international level, and benefit from grants and scholarships established exclusively for post-doctoral researchers and young scholars by universities and scientific foundations.

Material Resources Necessary for the Implementation of the Program

To achieve the learning outcomes provided for by the Ph.D. Program in Law, the University's infrastructure and material-technical resources, which are available to students without restriction, are used, namely:

- Classrooms and conference halls equipped with appropriate inventory;
- A simulated courtroom;
- A library equipped with computer equipment and information-communication technologies;
- Computer laboratories, computer equipment connected to the Internet and internal network, and appropriate computer programs for the learning/teaching process;
- Various technical devices, etc.

The educational program is supported with relevant textbooks and methodological literature. The University library provides students with printed and electronic textbooks, teaching-methodological and scientific literature provided for in the syllabi of study courses, as well as access to the library's book collection database and the electronic catalog available on the University's website.

The material resources owned and possessed by the University ensure the realization of the objectives of the Ph.D. Program in Law and the achievement of the planned learning outcomes:

- **Buildings and facilities** – The doctoral educational program is implemented in buildings and facilities owned and possessed by the University, which comply with sanitary-hygienic and safety standards (the buildings are equipped with an alarm system, fire extinguishers, perimeter video surveillance, and are guarded by the University's security personnel). The building fully meets the technical requirements set for a higher education institution and has lecture and practical classrooms equipped with appropriate technology and inventory (projector, chairs, desks, boards, etc.).
- **Library** – The University library holds a relevant printed and electronic collection for the doctoral educational program, which is accessible to students, invited lecturers, and academic staff. The library has a reading hall equipped with appropriate inventory (chairs, tables, computers). The library is equipped with a photocopier, which students can use with the assistance of library staff. In the reading hall, students have access to the Internet and to national and international electronic resources (Legislative Herald of Georgia, EBSCO, HeinOnline, Elsevier). The University library has an electronic catalog. In addition to the central reading hall, doctoral students can use the David Batonishvili and Zubalashvili Brothers reading rooms.
- **Workspaces for academic staff** – Appropriate inventory and equipment (chairs, tables, cabinets, computers connected to the Internet, multifunctional copier) are provided for academic staff.
- **Information and communication technologies** – For the implementation and administration of the Ph.D. Program in Law, the University uses information and communication technologies. There is software relevant to the Ph.D. Program in Law, the available computer equipment meets modern requirements, is connected to the Internet, and is accessible to students, academic, invited, and administrative staff. For providing students with access to assessments, enabling the administration to monitor students' academic performance, and supporting the learning process, an electronic system for student knowledge assessment and organization of teaching is used. Through the University's website, which contains the catalog of educational programs, as well as information related to the implementation of educational programs and the organization of the learning process, the University ensures the publicity and accessibility of information.

Program Structure

The Ph.D. Program in Law consists of study and research components. The volume of the study component is 60 ECTS credits, which consists of compulsory courses. The study courses are distributed over 4 semesters: in the first semester, the doctoral student must earn 18 ECTS, in the second semester – 22 ECTS, in the third semester – 17 ECTS, and in the fourth semester – 3 ECTS.

The research component involves the preparation of the doctoral dissertation. While working on the research component, the doctoral student completes three colloquia, which involve, in agreement with the academic supervisor, the preparation and writing of parts of the dissertation and their presentation before the relevant field commission.

The doctoral colloquia can be undertaken from the third semester, provided that the doctoral student has received a positive grade in the course “Academic Writing and Dissertation Architectonics.” For each colloquium, the doctoral student must receive a positive recommendation, which means a positive evaluation from the majority of the members of the field commission. The completion of the colloquium does not award credits and is not graded numerically.

The defense of the doctoral dissertation may take place in the sixth semester. The defense of the dissertation, its prerequisites, and issues related to the implementation of the program are determined by the *Regulation on Doctoral Studies*.

Educational Program Curriculum

№	Prerequisite	Module / Course	ECTS Credits						Student Workload	
			I Year		II Year		IIIYear		Contact Hours	Independent Hours
			Semester							
			I	II	III	IV	V	VI		
Teaching Component										
Compulsory Courses										
1.	None	Research Methods in Legal Studies	8/200						43	157
2.	None	Academic Writing and Dissertation Architectonics		6/150					42	108
3.	None	Modern Teaching Methods		6/150					30	120
4.	Research Methods in Legal Studies	Research Seminar in Comparative Law		10/250					8	242
5.	Research Methods in Legal Studies	Research Seminar in Legal Methods			10/250				8	242
6.	None	Qualitative Research Methods			7/175				39	136

7.	None	Principles of University Curriculum Design	10/250						33	217
8..	Modern Teaching Methods	Professorial Assistantship				3/75			11	64
Per Semester			18	22	17	3				
Per Year			40		20					
Total			60							

Program Objectives and Learning Outcomes Map

Program Objectives	Program Learning Outcomes					
	A	B	C	D	E	F
In-depth scientific analysis on current issues of legal practice and theory, results-oriented research, and creation of new knowledge	✓	✓			✓	
Preparation of researchers and academic staff oriented toward the dynamic challenges of law				✓		
Contribution to the development of Georgian and comparative law through the creation of high-quality scholarly works			✓		✓	✓

Map of Compulsory Courses and Program Learning Outcomes

№	Module/Course	Status of the Course		Program Learning Outcomes					
				A	B	C	D	E	F
1.	Research Methods in Legal Studies	D	M	+	+			+	
2.	Academic Writing and Dissertation Architectonics	M		+				+	+
3.	Modern Teaching Methods	M				+			
4.	Professorial Assistantship	D	M			+			
5.	Qualitative Research Methods	D	M	+	+				+
6.	Research Seminar in Comparative Law	M		+	+		+	+	+
7.	Research Seminar in Legal Methods	M		+	+		+	+	+

8.	Principles of University Curriculum Design	M			+			
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Status of the Course

I – Introductory Courses	D – Developing Courses	P – Practical Courses	Master Courses

Mapping of Learning Outcomes – Competences for the Program's Compulsory Courses

#	Course	Learning Outcomes		
		Knowledge and Awareness	Skill	Responsibility and Autonomy
1.	Research Methods in Legal Studies	+	+	
2.	Academic Writing and Dissertation Architectonics	+	+	+
3.	Modern Teaching Methods	+	+	+
4.	Professorial Assistantship	+	+	+
5.	Qualitative Research Methods	+	+	+
6.	Research Seminar in Comparative Law	+	+	+
7.	Research Seminar in Legal Methods	+	+	+
8.	Principles of University Curriculum Design	+	+	