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Faculty of Laws Newsletter

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A word from the Dean

Last month, precisely on the 16th of May, the Faculty of Laws met with the Periodic Programme Review (PPR) Team. To recap, during this and the next academic year, all of the study programmes offered by the Faculty of Laws are being reviewed by a UM committee purposely set up, who ask us a number of questions about the study programme under scrutiny, collect feedback from stakeholders and then relay the feedback and their views to the Faculty. This is a cyclical review, which all Faculties are subjected to, around once every six years. This process started in November 2023 and by the end of this current academic year, the LLB Hons, M.Adv and M.Not would have been reviewed; last November we filled in the questionnaires, which were analysed and on 16th May we met the stakeholders, who consist of past and present students, practitioners, representatives of the Ministries for Justice and Education, and others who are involved in the legal world such as the CEO of the Financial Services Arbiters office. We received verbal feedback, some of which was indeed very interesting, such as students calling out for a Foundation Year (something which the Faculty itself has long been calling for), the problem of lectures being held in English when the warrant exam is in Maltese and court practice is in Maltese, students not knowing Italian joining the Notarial Profession and expected to read contracts in Italian, and the perennial question of trying to do prattika during Madv to get one's warrant as soon as one finishes studying, to mention but a few of the points which arose.

What comes next? Most of what was said, we had heard before. To this I must add that we still have not implemented the recommendations of the Internal Audit which we were subjected to the previous year. Indeed, we went so quickly from Internal Audit to PPR that we simply did not have time to concentrate on the Internal Audit's recommendations. If this were not enough, we are also being required to carry out APRs (Annual Performance Review) for each and every study programme we offer, apart from our having commenced an internal exercise on whether and how to reform our much-coveted LLB Hons to bring this up-to-date with contemporary realities and modern requirements, and also to make space for

a foundation year, as Year One. To do all this, we have set up an internal ‘task force’ composed of myself, Deputy Dean Prof Ivan Sammut, Prof Pat Vella de Fremaux, Dr Felicity Attard, Dr Daniel Bianchi and Dr Ilona Schembri to first, take stock of what is being recommended to us and required from us be it Internal Audit, PPR or APR, second come up with a plan on what is doable and what is not, thirdly come up with a plan of what can be implemented in the short, medium and long term, fourthly inform those affected by these changes be they academic or admin staff, and finally to oversee the implementation of all this.

The process will not be easy; indeed it will take a lot of hard work, sacrifice and determination to implement, but it is necessary, because even if we were to scrap any plans to try to overhaul the LLB Hons course, we must still implement the Internal Audit and PPR recommendations, and we must also conduct the APRs every year. These have to be done, and once we are doing them, we might as well go beyond ‘box ticking’ exercises, to ensure that after all that effort we actually reap the benefits of our toils.

Visit from Professor Andrea Pierini

[Professor Andrea Pierini](#) from the Dipartimento di Scienze Politiche, Università degli Studi di Perugia visited the Faculty of Laws between the 6th and the 10th of May, on an Erasmus+ visit.

On this visit he delivered a number of lectures on comparative constitutional law to our LLB Hons students and also held various discussions on topics of interest with a number of academics. Furthermore, Prof Pierini actively participated in, a Human Rights Platform meeting held that week and



also attended the Human Rights Platform webinar on *Understanding the Rights of the Unborn* held during the same week of his visit. This was the first of two visits from representatives of overseas universities during May 2024, the second being a courtesy call at the Faculty of Laws from the General Secretary, *Universidad Isabel I*, also as part of an Erasmus+ exchange.

Book Launch

Dr Peter Borg Costanzi officially launched the first volume of his *Notes on the Law of Succession*. This launch formed part of a double launch organised by GhSL,



which in fact launched two books on the occasion, the other being *Selected Essays on Family Law*. Both publications were organised by GhSL, but were written by academics and practitioners. At the launch, held at the Arts Lecture Theatre, Dr Borg Costanzi spoke about how his study and the other volumes to follow on the same subject are largely based on his own private practice in the field, while the Dean pointed out that, while in recent

years we have made considerable progress where publications by academics are concerned, we need more people to dedicate time to writing and research in general, and in particular to offer more essays on Family Law thus making it possible for GhSL to publish more volumes on the topic.

Photo taken from https://www.linkedin.com/posts/ghaqda-studenti-ligi_thisisg%C4%A7sl-doublebooklaunch-activity-7192520002275586048-6gww/

Professor Ivan Sammut lecture

On Tuesday, 14th May 2024, Prof Ivan Sammut was invited by Prof Arkadiusz Wudarski, a Professor at the European University Viadrina, to give a lecture on 'Malta as a mixed jurisdiction - a 'loving' marriage of legal systems or a curse'. European University Viadrina is a German university located in Frankfurt an der Oder on the German/Polish border with a campus in Slubice, Poland, where the talk was held. The talk was held under the auspices of IUS PRIVATUM, which is a research seminar on private and foreign law, aiming at the presentation of research results, the exchange of views, analysis and evaluation of current and planned amendments in private law, as well as seeking cross-border solutions to

problems occurring in the practice of law.

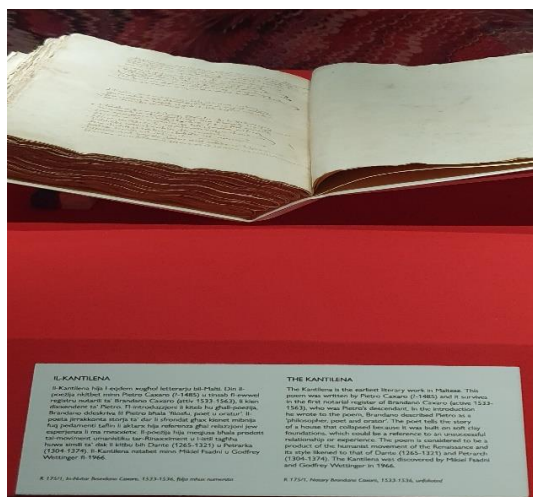
Many German and Polish students showed interest in Malta as a mixed jurisdiction, and Prof Sammut's lecture was extremely well received.

Prof Wudarski is expected to come to Malta in 2025 to deliver his return lecture to our students. Further cooperation between the law faculty and the German faculty is also planned.



Visit to the Notarial Archives Foundation

On 30th May a number of academics from the Faculty of Laws visited the [Notarial Archives Foundation](#) in St Paul's Street, Valletta. This visit was organised upon invitation from Dr Joan Abela, President of the same foundation.





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Dr Joan Abela gave us an extremely detailed tour of the museum which houses extremely rare works that include *Il-Kantaleña* this being the oldest known literary work in Maltese; Dr Abela also introduced us to the officials of the Foundation who include two professional restorers and a number of volunteers. We were also given a presentation on [Notarypedia](#) and information about professional services offered.

Promotion to Associate Professor

The Newsletter Editorial Board wishes to congratulate [Dr Omar Grech](#) on his recent promotion to Associate Professor.

Have you got any news to share? If you have any item of relevance to this newsletter, feel free to inform us about it. You may contact any member of the editorial board, these being Prof Tonio Borg, Prof Ivan Sammut, Ms Rowena Leontijevic and Dr Ivan Mifsud. The Board reserves the right to refuse to publish an item submitted to it for its consideration.