

## **Summer School 2023: Summer Study of Law in Europe – A Report**

*"It was such a privilege and a once in a lifetime opportunity to be a part of this program. This was truly a life-changing experience that I will never forget. The organizers of this trip did a wonderful job and gave us the opportunity to see and experience things that most people never will. It has been a lifetime dream of mine to come to Germany and I couldn't have asked for a better experience. This trip has allowed me to meet so many new people, make new friends, and explore so many places I never thought I'd get to visit. This program has made Germany feel like a second home to me!"*

*T. Lesso, Juris Doctor Candidate 2024*

*Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University*

### **Abstract**

For the seventh time, the Chair of US-american Law at the University of Cologne (UoC) welcomed students from the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, USA, for the three week summer school in Cologne. The global COVID-19 pandemic was not able to cloud the success that was the summer school in 2018 but rather motivated even twice as many students to join the summer school 2023!

From May, 20th to June 10th, 2023, the American students were presented with an educational program, including lectures in European Union and European Data Protection Law at the UoC, lectures in European Social Law at the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, Paris, France, and a visit to the European Court of Justice (ECJ) in session in Luxembourg, followed by a meeting with the German Judge at the ECJ, and member of the law faculty of the UoC, Prof. Dr. Thomas von Danwitz.

Special gratitude goes to Prof. Dr. Kirk W. Junker and P. Matthey Roy, Esq., (Chair of US-american Law, UoC), Prof. Norton, Prof. Kwisnek, and the staff of the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University, for organizing and carrying out a memorable once in a life time opportunity for the participating students, and Santander Universitäten for graciously sponsoring the summer school.

The next summer school will take place in 2025.

### **Summer Study of Law in Europe – Detailed Report**

*by Emma Shensher, Chair of US-american Law*

In 2011, the first summer school in European Law was organized and carried out by the Chair of US-american Law of the UoC and the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University and took place generally every second year. After the initially planned summer school 2020 was cancelled due to the global COVID-19 pandemic, it returned 2023 with its signature educational program and twice as many American students!

On May 20th, the students arrived in Cologne and were welcomed by Prof. Dr. Kirk W. Junker, P. Matthew Roy, and Saskia Münster, for the orientation session in the seminar room at the chair. The walking orientation of the city center Cologne lead to a dinner in the Brewery ``Früh am Dom`` and a meeting with Cologne students who are studying in Pittsburgh in the fall semester 2023. On the next day the group had the chance to visit Augustus and Falkenlust Palace in Brühl.



Students at the Augustus Palace in Brühl © Lehrstuhl für US-amerikanisches Recht

After a warm welcome to Cologne, the students finally began their first week of study of European Law. In three sessions, Prof. Dr. Karl-Nikolaus Peifer, Institute for Media and Communications Law, UoC, held a seminar in European Data Protection Law where the students learned the European prospective and approach on the highly interesting and relevant issue of data protection. Next to exploring this topic, the students also had the opportunity to meet the Cologne Major at the City Hall in the old city center, visit the Regional Court Bonn in Session and talk to presiding Judge Dr. Eumann. LL.M., take a tour through the Museum House of History in Bonn, visit the State Parliament of North-Rhine Westphalia in Düsseldorf and have a discussion with a parliament member, and visit the Rhine Tower in Düsseldorf. Among educational contents, the American students did get a chance to network with German students during the graduation ceremony for the ``Certificate in US-american Law`` (CUSL) and learn from Dr. Ryan Kraski on his experience as a Duquesne Law Graduate living and working in Germany.



Students at the State Parliament of North-Rhine Westphalia © Lehrstuhl für US-amerikanisches Recht

An educational week came to an end with the Pentecost weekend, during which the students had time to explore Cologne, Germany, or other European Countries on their own before entering into the second week of summer school which began with the three sessions seminar in the Public Law of the European Union, taught by Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. Dr. h.c. Stephan Hobe, LL.M., Institute of Air Law, Space Law and Cyber Law at the UoC. During this week the students did not only visit the famous Cologne Cathedral, but also had the unique opportunity to participate in a guided tour of the Penal Institution Ossendorf, where they could learn how the German penalty system is conducted and compare it to the US-american approach.

To honor the title ``Summer Study of Law in Europe``, the group of 21 students, Associate Dean for Students and Associate Professor Ella Kwisnek, and Professor Patrick Sorek, both of the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University, Professor Junker, P. Matthew Roy, and student assistant Emma Shensher, departed June 1st for Paris! The day after arrival began with a seminar on Social Aspects of European Law by Professor Linxin He of Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, which was also joined by Dean April Barton of Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University. After lunch at the restaurant ``Bouillon République``, students, professors, and staff were sent into the weekend to explore Paris. Of course a visit to Paris is incomplete without a visit to the Eiffel Tower and a view of Paris from the top – in groups, the students went for this memorable experience on Sunday late afternoon/evening.



One group of students on top of the Eiffel Tower © Lehrstuhl für US-amerikanisches Recht

Before departing to the next stop Luxembourg, the students were taught by Prof. Dr. Sophie Robin-Olivier in another session on Social Aspects of European Law.



Students at Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne © Lehrstuhl für US-amerikanisches Recht

The day after arrival in Luxembourg, the students had a truly unique chance to not only visit the European Court of Justice, have a guided walking tour through the court building, but also to experience the work of European Judges in session, followed by lunch and talk with German Judge and member of faculty of law of the UoC, Prof. Dr. Thomas von Danwitz! After this truly once in a lifetime experience – which also was complemented with several short presentations on the courts work in general – the students ended the day with dinner at the restaurant ``Am Tiirmschen`` and brief exploration of Luxembourg before departing for Germany the next day.



Students with Judge Prof. Dr. Thomas von Danwitz at the European Court of Justice © Lehrstuhl für US-amerikanisches Recht

In the third week of the summer school the program approached its end, but not without lectures on Comparative German and US Civil Procedure in the Areas of Pleading and Information Disclosure, German Legal Education and Legal Practice before sending the students off to revisit their gained language and prepare for their final examination of four hours with a mixture of short answers, essays, and multiple choice questions on the last day of the summer school.

The last day of the program ended with a farewell dinner at the restaurant ``Oasis`` during which the students reminisced and talked about their experience and with a heavy heart began to say goodbye to Cologne.

For 15 students the program was over – six students however stayed up to six weeks in Germany for an internship in German law firms in Cologne, Düsseldorf, and Berlin.

The Chair of US-american Law thanks everyone involved at the University of Cologne, the Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University, the Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne, and all involved people and individuals for making this program as unique as it is. Special gratitude is expressed to Santander Universitäten for sponsoring the Summer School 2023. Also, the chair would like to thank this year's participating students for their eager to learn about European law and culture, and for making this program as educational, fun, and successful as it is.

This success will be followed upon in summer 2025!

*“I am so incredibly grateful to have gotten the opportunity to participate in this program. I was pleasantly surprised with how immediately comfortable I became studying in another country. [...] It was so interesting having the chance to learn in so many different places throughout Europe, both inside and outside of the classroom. Hearing from professors at the University of Cologne and the Sorbonne really gave me a perspective that I would not have received if I had studied European law back in the United States. [...] Outside of a strictly educational setting, I was thrilled to visit the top of the Eiffel Tower! [...] I was definitely nervous visiting a new country for the first time, and I thought that I might be overwhelmed being so far away from home for three weeks. Having completed the program, however, I only wish that it were a bit longer! I would highly recommend this to any law student, even if they haven’t thought much about comparative law or traveling around Europe. The experience was so much better than I could have imagined, and I cannot believe how much I was able to learn! This program has been the highlight of my entire law school experience thus far.”*

*K. Podolak, Juris Doctor Candidate 2025  
Thomas R. Kline School of Law of Duquesne University*

*“When I first signed up for this program, I knew I could expect something good, but I never really understood just how great it would be! I thoroughly enjoyed our classes at the University of Cologne as I learned about the unique institution that is the European Union, with Professor Peifer’s Data Protection class being my personal favorite. The excursions planned as part of the program were also fantastic as I got the rare experience as an American to witness a German trial court, a state parliament session, and in Luxembourg a European Court of Justice trial. [...] While I loved Germany, Paris and Luxembourg were also wonderful and I can now proudly say I studied (shortly) at the Sorbonne and got to be the only person among my friends and family who has been to Luxembourg. [...] I am grateful for all this trip has given me in many aspects, the academics were great for my legal education and understanding of the European Union, the excursions gave me unique experiences, and the trip taught me the joy and relative ease of travel. I can easily say this was the greatest opportunity I have experienced throughout my education, and I am very grateful for being able to attend.”*

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