

Belonging, community, identity: legalities beyond the law

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Project description:

Aim: to map how the legal concepts of community, identity, and belonging can be determined by apparently 'non-legal' institutions.

The distinction between the *ideal* of law and the *actuality* of law relates closely to the distinction between the formal operation of law and the notion of law that we are made conscious of in our everyday lives. This project encourages students to explore the latter—the 'legalities'—that exist to determine, facilitate, and contradict our experiences and understanding of the law.

Students will be asked to explore how their object of research are implicated in the production of legal, social, and political boundaries. Namely, students will explore how seemingly non-legal practices are constructed, co-opted, and performed in ways that define senses of belonging, community, and identity. For instance, commemorative events, and memory practices more generally; the definitions of time and implementations of schedules; the planning and mapping of cities; and, the organisation of places of work can all be implicated in the determination of who exists within a community and who is excluded from it and the operation of law.

The project broadly sits within the wider socio-legal project of interdisciplinary exploration of law's relationship with its social and political environment. However, the scope of the project is generously defined and the potential research object and methodological perspectives are not prescribed; students are encouraged to identify and justify the scope of their proposal from a wide range of possible topics.