

## **Rethinking the Theoretical Foundations of Academic Legal Education**

CONVENORS: Hedwig van Rossum (Vrije Universiteit Amsterdam)  
Bald de Vries (Universiteit Utrecht)  
Ernst van Bemmelen van Gent (Universiteit Utrecht)  
Jasper Sluijs (Universiteit Utrecht)

Lecturers in academic legal education face new challenges, such as the need to prepare an increasing amount of diverse students belonging to the digitalized generation for professional and civil life in the globalized risk society. Lecturers teach in the context of a university that values efficiency and effectiveness, and focuses on the future employability of students. This has led to an emphasis on training vocational skills and the teaching of black letter law, and seems to result in the uniformity of curricula and graduating students. A focus on vocational skills and black letter law might undermine the ability for students to develop as responsible individuals capable of, for example, ethical decision making and creativity. In the constantly changing circumstances of contemporary society, lawyers need fitting abilities and it may well be that ethical capability and creativity are some of the defining and necessary characteristics for lawyers and citizens of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. These challenges give rise to a rethinking of the foundations of academic education and to reflect on the aims, content and pedagogy of legal education.

We welcome papers reflecting on the foundations of legal academic education, describing contemporary teaching practices or designs for future-proof legal education.

If you are interested in participating as a speaker in this special workshop, please send your proposal (max. 500 words, references excluded) and a short CV by the 1st of March to [h.e.van.rossum@vu.nl](mailto:h.e.van.rossum@vu.nl). Selected speakers should send a paper by the 1st of June. Papers presented during the workshop will be made available to all participants.