

# POLAR LAW

## LL.M / M.A.

Polar Law describes the legal regimes applicable to the Arctic and Antarctica. Emphasis is placed on areas of international and domestic law concerning the Polar regions. Issues of human rights law, environmental law, the law of the sea, the law of sustainable development and natural resources law are addressed, including questions of sovereignty and boundary disputes on land and sea. The rights of indigenous peoples in the North, self-government and good governance, and land and resource claims in the Polar regions are also explored.

## MASTER'S PROGRAMMES IN POLAR LAW

The Master's Programmes at the University of Akureyri are the first of their kind in the world that provide a unique focus on Polar Law. They come about in a timely fashion, when climate changes are having a dramatic effect on the Arctic and Antarctic regions, when the opening of the Northwest and Northeast passages is becoming possible, when current and potential boundary disputes on land and sea remain unresolved, when issues and questions of national and local governance are moving forward on national and international agendas, and, last but not least, when multiple threats to the environment are sending serious danger signals and calling for urgent measures. One of the interesting areas of study to which the Master's Programmes can contribute concerns possible lessons that the legal regime for Antarctica could provide for solutions in the Arctic region.

## INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

In offering these Master's Programmes, the University of Akureyri is working closely with the University of the Arctic and with universities in Alaska (USA), Australia, Canada, Denmark, the Faroe Islands, Finland, Greenland, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, the Russian Federation, and the United Kingdom.

## AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The Master's Programmes are designed both for lawyers (leading to the LL.M. degree) and non-lawyers (leading to the M.A. degree), preparing them for work in the public as well as private sectors, with different levels of government (nationally and globally), with international organizations, with indigenous peoples of the Circumpolar North and around the globe, with academic institutions and non-governmental organizations, and with national and transnational corporations to promote the interests of the polar regions and their inhabitants.

Annual Polar Law Symposiums are convened at the University of Akureyri. A Yearbook on Polar Law is published under the auspices of the Programme.

## PROGRAMMES AND REQUIREMENTS

The Polar Law Programme is designed primarily as a Master's level programme. All the Polar Law subjects are taught in English and applicants should provide evidence of good written and spoken English skills.

### LL.M.

The LL.M. degree involves 90 course credits (ECTS) in Polar Law, including a 30 ECTS research thesis during three semesters of study. A previously completed B.A. degree in law (or comparable law degree) is a prerequisite for LL.M. studies in Polar Law.

## M.A.

The M.A. degree involves 120 course credits (ECTS) in Polar Law, including a 60 ECTS research thesis, during a two year programme of study. A previously completed B.A. degree (or comparable university degree) is a prerequisite for M.A. degree studies in Polar Law.

## UNDERGRADUATE DIPLOMAS

The Polar Law Programme offers a one-year (60 ECTS) Diploma in Polar Law Studies at the undergraduate level towards a B.A. The admission requirement for the undergraduate diploma is one year (60 ECTS) of university studies at the bachelor level in a relevant field within the humanities or social sciences, or a matriculation examination plus significant relevant work experience.

## INDIVIDUAL COURSES

Exchange students from other universities and academic institutions (for instance, students enrolled at the University of the Arctic) and individuals working in related government agencies or institutes may take individual courses in the Polar Law Programme. Such students will be individually assessed to determine whether they have sufficient preparation for the courses that they intend to take. Certificates will be issued to individuals who successfully complete such course work.

## TEACHING AND TEACHERS

Courses are taught by Guðmundur Alfreðsson, Timo Koivurova, Marie Jacobsson, Kári á Rógvi, Malgosia Fitzmaurice, Nigel Bankes, David Vanderzwaag and other leading academic experts and practitioners in the field of Polar Law. Some of the compulsory and elective courses\* (4 or 6 ECTS) offered in the Polar Law Programme are:

\* Titles of the courses are subject to change.

- Introduction to Polar Law
- Environmental Law and Biodiversity
- The Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- Customary Laws of Indigenous Societies in the Arctic
- The Role of International and Regional Organizations in the Polar Regions
- Law of the Sea
- Arctic Societies and Cultures
- Comparative Arctic Governance
- International Cooperation and Security
- Faroese Law
- Economies and Business in Polar Regions

All courses are taught in intensive seminars of 3-5 weeks duration each.

## REGISTRATION AND OTHER REQUIREMENTS

As a public university, the University of Akureyri offers the Polar Law Programmes without tuition fees to students from anywhere in the World. Applicants are required to pay a registration fee. A limited number of scholarships is available for international students to assist in covering their travel and accommodation needs. Scholarships are awarded on the basis of academic merit.

The deadline for the submission of applications for admission and scholarships is April 1st. each year. For further information regarding the application process and courses, please visit the Polar Law website: [www.polarlaw.is](http://www.polarlaw.is) or contact Dr. Markus Meckl, Polar Law Coordinator [polarlaw@unak.is](mailto:polarlaw@unak.is), tel.: +354 460 8655

## THE UNIVERSITY OF AKUREYRI

The University of Akureyri is situated in Northern Iceland in attractive natural surroundings. The number of students is over 1400 and members of staff are around 180. Further information can be obtained at [www.unak.is](http://www.unak.is) or [www.english.unak.is](http://www.english.unak.is). For information about the town of Akureyri, please consult [www.visitakureyri.is](http://www.visitakureyri.is)