

INTEGRATING SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN THE LAW CURRICULUM: LEGAL EDUCATION FOR “PEOPLE, PLANET AND PROSPERITY”

MD SAIFUL KARIM, FELICITY DEANE, ABDULLAH-AL ARIF, ANDREW GARWOOD-GOWERS, FRAN HUMPHRIES, MD MAHTAB UDDIN, AFSHIN AKHTAR-KHAVARI, ROWENA MAGUIRE, BRIDGET LEWIS, LUCY CRADDUCK, LACHLAN ROBB, TINA COCKBURN, KELLY PURSER, SAM BOYLE, ANNE MATTHEW, BRYDON WANG, AND ALEX DEAGON*

Understanding the multifaceted relationship between Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and law is important for law educators and students, as the SDGs encapsulate diverse legal aspects beyond environmental concerns, spanning economic, social, and human rights dimensions. The achievement of many SDGs hinges on a robust legal framework, necessitating legal education to encompass the direct and indirect connections between the SDGs and law. This Article underscores the imperative of incorporating SDGs into legal education, aiming to familiarize students with the principles, challenges, and relevance of SDGs for future legal practice. It proposes

* Professor Md Saiful Karim, PhD, SFHEA is a professor in the School of Law and Justice at the University of Southern Queensland, Australia (corresponding author). He is a lead author of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Special Report on the Ocean and Cryosphere in a Changing Climate (SROCC). He is also a lead author of the first Global Assessment and Asia Pacific Regional Assessment of the Intergovernmental Science-Policy Platform on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services (IPBES). Email: mdsaiful.karim@unisu.edu.au. Professor Deane, Professor Akhtar-Khavari, Professor Maguire and Professor Cockburn are professors at QUT Law School. Associate Professor Lewis, Associate Professor Craddock, Associate Professor Purser and Associate Professor Deagon are associate professors at QUT Law School. Mr. Garwood-Gowers, Dr. Boyle and Dr. Matthew are senior lecturers at QUT Law School. Dr. Robb and Dr. Wang are lecturers at QUT Law School. Associate Professor Humphries is an associate professor at Griffith Law School. Dr. Arif is a Lecturer at Macquarie Law School. Dr. Uddin is an adjunct professor and post-doctoral researcher at the University of Guelph and a digital policy hub fellow at the Centre for International Governance Innovation.

strategies for seamlessly integrating SDGs knowledge into the law curriculum without disrupting the existing syllabus and emphasizes the crucial influence of SDGs on legal education. Focusing on professional law degrees like Bachelor of Laws (LLB) and Juris Doctor (JD), this Article presents case studies illustrating SDGs education in selected core and optional subjects taught in law schools. It stresses the necessity of cultivating SDGs awareness among law academics and students to enhance their expertise and underscores the transformative impact on the development of legal education. Finally, this Article argues that blending SDGs into the law curriculum is essential for ensuring meaningful legal reform and preparing the next generation of lawyers to contribute to a just and equitable world by addressing cross-cutting issues in various areas of law.

INTRODUCTION	198
I. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE SDGs	199
II. SDGs AND LAW	202
III. INTEGRATION OF SDGs IN LAW CURRICULUM	204
A. Introduction to Law	205
B. Constitutional Law	206
C. Corporate Law	208
D. Criminal Law	210
E. Contract Law	211
F. Property Law	212
G. Equity and Trusts	214
H. International Law	216
I. Environmental, Water, Planning, and Climate Change Law	217
J. Law of the Sea	218
K. Taxation Law	220
L. Trade Law	222
M. Health Law	224
N. Intellectual Property Law	226
O. Technology Law	227
P. Human Rights Law	229
CONCLUSION	231

INTRODUCTION

The United Nations (UN) adopted the “2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,” including seventeen Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), as “a plan of action for people, planet and prosperity.”¹ The Agenda also strives to strengthen “universal peace in larger freedom.”² The SDGs cover many economic, social, and human rights challenges. Many areas of law are relevant to the SDGs, and knowledge of the SDGs will be invaluable for the legal profession, and for the diverse career paths of law graduates.³ At the same time, law and legal institutions have a fundamental role in achieving the SDGs. Many SDGs will be impossible to achieve without a supporting international and national legal structure. Some SDGs are directly law-related goals and need to be adequately highlighted in legal education. This has encouraged legal researchers worldwide to develop a vast literature on the law and the SDGs.⁴ However, similar enthusiasm has thus far not been seen for integrating the SDGs into the law curriculum in a comprehensive way.

Many research papers highlight the need for integrating environmental sustainability education into the law curriculum.⁵ However, the reach of the SDGs is far more extensive than is traditionally captured by the idea of environmental sustainability. For example, SDG 5 seeks to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls. For this reason, law students should be at least familiar with the SDGs and their broader

1. G.A. Res. 70/1, Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, at 1 (Sept. 25, 2015).

2. *Id.*

3. Ruth Morgan & Sarah Bartholomeusz, *Choosing a Law Career*, in CAREERS IN LAW: A GUIDE FOR STUDENTS, GRADUATES, AND PROFESSIONALS 143, 143–74 (M. Raz et al. eds. 2020); James Miles, *New Career Paths: From Computing Services to Library Director*, AALL SPECTRUM, Nov. 2002, at 14, 14.

4. *E.g.*, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: LAW, THEORY AND IMPLEMENTATION (Duncan French & Louis J. Kotzé eds., Edward Elgar Publishing 2018); THE CAMBRIDGE HANDBOOK OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND INTERNATIONAL LAW (Jones Ebbesson & Ellen Hey eds., Cambridge University Press 2022); FULFILLING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: ON A QUEST FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD (Narinder Kakar, Vesselin Popovski, and Nicholas A. Robinson eds., Routledge 2022); Alexandra R. Harrington, INTERNATIONAL LAW AND GLOBAL GOVERNANCE: TREATY REGIMES AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS IMPLEMENTATION (Routledge 2021).

5. David Mohan Ong, *Prospects for Integrating an Environmental Sustainability Perspective within the University Law Curriculum in England*, 50 LAW TCHR. 276, 276–99 (2016); Peter Doran, *Head, Hand and Heart: Immersive Learning for a Demanding New Climate at Queen’s University Belfast’s School of Law*, 50 LAW TCHR. 341, 341–51 (2016); Colin T. Reid, *Education for Sustainable Development and the Professional Curriculum*, 50 LAW TCHR. 300, 300–06 (2016); Jason Lowther & Joanne Sellick, *Embedding Sustainability Literacy in the Legal Curriculum: Reflections on the Plymouth Model*, 50 LAW TCHR. 307, 307–20, 32–40 (2016); Michelle Lim & Andrew Allan, *The Use of Scenarios in Legal Education to Develop Futures Thinking and Sustainability Competencies*, 50 LAW TCHR. 321, 321–22 (2016); John C. Dernbach, *The Essential and Growing Role of Legal Education in Achieving Sustainability*, 60 J. LEGAL EDUC. 489, 489–518 (2010).

implications. Indeed, many universities are now assessed according to integration of the SDGs into their teaching and learning activities.⁶ Against this backdrop, this article highlights the need for integrating the SDGs into the law curriculum and identifies how the law curriculum can familiarize students with the concepts and principles of, and challenges for, achieving the SDGs and promoting a sustainable future.

Awareness of the relevance of the SDGs for substantive areas of legal practice is vitally important for future lawyers. There is a need to highlight the influence of the SDGs on the core legal curriculum. This Article shows how knowledge of the SDGs can be embedded in the core curriculum without any significant disruption to the existing curriculum. It discusses how the law curriculum can integrate the SDGs and aims to show how knowledge of the SDGs will shape the development of curriculum for professional law degrees. It focuses on the integration of the SDGs in the law degrees that qualify graduates to apply for registration as a legal practitioner in the respective jurisdictions, such as Bachelor of Laws (LLB) and Juris Doctor (JD) degrees. This Article presents some examples on inclusion of SDGs education in some core areas of law and selected optional subjects. Development of awareness of the SDGs among law academics, including the relevance of the SDGs for their areas of expertise, is also essential. This will, in turn, help embed awareness of the SDGs across the whole spectrum of legal education. This Article serves these purposes and can be used as training material for legal educators.

Part I briefly presents the historical background of sustainable development and the SDGs and introduces the seventeen SDGs in a legal context. Part II elaborates the relationship between the SDGs and law. Part III presents several case studies covering various areas of legal education that showcase how the SDGs can be integrated into core and optional law subjects. The conclusion of the article provides some recommendations for integrating the SDGs into the law curriculum without disrupting the existing syllabus.

I. SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND THE SDGs

The adoption of the SDGs is interlinked with the international development of the principle of sustainable development. The first major global environmental conference was the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment 1972 (the Stockholm Conference), the precursor to the development of the concept of sustainable development in the international law and governance discourses.⁷ This conference adopted the Stockholm

6. *Impact Rankings 2023*, TIMES HIGHER EDUC., <https://www.timeshighereducation.com/impactrankings> [<https://perma.cc/5HFK-SVSF>] (last visited Aug. 3, 2024).

7. United Nations, United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, June 5–16, 1972, Stockholm, <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/stockholm1972> [<https://perma.cc/9232G-636A>] (last visited Aug. 3, 2024).

Declaration, which contains twenty-six principles covering various issues of conservation and protection of the environment.⁸ The Declaration recognized the “fundamental right to freedom, equality and adequate conditions of life, in an environment of a quality that permits a life of dignity and well-being” and “a solemn responsibility to protect and improve the environment for present and future generations.”⁹ This can be considered the basis for international and national sustainable development law.

Following the Stockholm Conference, the United Nations formed the World Commission on Environment and Development under the leadership of the former Prime Minister of Norway, Gro Harlem Brundtland. The Commission published its celebrated report in 1987, popularly known as the “*Our Common Future*.”¹⁰ The report defines sustainable development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.”¹¹ The 1992 Rio Declaration on Environment and Development also refers to the concept of sustainable development in many of its principles.¹²

As a further commitment to ensuring equitable development across the world, in 2000, the United Nations Millennium Declaration¹³ was adopted, including eight Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) covering the areas of poverty and hunger eradication, education, health, gender equality, environmental sustainability, and global partnership for achieving the MDGs.¹⁴ The two parallel processes for development and environment finally combined into one process at the World Summit on Sustainable Development in 2002,¹⁵ which adopted the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development.¹⁶ In 2012, a conference with the same title was held in Rio de Janeiro.¹⁷ Sustainable development, at least as an objective of the international legal system, arguably developed as a principle of

8. U.N. Conference on the Human Environment, *The Report of the United Nations Conference on the Environment*, 4–5, U.N. Doc. A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1 (June 5–16, 1972).

9. *Id.*

10. U.N. Secretary-General, *Report of the World Commission on Environmental and Development: Our Common Future*, U.N. Doc. A/42/427 (Aug. 4, 1987).

11. *Id.*

12. U.N. Conference on Environment and Development, *Rio Declaration on Environment and Development*, U.N. Doc. A/CONF.151/26/Rev.1 (Vol. I), annex I (Aug. 12, 1992).

13. G.A. Res. 55/2, United Nations Millennium Declaration (Sept. 18, 2000).

14. *Millennium Summit, 6-8 September 2000, New York, United Nations*, <https://www.un.org/en/conferences/environment/newyork2000> [<https://perma.cc/YW45-6294>] (last visited Aug. 3, 2024).

15. World Summit on Sustainable Development, *Report of the World Summit on Sustainable Development*, U.N. Doc. A/CONF.199/20 (2002).

16. *Id.* at 1–5.

17. U.N. Conference on Sustainable Development, *Report of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development*, U.N. Doc. A/CONF.216/16 (June 20–22, 2012).

customary international law.¹⁸ Judge Weeramantry, in his separate opinion in the *Gabcikovo-Nagymaros Project* case, held that he considers sustainable development to be “more than a mere concept, but as a principle with normative value”¹⁹

A major influence of the Stockholm and Rio declarations is the emergence of sustainable development law in national legal systems. Using sustainable development as a framework for national governance in various fields has been advocated in the United States from the early stages of the development of the concept.²⁰ For example, it has been implemented (although modified) in the Australian legal system through “ecologically sustainable development.”²¹ In the United Kingdom, sustainable development is gradually included in legislative reform and has “a place in . . . legislation.”²² Some judiciaries in common law countries may also recognize sustainable development through liberal interpretation of constitutionally recognized fundamental rights. For example, the Indian Supreme Court held that “the concept of ‘sustainable development’ is to be treated as an integral part of ‘life’ under Article 21” of the Constitution of India, which recognizes the right to life.²³ There is even an example of direct constitutional recognition of sustainable development. Article 22 of the Maldives Constitution provides that “[t]he State shall undertake and promote desirable economic and social goals through ecologically balanced sustainable development. . . .”²⁴

The SDGs 2030 were adopted in 2015.²⁵ As noted, seventeen SDGs were adopted, including 169 targets for eradicating poverty and hunger; ensuring the health and wellbeing of the global population; promoting education; promoting gender equality; ensuring access to water, sanitation and energy; ensuring sustainable economic growth and decent employment opportunities for the people; ensuring sustainable infrastructural and

18. Virginie Barral, *Sustainable Development in International Law: Nature and Operation of an Evolutive Legal Norm*, 23 EUR. J. INT’L. L. 377, 377–78 (2002); Shawkat Alam and Md Saiful Karim, *Linkages of Development and Environment: In Search of an Integrated Approach through Sustainable Development*, 23 GEO. INT’L. ENV’T. L. REV. 345, 349 (2011).

19. Case Concerning the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros Project, Judgment, 1997 I.C.J. 7, 88 (Sept. 25) (separate opinion of Vice-President Weeramantry).

20. See, e.g., John C. Dernbach, *Sustainable Development as a Framework for National Governance*, 49 CASE W. RES. L. REV. 1 (1998); Jonathan D. Weiss, *Local Sustainability Efforts in the United States: The Progress Since Rio*, 32 ENV’T. L. REP. NEWS & ANALYSIS 10667, 10667 (2002); Risa E. Kaufman, *Localizing Human Rights in the United States through the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda*, 49 COLUM. HUM. RTS. L. REV. 99, 99 (2017).

21. *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (Cth) s 3A (Austl.).

22. Andrea Ross, *SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT LAW IN THE UK: FROM RHETORIC TO REALITY?* 4, 205 (Routledge, 2012).

23. N.D. Jayal and Anr v. Union of India & Ors, AIR 2004 SC 867 (India).

24. CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF MALDIVES 2008, art. 22.

25. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 1.

industrial development; reducing “inequality within and among countries;” ensuring sustainability in urban development and human settlements; ensuring sustainability in the production and human consumption process; promoting urgent climate action; ensuring conservation and sustainable use of the oceans’ resources; ensuring the restoration and protection of nature and natural resources of terrestrial areas; and promoting access to justice and inclusive global institutions, partnership, and cooperation for achieving the SDGs.²⁶ Each of the seventeen SDGs includes some practical targets which are the main guide for achieving the respective goals. The targets have varied timeframe for achievement.

II. SDGs AND LAW

A general understanding of the focus of various SDGs may be helpful for law educators in incorporating the SDGs into their learning and teaching practice. As noted by Professors James May and Erin Daly, the SDGs “are the culmination of four decades of multidisciplinary and legal thinking about what sustainable development means . . .”²⁷ and “the embodiment of sustainability in the international legal order [is] designed to advance human dignity, something reflected in the very text of the SDGs.”²⁸ Table 1 provides an overview of the relationship between law and the seventeen SDGs.

Table 1: SDGs and Law²⁹

SDG	Focus	Examples of Some Relevant Areas of National Law
1	Poverty Eradication	Constitutional law; human rights law; law and economics; environmental, agricultural, and sustainable development law; property law (land tenure); corporate and commercial law
2	No Hunger	Constitutional law; human rights law; law and economics; environmental, agricultural, and sustainable development law; property law (land tenure)
3	Ensuring Health	Constitutional law; human rights law; health law

26. *Id.* at 14.

27. James R. May & Erin Daly, *The Role of Human Dignity in Achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals*, 59 GLOB. ENV'T. L. ANN. 59, 62–63 (2021).

28. *Id.* at 74.

29. For full descriptions of the SDGs, see generally G. A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1 (noting this is an overview, not necessarily a comprehensive account of the relationship of law and SDGs; noting also that various areas of international law are generally relevant for all SDGs, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development itself is a soft legal instrument).

4	Education	Constitutional law; human rights law
5	Gender Equality	Constitutional law; human rights law; family law; criminal law; corporate law; equity and trusts law; tax law; anti-discrimination law; labor law; jurisprudence
6	Water and Sanitation	Water law; environmental law; urban and regional planning law
7	Energy	Energy law; environmental law; planning law
8	Decent Work and Economic Growth	Constitutional law; human rights law; labor law; corporate law
9	Industrial and Infrastructural Development	Economic, investment, financial and trade, intellectual property, corporate, and technology law
10	Inequality	Constitutional law; human rights law; tax law
11	Urban Development	Urban and regional planning law; property law
12	Sustainable Consumption	Commercial law; consumer law; health law
13	Climate Change	Climate law; environmental law; planning law; corporate law; human rights law
14	Oceanic Environment	Marine law; law of the sea; environmental law
15	Terrestrial Environment	Environmental, planning, and climate change law
16	Rule of Law and Justice	Constitutional law; administrative law; criminal law
17	Global Partnerships	Relationship between national and international law

Sustainable development, and the methods intended to realize it, have been “considered one of the most important areas of focus in contemporary society.”³⁰ This means that understanding the SDGs and their application to a particular area of law is necessary for tertiary education;³¹ hence, university educators should incorporate this understanding in their teaching practice. However, teaching students about sustainable behaviors extends beyond environmental considerations. The SDGs incorporate

30. Clara Vasconcelos et al., *Teaching Sustainable Development Goals to University Students: A Cross-Country Case-Based Study*, 14(3) SUSTAINABILITY 1593, 1594 (2022).

31. *Id.*

economic and social concerns that inevitably touch on almost all subject matters of law. At the same time, it is vital to recognize that the relationship between the SDGs and the law can be both direct and indirect. For instance, achieving gender equality and labor rights will be challenging without a robust legal framework for anti-discrimination and human rights.

Many of the SDGs will not be achievable without the rule of law and a supportive legal framework. For example, economic growth may be hindered without an encouraging business and commercial law environment for investment and entrepreneurship. Similarly, the inequality between states with different levels of economic development will not be reduced without international legal and institutional reform to promote access and equity in international relations. On the other hand, to foster pro-people lawyering and to keep law and legal institutions relevant for economic, social, and environmental issues, lawyers must be aware of these most significant global goals, the needs of humankind (both present and future), and of nature itself, upon which humankind's existence is dependent.

III. INTEGRATION OF SDGS IN LAW CURRICULUM

Universities play a critical role in teaching students about the importance of the SDGs.³² This is particularly the case for educating law students because “many of the world’s legislators are lawyers or law graduates.”³³ This means legal educators are tasked with imparting more than just the description of the law as it exists. Instead, legal educators must embrace and teach the principles that underpin good law (including the SDGs) and be well-versed in the means to achieve desired outcomes through law and policy.

In common law countries, core subjects usually include constitutional law, administrative law, criminal law, tort law, contract law, property law, equity and trusts law, corporate law, civil procedure, criminal procedure, and the law on evidence. Some optional subjects supplement these core areas of law, for example, jurisprudence and legal theory, taxation and fiscal law, international law, environmental and planning law, and human rights law. However, some optional subjects, such as international law and jurisprudence, may be compulsory in some universities and countries. In some countries and/or universities, most subjects may be included as compulsory with little or no optional choice. Law degrees may occasionally include non-law subjects or the option to take a few non-law subjects.³⁴

32. *Id.*

33. Devin K. Joshi, *Lawyers and Law Graduates in Parliaments as a Consequence of SMD Electoral Systems: A Comparison of Japan, South Korea, and Germany*, 21(1) JAPAN. J. OF POL. SCI. 19, 19 (2020).

34. *SLS-Approved Non-Law Courses*, STANFORD L. SCH., https://law.stanford.edu/nl-course/?tax_and_terms=9304&page=4 [<https://perma.cc/8G4Z-NPM9>] (last visited Aug. 4,

The SDGs can be embedded in different areas of the law curriculum in the specialized and core subjects. The following sections present examples or case studies in selected core and optional subjects. Inclusion or non-inclusion in this section does not necessarily mean that one law subject is more relevant for the achievement of the SDGs than others. For example, we did not include the law of evidence and civil procedure as case studies. However, these procedural law courses are relevant for the SDGs, particularly SDG 16, which emphasize the need of “the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.”³⁵ Similarly, administrative law is directly relevant to the achievement of goals 1 to 5, 10, and 16 because of the need for rule of law in the context of the SDGs and national development. Moreover, most law schools in the common law world include one or more environmental, planning, and climate law subjects in the LLB and JD curricula. These areas are also profoundly emphasized in existing legal education literature for integrating sustainability literacy for law students.³⁶ The sections below cover one concise case study on these subjects, but the coverage of the integration of environmental sustainability in the existing legal education literature demonstrates a clear recognition of the need for this type of work.

The case studies presented take various approaches to describing how one or more SDGs can be integrated or highlighted in the curriculum of the related law subjects. Integration of the SDGs may look different across subjects, guided by its primary learning outcomes and subject matter limitations. Therefore, this Article does not suggest a one-size-fits-all approach. Rather, it fully embraces a spectrum of learning and teaching approaches.

A. Introduction to Law

The curricula of the first year in law school in most common law countries has an introductory subject that takes names such as “Introduction to Law”³⁷ or “Foundations of Law.”³⁸ The subject aims to provide preliminary knowledge of different kinds of law, for example, administrative, civil, criminal, and constitutional, as well as various legal systems, civil law, common law, religious law, and mixed or hybrid systems. In addition, it offers a brief discussion of the country’s judicial

2024); *J.D. Curriculum*, VAND. L. SCH., <https://law.vanderbilt.edu/jd-program/curriculum/> [<https://perma.cc/D5H4-2EAD>] (last visited Aug. 4, 2024).

35. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 25.

36. *See* references, *supra* note 5.

37. *LLB101 Introduction to Law*, QUEENSL. UNIV. OF TECH., <https://www.qut.edu.au/study/unit?unitCode=LLB101> [<https://perma.cc/Q3HJ-3KR6>] (last visited Aug. 3, 2024).

38. *LAWS1006: Foundations of Law*, UNIV. OF SYDNEY, <https://www.sydney.edu.au/units/LAWS1006> [<https://perma.cc/3DCC-RQ2C>] (last visited Aug. 3, 2024).

system, including essential features of the courts and their hierarchy.³⁹ An introductory class may, in some cases, also briefly introduce global legal order, international law, and the UN system.⁴⁰ Furthermore, the subject informs students why they should study law and how to develop a legal mind.⁴¹

Integrating knowledge of the SDGs with the introductory law subject will make students aware of sustainable development and the SDGs.⁴² The first step in that direction can be explaining the relationship between the SDGs and the legal system. The three dimensions of sustainable development—economic, social, and environmental—may also be incorporated to help students realize the rationale and importance of the SDGs.

As the students being introduced to the subject are often first-year law students, their knowledge of the global legal and political order may be minimal. Providing information on the world's most critical challenges and the international communities' efforts to address those challenges can engage students in these issues. With basic knowledge of the SDGs, students will understand the inequality and resource gaps between parts of the world.⁴³ This will enable them to appreciate the role of individuals and communities, political leaders, and global institutions such as the UN in shaping and maintaining the international order. Early introduction to the SDGs will also provoke students to think about the role of law in making the world a just, prosperous, and peaceful place for everyone, irrespective of their ethnicity, language, color, age, gender, religion, place of birth, political, social, or economic status.

B. Constitutional Law

As noted earlier, constitutional recognition of sustainable development can also be discussed in constitutional law. SDG 16 aims to “promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and

39. *Course Outlines: Law 1501 – Foundations of Law*, UNIV. OF ADEL., <https://www.adelaide.edu.au/course-outlines/104943/1/sem-1/2016/> (last visited Aug. 3, 2024).

40. *Introduction to Law, Governance, and Development*, AUSTRAL. NAT'L UNIV., <https://programsandcourses.anu.edu.au/2022/course/LAWS8001/Summer%20Session/1564> [<https://perma.cc/3X26-2GT3>] (last visited Aug. 3, 2024); *Principles of Public Law (LAW50024)*, UNIV. OF MELB. (Feb. 8, 2024) <https://handbook.unimelb.edu.au/subjects/laws50024> [<https://perma.cc/Z5PT-GBNX>].

41. MICHELLE SANSON & THALIA ANTHONY, *CONNECTING WITH LAW 10–12* (Oxford University Press, 5th ed. 2014).

42. *See generally* G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1.

43. *See* Joyeeta Gupta & Courtney Vegelin, *Sustainable Development Goals and Inclusive Development*, 16 INT'L ENV'T AGREEMENTS 433 (2016); Ignacio Saiz & Kate Donald, *Tackling Inequality through the Sustainable Development Goals: Human Rights in Practice*, 21 INT'L J. HUM. RTS. 1029 (2017).

inclusive institutions at all levels.”⁴⁴ There are numerous aspects of this goal that are relevant to constitutional law, including ensuring democracy (Target 16.7) and protecting fundamental freedoms (Target 16.10).⁴⁵ However, this section focuses on Target 16.3 as central to all of these aspects. Target 16.3 aims to “promote the rule of law at the national and international levels and ensure equal access to justice for all.”⁴⁶ Constitutional law is the study of how a state empowers and regulates the various institutions of government, such as the Legislature (which creates laws), the Executive (which administers laws) and the Judiciary (which interprets laws).⁴⁷ For example, both the United States and Australia have written constitutions which set out the rules for how the Legislature can create laws and how the Executive can administer laws. Under these constitutions, the Judiciary cannot create or administer laws, but they do interpret the constitutional rules to ensure the other branches of government do not act outside their constitutionally granted powers.⁴⁸

This separation of judicial power is important for the rule of law, which forms an assumption for constitutions in liberal democracies like the US and Australia. Although it has been expressed in various ways, the fundamental idea of the rule of law is that even though governments create and administer laws, they are still subject to the law, which is clearly and publicly promulgated, equally enforced, and independently adjudicated.⁴⁹ That is, a government cannot exercise legal power in a manner that is arbitrary, capricious, or unchecked, for it remains subject to the higher law that establishes and limits it (the Constitution).⁵⁰ Similarly, every person, regardless of their status and influence, is entitled to equal access to the protections provided by law.⁵¹ Hence, constitutional law is essential to achieving SDG 16. Constitutional law ensures that laws are clearly and publicly promulgated by the Legislature and equally enforced by the Executive through independent adjudication by the Judiciary, upholding the

44. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 25.

45. *Id.* at 25–26.

46. *Id.* at 25.

47. Gwendolyn Juarez, *What is Constitutional Law?*, LEXINTER L. DIRECTORY (Feb. 13, 2024), <https://www.lexinter.net/law/constitutional> [<https://perma.cc/CM3Z-MCT7>].

48. NICHOLAS ARONEY, PETER GERANGELOS, SARAH MURRAY & JAMES STELLIOS, *THE CONSTITUTION OF THE COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA: HISTORY, PRINCIPLE AND INTERPRETATION* xvii, 1 (Cambridge University Press 2015).

49. See David Feldman, *Democracy, the Rule of Law and Judicial Review*, 19 *FED. L. REV.* 1 (1990).

50. Kate Brown, *What Is Power Under the Rule of Law?*, AM. BAR ASS’N (Mar. 3, 2021), https://www.americanbar.org/groups/public_education/law-day/law-day-2021/what-is-power-under-the-rule-of-law/#:~:text=Under%20the%20rule%20of%20law%2C%20power%20is%20the%20sovereign%20will,to%20it%20by%20the%20people.

51. Lisa Burton Crawford, *The Rule of Law*, in *AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTIONAL VALUES* 77, 77–78, (Rosalind Dixon ed., Hart 2018); see also Lisa Burton Crawford, *THE RULE OF LAW AND THE AUSTRALIAN CONSTITUTION* (Federation Press 2017), (explaining equal protections in the Australian Constitution in greater detail).

rule of law.⁵² Achieving SDG 16 is vital for achieving other SDGs in a just and equitable manner.

Law students need to understand the nature of this fundamental connection between SDG 16 and constitutional law through the rule of law. Without understanding how and why constitutions establish and regulate the institutions of government which create, administer, and interpret law, law students are less likely to appreciate the rule of law and what it means. The rule of law and access to justice can be taught through constitutional law subjects, which introduce the institutions of government, their relationships with each other, and how they are established and regulated by law to promote peaceful and sustainable societies.⁵³

C. Corporate Law

Achievement of the SDGs depends in part on the initiative and cooperation of private enterprises. As noted by former UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon: “[g]overnments must take the lead in living up to their pledges. At the same time, I am counting on the private sector to drive success.”⁵⁴ The SDGs most closely related to corporate law are 8,⁵⁵ 9,⁵⁶ 12,⁵⁷ and 13.⁵⁸ Other SDGs resonate with long-standing calls for improvement of board diversity, including, for example, SDG 5, particularly targets 5.5 and 5c.⁵⁹ The connection between corporate law and sustainability is very apparent. Companies permeate most societies and are often the commercial vehicles responsible for distributing the fundamentals of life and livelihood: income, water, power, food, housing, and education. The core features of corporations are limited liability and separate legal personality. These features position the corporate form to foster opportunities for entrepreneurship, innovation, economic growth, and sustainability.⁶⁰ In most nations, even the smallest companies, when considered collectively, make a contribution to GDP and employment that

52. See, e.g., Noora Arajarvi, *The Rule of Law in the 2030 Agenda*, 10 HAGUE J. ON R. OF L. 187, 189 (2018); Steven Malby, *The Rule of Law and Sustainable Development*, 43 COMMONWEALTH. L. BULL. 521, 522–23 (2017).

53. See generally James Michel, CENTER FOR STRATEGIC & INTERNATIONAL STUDIES, *THE RULE OF LAW AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT* (2020).

54. Ban Ki Moon (Former U.N. Secretary General), *Secretary-General’s remarks at the United Nations Private Sector Forum [as prepared for delivery]* (Sept. 26, 2015).

55. The closest connections here relate to Targets 8.1–8.3 and 8.5–8.6, G. A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 19.

56. See Targets 9.1–9.5., G. A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 20.

57. See Target 12.6, G. A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 22.

58. SDG 13, G. A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 23.

59. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 18.

60. UNITED NATIONS COMM’N ON INT’L TRADE L. (UNCITRAL), UNCITRAL LEGIS. GUIDE ON LTD. LIAB. ENTERS., 9–13 (2002).

belies their size.⁶¹ It is arguable that without an effective corporate legal system, achieving most SDGs will be difficult.

In corporate law, a core unit in legal education, the SDGs can be taught in core topics via presenting the connection with the highly connected SDGs.⁶² Context can be created by exploring the relevance of the law to the attainment of the targets.⁶³ For example, when learning about the corporate form, the SDGs reveal the value of the features of companies enshrined in corporate law that support risk-taking, innovation, and entrepreneurship, including entrepreneurship of young people, as “critical agents of change.”⁶⁴ When learning about decision-making, the SDGs reveal the reverberating impact of those decisions and the importance of best practice approaches to corporate governance and the bearing of stakeholder perspectives. Exploring the complexity of the interconnectivity of sustainability issues adds further nuance and depth to the authentic connection with corporate law. For instance, taking a well-recognized legal form allows nascent businesses to take shape and do business within the formal economy, which in turn eases access to finance and capital. This creates an environment where the company is well positioned to contribute to the economy, provide employment, innovate, and so forth. Conversely, a lack of support for nascent entrepreneurship, particularly among young people and women in developing countries, can stifle nascent business, increasing the risks of poverty and unemployment.⁶⁵

The SDGs also provide an excellent critical lens for student discussion because corporation and company law are part of the current

61. ORG. FOR ECON. CO-OPERATION AND DEV. (OECD), SMES, ENTREPRENEURSHIP AND INNOVATION, OECD STUDIES ON SMES AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP 5 (2010).

62. E.g., SDGs 5, 8, 9, 12, and 13, G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 14; Amr ElAlfy et al., *Scoping the Evolution of Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) Research in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) Era* 12 (14) SUSTAINABILITY 5544, 1–3 (2020); BUSINESS SCHOOLS, LEADERSHIP AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: THE FUTURE OF RESPONSIBLE MANAGEMENT EDUCATION xiv, 2–4, 7 (Lars Moratis & Frans Melissen eds., Routledge 2022); Yiasemina Karagiorgi & Loizos Symeou, *Translating Constructivism into Instructional Design: Potential and Limitations* 8(1) EDUC. TECH. AND SOC’Y 17, 20 (2005); DIANA LAURILLARD, TEACHING AS A DESIGN SCIENCE: BUILDING PEDAGOGICAL PATTERNS FOR LEARNING AND TECHNOLOGY 165–67 (Routledge 2012); Jan Herrington et al., *Immersive Learning Technologies: Realism and Online Authentic Learning* 19(1) J. OF COMPUTING HIGHER EDUC. 80 (2007); Jan Herrington et al., *Connected Authentic Learning: Reflection and Intentional Learning* 58(1) AUSTL. J. EDUC. 23, 23 (2014); Jan Herrington & Ron Oliver, *An Instructional Design Framework for Authentic Learning Environments* 48(3) EDUC. TECH. RSCH. AND DEV. 23, 23 (2000).

63. Janice Denoncourt, *Companies and UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goal 9 Industry, Innovation and Infrastructure* 20(1) J. OF CORP. L. STUDS. 199, 200 (2020).

64. Moon, *supra* note 54; see also Inna Amesheva, Alex Clark and Julian Payne, *Financing for Youth Entrepreneurship in Sustainable Development*, in SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: HARNESSING BUSINESS TO ACHIEVE THE SDGS THROUGH FINANCE, TECHNOLOGY AND LAW REFORM 253, 254 (Julia Walker, Alma Pekmezovic & Gordon Walker eds., John Wiley & Sons 2019).

65. Amesheva, Clark and Payne, *supra* note 64, at 254.

sustainability problem and vital to SDG-focused solutions.⁶⁶ Problem-based learning provides “a motivating context for learning because it emphasizes learning by doing. Students sense an authentic scenario in which they learn not just ‘dry’ theory but tackle the respective issues.”⁶⁷ Such an approach supports engagement through the development of a nuanced understanding of the law and how it fits in a sustainable future.⁶⁸

D. Criminal Law

There are significant opportunities for the SDGs to be integrated into the learning and teaching of domestic criminal law subjects. Awareness and understanding of the key SDGs, such as 16 and 5,⁶⁹ can be embedded in the curriculum in relation to both substantive and procedural aspects of criminal law. This awareness can help develop students’ ability to critically analyze the impact of criminal law so that, as future legal professionals, they are in a position to contribute meaningfully to reforming the criminal justice system.

SDG 16 seeks to promote peaceful and inclusive societies through access to justice, the rule of law, and good governance and institutions. Targets 16.1 (significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere) and 16.2 (end abuse, exploitation, trafficking, and all forms of violence against and torture of children)⁷⁰ are particularly relevant to the context of teaching about substantive offences such as homicide, offenses against the person, and sexual offences. Other SDG targets, such as 16.4 (reduce illicit financial and arms flows, combat organized crime) and 16.5 (reduce corruption and bribery),⁷¹ can be integrated into the teaching of financial crimes and political corruption offences. When considering procedural aspects of criminal law and the practical operation of the criminal justice system, students can be introduced to broader SDG

66. B Sjäffjell, *Redefining the Corporation for a Sustainable New Economy* 45 J. OF L. AND SOC’Y 29, 36 (2018). For example, exploring corporate governance and reporting requirements will allow for exploration of transparency and accountability and the risks of greenwashing and SDG washing. Haritas and Das describe SDG washing as “the phenomenon of positively highlighting contributions to some SDGs while ignoring the negative impact of others”: Ishwar Haritas & Arindam Das, *Simple Doable Goals: A Roadmap for Multinationals to Help Achieve the UN’s Sustainable Development Goals*, SOC’Y AND BUS. REV. 618, 620 (2023); Commonwealth Secretariat, *Commercial and Company Law and Sustainable Development* 43(3-4) COMMONWEALTH. L. BULL. 362, 399 (2017); T. Dyllick & K. Muff, *Clarifying the Meaning of Sustainable Business: Introducing a Typology from Business-as-Usual to True Business Sustainability* 29 ORG. & ENV’T 156, 157 (2016); Amr ElAlfy et al., *supra* note 62, at 1–3.

67. MATTHIAS BARTH, *IMPLEMENTING SUSTAINABILITY IN HIGHER EDUCATION: LEARNING IN AN AGE OF TRANSFORMATION* 94 (Routledge 2014).

68. B. Sjäffjell, *Redefining the Corporation for a Sustainable New Economy* 45 J.L. AND SOC’Y 29, 36–37 (2018).

69. *See* G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 18, 25–26.

70. *Id.* at 25.

71. *Id.*

targets, such as 16.3 (promote the rule of law and ensure equal access to justice) and 16.6 (effective, accountable, and transparent institutions).⁷² In relation to Target 16.3, one indicator of progress is the reduction of the number of unsentenced detainees as a proportion of the overall prison population, which is based on the principle that those awaiting trial should not be detained in custody unnecessarily reflecting the principle of presumption of innocence until proven guilty.

SDG 5 focuses on the achievement of gender equality and empowering women to reach their full potential by eliminating all forms of discrimination, violence, and harmful practices against women.⁷³ Target 5.2 (eliminate all forms of violence against women and girls)⁷⁴ is relevant to a range of substantive criminal law offences such as rape, other sexual offences, and domestic violence. Critically analyzing the specific elements of these offences, such as the way in which consent is defined and interpreted, is a key part of assessing whether the current law provides a robust framework for achieving gender equality. In a procedural context, students could also be introduced to the extent to which the criminal justice system provides fair treatment to victims of sexual offences. Target 5.3 seeks to eliminate harmful practices such as female genital mutilation and is often implemented through the criminalization of such practices in domestic criminal law.⁷⁵ Target 5.6 (ensure universal access to reproductive health and reproductive rights)⁷⁶ can be discussed in the context of law reform efforts to decriminalize abortion and, instead, frame termination of pregnancy as a health issue.⁷⁷

These examples illustrate how discussion of the SDGs can be integrated into the learning and teaching of the substantive and procedural aspects of domestic criminal law subjects.

E. Contract Law

The teaching of contract law principles to law students is important for the understanding of contract formation and termination, which are general common law principles that pervade other courses, such as property law, equity and trusts, employment law, and consumer law, among others.

72. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 25. On SDG 16.3 see, for example, Margaret L. Satterthwaite & Sukti Dhital, *Measuring Access to Justice: Transformation and Technicality in SDG 16.3* 10 GLOB. POL'Y 96, 96 (2019).

73. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 18.

74. *Id.*

75. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 18. In the Australian State of Queensland, female genital mutilation is an offence under s 323A of the Criminal Code that is punishable by a maximum penalty of 14 years' imprisonment. The consent of the person, or the person's parent or guardian, is not a defense to the charge. *Criminal Code Act 1899* (Qld) s 323A (Austl.).

76. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 18.

77. For example, in Queensland, abortion was only removed from the state's Criminal Code in December 2018. *Termination of Pregnancy Act* (Qld) pt 6 div 2 (Austl.).

There is a clear application of SDG 9 that promote industrial and infrastructural development in contract law, as the building of infrastructure and innovation can be fundamentally linked to good contracts and a clear understanding of obligations. However, the SDGs can be woven deeper into the teaching of the subject beyond the obvious assumption of the importance of contracts for commercial transactions.

Contract law can be taught in a way that highlights key first-order principles, not merely strict adherence to case law and legislation. Principles of fairness, justice, and accountability in line with SDG 16 can be highlighted through many areas of contract law. The course can teach simple real-world examples of how contract disputes can be resolved in ways that foster justice and can be drafted in fair and transparent ways. This could be overtly included in lessons about equitable remedies such as estoppel⁷⁸ and part performance.⁷⁹ It can also be highlighted in principles such as *contra proferentum*⁸⁰ to demonstrate the need for inclusivity, sustainability, and justice through fair and clear drafting of contracts. When discussing how terms can be implied into contracts, the implied duty of cooperation⁸¹ and fair dealing⁸² can also be expanded upon to highlight this SDG.

If specific terms are explored during the course, it provides an important opportunity to teach students the nuances of how courts strike a fair and balanced deal, avoiding exploitation of either party or over-reliance on the existing interpretation. This may be demonstrated through restraint of trade clauses and cascade provisions drafted to find a balance between a single restriction (that may not be fair or necessary) and dozens of permutations of restrictions (that place an unfair burden on the court to determine what is reasonable).⁸³ Because contract law is an early-degree core course, these principles are important for laying a strong foundation for students towards understanding the rule of law and access to justice issues.

F. Property Law

In the 21st century, there are several primary concerns for real property and its users, which are recognized broadly as issues of concern

78. *Waltons Stores (Interstate) Ltd v Maher* (1988) 164 CLR 387 (Austl.).

79. *Regent v Millett* (1976) 133 CLR 679 (Austl.).

80. Latin maxim indicating that ambiguity is interpreted against the party relying on the ambiguous term. *See Darlington Futures v Delco Australia* (1986) 161 CLR 500 (Austl.).

81. *Butt v McDonald* (1896) 7 QJL 68, 71 (1896); *RDJ International Pty Ltd v Preformed Line Products (Australia) Pty Ltd* 39 NSWLR 417 (1996).

82. *Burger King Corporation v Hungry Jack's Pty Ltd* (2001) 69 NSWLR 558 (Austl.); *Renard Constructions (ME) Pty Ltd v Minister for Public Works* (1992) 26 NSWLR 234 (Austl.).

83. *See, e.g., 3 x 3 clauses in Hanna v OAMPS Insurance Brokers Ltd* (2010) NSWCA 267 (Austl.).

that governments, businesses, industries, and communities must address. Notably, these concerns relate to issues arising from the lack of security of tenure for many landowners⁸⁴ and land occupiers⁸⁵ and from the adverse impacts of climate change on property use and users.⁸⁶ These concerns are also reflected in the SDGs, by which the global community is determined to end poverty,⁸⁷ ensure equality,⁸⁸ and ensure the protection of our planet from our actions,⁸⁹ including through urgent climate action.⁹⁰ Understanding these issues is important for law students as future legal practitioners.

Reducing poverty and ensuring equality are very much related to equal rights to property and security of tenure for home occupation.⁹¹ SDG Target 5a requires state parties to initiate legal “reforms to give women equal rights to economic resources, as well as access to ownership and control over land and other forms of property”⁹² Property rights are recognized in some jurisdictions as human rights.⁹³ Moreover, it will be of vital importance that education on issues relevant to climate change, and how to support communities in developing countries to achieve positive outcomes under its influence, is enabled for those with direct involvement

84. Abul Hasanat & Lucy Craddock, *Technology and Torrens: How to Support Bangladesh Landowners’ Rights*, in PROCEEDINGS FROM THE PACIFIC RIM REAL ESTATE SOCIETY (PRRES) CONFERENCE 2022 (Dulani Halvitigala ed., 2022), https://www.prres.org/uploads/548/2369/Hasanat_Technology_Torrens.pdf [https://perma.cc/5Q7V-LST7] (last visited Aug. 3, 2024).

85. Lucy Craddock, *Balancing the Scales of Property Rights: Improving Security of Tenure for Queensland Tenants: How and Why.*, 24(3) PAC. RIM PROP. RSCH. J. 285 (2018); Lucy Craddock & Andrea Blake, *The Impact of Tenure Type on the Desire for Retirement Village Living*, in PROCEEDINGS OF THE 18TH ANNUAL PACIFIC RIM REAL ESTATE SOCIETY CONFERENCE 1 (V. Kupke, ed., 2012), https://www.prres.org/uploads/711/1899/Craddock_Impact_on_Tenure_Type.pdf, [https://perma.cc/5STA-ZBJW] (last visited Aug. 3, 2024); Nathalie Wharton & Lucy Craddock, *A Comparison of Security of Tenure in Queensland and in Western Europe*, 37(2) MONASH UNIV. L. REV. 16, 16–17 (2011).

86. Lucy Craddock & Georgia Warren-Myers, *Why Climate Related Risks Need to be Specifically Considered by Valuers*, *AUSTRAL. PROP. J.* (Nov. 16, 2022), <https://www.australianpropertyjournal.com.au/2022/11/16/why-climate-related-risks-need-to-be-specifically-considered-by-valuers/> [https://perma.cc/5Z6N-UJKA].

87. See G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 18 (SDG 1: “End poverty in all its forms everywhere”).

88. *Id.* at 18 (SDG 5: “Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls.”); *id.* at 21 (SDG 10.3: “Ensure equal opportunity and reduce inequalities of outcome, including by eliminating discriminatory laws, policies and practices and promoting appropriate legislation, policies and action in this regard.”); *id.* at 25 (SDG 16: “Promote peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, provide access to justice for all and build effective, accountable and inclusive institutions at all levels”).

89. *Id.* at 21 (SDG 11: “[m]ake cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable”).

90. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 2.

91. See, e.g., G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, for related SDGs including 1.4, 5.a and 11.1.

92. *Id.* at 18.

93. See, e.g., Human Rights Act 2019 (Qld) s 24 (Austl.).

in the development and implementation of land planning policies. The importance of achieving these outcomes is recognized within SDGs 11, 13, and 15. These could support a multi-disciplinary module that could be located within related legal subjects, for example, within a land law subject or a broader real estate subject.

The above discussion highlights the importance of the SDGs to law programs generally. The stated SDGs would be best incorporated within real property law subjects by adjusting existing materials.⁹⁴ By incorporating the SDGs now, current law students would be able to assist with the SDGs' implementation in practice in the future through their roles as legal practitioners.

G. Equity and Trusts

The evolving, flexible, and discretionary nature of the principles of equity and trusts offers a novel and authentic pathway through which to embed the SDGs in the law curriculum. The principles and doctrines of equity were never “‘like the rules of the Common Law, supposed to have been established from time immemorial;’ rather, they were ‘established from time to time—altered, improved, and refined from time to time.’”⁹⁵ Accordingly, equitable principles are capable of constant evolution in response to developments in society, including the SDGs.⁹⁶ As noted by former Judge of the High Court of Australia, Justice Kirby, “[e]quitable doctrine is perfectly capable of adjustment to such changes. It does not need to use outmoded concepts, or anachronistic language, which pretend that things have remained the same as they were. . . .”⁹⁷

Understanding equity and trusts law and related principles of succession and estate planning enables an understanding of property ownership as well as structures and mechanisms which can be implemented or invoked to enable asset retention, management, and transmission. This promotes better access to “ownership and control over land and other forms of property, inheritance . . . and financial services” as enumerated in SDG 1.⁹⁸ Equitable principles have been applied to hold that the interest of a husband in a discretionary trust formed part of the asset pool for the purposes of a family law property settlement in circumstances where the

94. Real property or land law has a particular role in teaching sustainability generally also. See Nicole Graham, *This Is Not a Thing: Land, Sustainability and Legal Education*, 26 J. ENV'T. L. 395, 395 (2014).

95. *Wik Peoples v Queensland* (1996) 187 CLR 1, 179 (Gummow J.) (Austl.) (quoting *in re Hallett's Estate* (1880) 13 ch D 696, 710 (Austl.)) (holding that native title rights could co-exist with pastoral leases rather than being extinguished by them, depending on the terms and nature of the particular pastoral lease).

96. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 32.

97. *Garcia v National Australia Bank Ltd.* (1998) 194 CLR 395, 434 (Austl.).

98. See G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 15 (SDG 1: “No Poverty”).

wife would have otherwise had no access to assets held in a discretionary trust.⁹⁹

The equitable doctrines of resulting and constructive trusts, for example, provide a remedy for older persons who have lost their financial and housing security as a result of failed assets for care arrangements.¹⁰⁰ Housing and financial security are linked to attaining good health and wellbeing in terms of having the necessary financial stability to access high-quality healthcare services, especially as the population ages.¹⁰¹

Equity and trusts law may be instrumental in ensuring access to justice and strong institutions promoted by SDG 16.¹⁰² A foundational tenet of equity and trusts, given its origins, is to respond to the harshness of the strict application of common law in certain circumstances. The equitable jurisdiction to provide relief such as rescission or equitable compensation may be invoked “whenever one party to a transaction is at a special disadvantage in dealing with the other party because of illness, ignorance, inexperience, impaired faculties, financial need or other circumstances affecting their ability to conserve his or her own interests and the other party unconscientiously takes advantage of the opportunity thus placed in his hands.”¹⁰³

The power of education, as well as fostering genuine understanding and learning,¹⁰⁴ cannot be underestimated, especially for eliminating gender disparity, and may have a positive impact on financial security.¹⁰⁵ This is important, for example, given the recognition by the High Court of Australia that although the role of women in Australian society has changed, many women are still facing economic and power imbalances and are thus vulnerable to exploitation by their husbands, especially in the

99. *Kennon v Spry* (1999) 201 CLR 35 (Austl.). This issue will be reconsidered in the substantive proceedings in *Woodcock & Woodcock (No. 2) (2002)* FedCFamC1F 173 (Austl.) (raising the following questions: Is the interest of a beneficiary in a discretionary trust considered a financial resource or property in family law property settlements?; and, if it is property, how is the interest valued?); *see also* *Thorne v Kennedy* (2017) 263 CLR 85 (Austl.) (setting aside a pre-nuptial agreement which would have significantly limited the wife’s entitlement on divorce was set aside on the grounds of unconscionability).

100. *Baumgartner v Baumgartner* (1987) 164 CLR 137 (Austl.); *Muschinski v Dodds* (1985) 160 CLR 583 (Austl.); *Sweetenham v Wild* (2005) QCA 264 (Austl.); *Field v Loh* (2007) QSCR 350 (Austl.).

101. *See* G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 15 (SDG 3.8: “Good Health and Well-Being”); Steve Rolfe et al., *Housing as a social determinant of health and wellbeing: developing an empirically informed realist theoretical framework*, BMC PUB. HEALTH 20:1138 (2020), <https://bmcpubhealth.biomedcentral.com/articles/10.1186/s12889-020-09224-0> [<https://perma.cc/TN2E-7G3S>] (last visited Aug. 4, 2024) (finding housing insecurity increases the risk of poor health outcomes and other hardships).

102. *See* G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 25 (SDG 16: Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

103. *Blomley v Ryan* (1956) 99 CLR 362 at 415 (Kitto J.) (Austl.).

104. *See* G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 17 (SDG 4: Quality Education).

105. *See id.* at 18 (SDG 5: Gender Equality).

context of financial transactions.¹⁰⁶ Therefore, just and equitable sustainable development in local and global contexts can be highlighted in equity and trust education.

H. International Law

Most law schools offer an international law subject to law students.¹⁰⁷ This is commonly a public international law course and may be optional or part of the core curriculum. Some law schools also offer private international law or conflict of laws, but this is almost always an elective option.¹⁰⁸ Whereas public international law covers legal issues of concern to states, private international law allows students to learn about private law disputes that have a foreign element. Public international law is important for the SDGs in the first place. The UNGA Resolution A/RES/55/2, which adopted the SDGs, is classified as soft law and gives the General Assembly the authority to develop norms.¹⁰⁹ Further, existing literature also highlights connections between international law and the implementation of the SDGs.¹¹⁰ International law is centrally implicated in implementing SDGs 10, 16, and 17 but is also arguably relevant to all the SDGs.¹¹¹ A comprehensive handbook on international law and the SDGs¹¹² highlights the relevance of international law for achieving the SDGs by demonstrating “that international law is a decisive factor in achieving the SDGs. . . .”¹¹³ The importance of the SDGs in shaping international law may be highlighted in several topics of international law without making any significant changes to the existing syllabus.

Private international law is significant for directly responding to the SDGs and can facilitate the development of private relationships that will

106. *Garcia v Nat'l Austl. Bank Ltd* (1998) 194 CLR 395 (Austl.).

107. See Irene Baghoomians, Emily Crawford & Jacqueline Mowbray, *The Teaching of Public International Law in Australian Law Schools: 2021 and Beyond* 43 ADEL. L. REV. 7, 9–10 (2022) (discussing international law in law school curricula).

108. There are calls to make private international law compulsory based on its significance for legal practice. See Michael Douglas, *Integrating Private International Law into the Australian Law Curriculum*, 44(1) MELB. UNIV. L. REV. 98, 100 (2020).

109. See Marcel M. T. A. Brus, *Soft Law in Public International Law: A Pragmatic or a Principled Choice? Comparing the Sustainable Development Goals and the Paris Agreement*, in LEGAL VALIDITY AND SOFT LAW, 243–266 (Pauline Westerman, Jaap Hage, Stephan Kirste & Anne Ruth Mackor eds., Springer 2018).

110. Rakhyn E. Kim, *The Nexus between International Law and the Sustainable Development Goals*, 25 REV. EUR. CMNTY & INT'L ENV'T. L. 15, 15–17 (2016).

111. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1.

112. THE CAMBRIDGE HANDBOOK OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND INTERNATIONAL LAW, *supra* note 4.

113. Jonas Ebbesson and Ellen Hey, *Introduction: The Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2030, and International Law*, 1, 3 in THE CAMBRIDGE HANDBOOK OF THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS AND INTERNATIONAL LAW, *supra* note 4.

help achieve the goals.¹¹⁴ Private and cross-border relationships emerging from contracts are central to how people respond to SDG goals like transferring environmentally safe technologies (Target 17.7) or purchasing materials for building clean energy technologies.¹¹⁵ Additionally, private legal relations will develop on a more stable and fair footing when the domestic legal system has clear and transparent access to justice (Target 16.3) and rules for dealing with disputes involving foreign elements.¹¹⁶ Finally, integrating SDG goals and ambitions into private international law developments can create opportunities for developing countries to benefit more from private law legal innovations. International organizations that develop cross-border private law regimes can avert criticism by developing uniform rules that support SDGs.¹¹⁷ Overall, the SDGs will be served well if they are supported by legal developments that relate to subject matter like family law, succession, property, torts, and contracts, all of which are important for private international law.

I. Environmental, Water, Planning, and Climate Change Law

Common law countries very often have one or more optional subjects on environmental, planning, and climate change law. In some cases, environmental law may be included as a core subject. Several SDGs are directly relevant to these areas of law, including SDGs 6, 7, 11, 13, 14, and 15. Environmental law subjects are inherently interlinked with these SDGs.¹¹⁸

SDG 6 focuses on ensuring sustainable management of water resources and elaborates on the goal of achieving affordable sanitation systems for the global population.¹¹⁹ In some universities, a law degree may include a special elective subject on water law. However, conservation and management of water resources can and should also be highlighted in environmental and planning law subjects. Moreover, the relationship between freshwater scarcity and climate change can be highlighted in the climate change course. Similarly, environmental, planning, and climate law is directly relevant to SDG 7, which emphasizes sustainable and affordable energy.¹²⁰ The reduction of energy consumption and the introduction of renewable and sustainable sources of energy are critical issues for

114. Hans Van Loon, *The Role of Private (International) Law in Achieving the Sustainable Development Goals*, in REIMAGINING THE INTERNATIONAL LEGAL ORDER 62 (Vesselin Popovski & Ankit Malhotra eds., Routledge, 2023).

115. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 19, 26.

116. *Id.* at 25.

117. *See, e.g.*, M. Sornarajah, *The UNCITRAL Model Law: A Third World Viewpoint*, 6 J. INT'L ARBIT. 7 (1989) (discussing the criticisms of the United Nations Commission on International Trade Law (UNCITRAL)).

118. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 17–19, 21.

119. *Id.* at 18.

120. *Id.* at 19.

environmental legal governance. Ensuring sustainability and resilience in human settlements, particularly in cities, is the focus of planning and development law as well as environmental law generally. Therefore, SDG 11¹²¹ can be integrated into environmental legal education. Climate action is the focus of climate change law, and SDG 13¹²² is naturally relevant to the subject of climate change law. This SDG can also be integrated with general environmental and/or planning law subjects. Finally, SDGs 14 and 15 deal with the conservation of marine and terrestrial environments,¹²³ respectively, and form core of environmental planning and climate change law. These issues are interconnected. For example, climate action is relevant for the conservation of marine biodiversity and the achievement of SDG 14.¹²⁴

In most universities, environmental, planning, and climate change law subjects are the main focus for integrating sustainability into legal education.¹²⁵ In fact, these areas of law are vital for achieving the SDGs. Without proper implementation of the environmental rule of law, achieving a sustainable future will be difficult, which is important for ensuring a balance between environmental, economic, and social development as advanced by the seventeen SDGs.¹²⁶

J. Law of the Sea

The law of the sea represents diverse areas of international law, including international boundaries and dispute resolution, maritime law, conservation of marine biodiversity, marine pollution prevention and the exploitation of living and non-living marine resources.¹²⁷ It involves the study of a range of international agreements, including the *United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea* and its implementing agreements.¹²⁸ SDG 14 aims to “conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine

121. *Id.* at 21.

122. *Id.* at 23.

123. *Id.* at 23–24.

124. See Md Saiful Karim & William W. L. Cheung, *The New UN High Seas Marine Biodiversity Agreement May Also Facilitate Climate Action: A Cautiously Optimistic View*, 3 NPI CLIMATE ACTION 8 (2024); Md Saiful Karim, *Indian Ocean Tuna Commission Climate Change Resolution: A Quiet Interaction of Ocean and Climate Change Legal Regimes*, 148 MARINE POL'Y 105434 (2023).

125. See references, *supra* note 5.

126. Arnold Kreilhuber & Angela Kariuki, *Environmental Rule of Law in the Context of Sustainable Development*, 32 GEO. ENV'T. L. REV. 591, 592–593 (2020).

127. Donald R. Rothwell & Tim Stephens, *THE INTERNATIONAL LAW OF THE SEA* 14–15 (2nd ed., Hart 2016).

128. U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea, *opened for signature* Dec. 10, 1982, 1833, U.N.T.S. 3 (entered into force Nov. 16, 1994); see also Agreement under the U.N. Convention on the Law of the Sea on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction, U.N. Doc. A/CONF.232/2023/4 (June 19, 2023).

resources for sustainable development” and is directly relevant to law of the sea curricula with targets that cover a broad range of ocean pressures and drivers.¹²⁹ In 2022, the UN reported that the adoption and enforcement of regulatory frameworks had recently supported improvements to SDG targets relating to protected areas, illegal fishing, and small-scale fisheries.¹³⁰ However, many other targets, including prevention of acidification and overfishing, remain elusive, with dire consequences for the planet’s largest ecosystem on which billions depend for their livelihoods.¹³¹

While there are many publications providing insight into how higher education engages with the SDGs,¹³² few focus on SDG 14,¹³³ and fewer still provide specific examples of how SDG 14 can be embedded in the law curriculum.¹³⁴ The literature mainly compares the law’s inclusion of SDG content with other disciplines without giving specific examples of how content may be embedded in practice.¹³⁵ Further, a narrow focus on the relationship between SDG 14 and the law of the sea misses a broader opportunity to embed a range of social, cultural, and economic perspectives of other SDGs in the curriculum. Academics argue that the ocean has become central to realizing all other SDGs.¹³⁶ While there are many examples of integrating multiple SDGs in ocean law¹³⁷ and policy,¹³⁸ there

129. See G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 23–24.

130. The Sustainable Development Goals Rep., 54–55 (2022), 54–55, <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2022/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2022.pdf> [https://perma.cc/HV5Z-3368] (Aug. 4, 2024).

131. *Id.*

132. See, e.g., Magali Fia, Khatereh Ghasemzadeh & Angelo Paletta, *How Higher Education Institutions Walk Their Talk on the 2030 Agenda: A Systematic Literature Review*, 36 HIGHER EDUC. POL’Y 599, 600 (2023); Walter Leal Filho, Amanda Lange Salvia & João Henrique Paulino Pires Eustachio, *An Overview of the Engagement of Higher Education Institutions in the Implementation of the UN Sustainable Development Goals*, 386 J. CLEANER PROD. 135694 (2023).

133. See, e.g., Lise Ovreas, Kristin Hansen, Jessica Fuller, Isabel Toman & Hillgje Van’t Land, HIGHER EDUCATION AND SDG14: INTEGRATING OCEAN RESEARCH FOR THE GLOBAL GOALS 7–8 (University of Bergen and the International Association of Universities, 2021).

134. See, e.g., Ya-Ching Chang & Hsing-Lung Lien, *Mapping Course Sustainability by Embedding the SDGS Inventory into the University Curriculum: A Case Study from National University of Kaohsiung in Taiwan*, 12 SUSTAINABILITY 4274 (2020).

135. See generally Ángela Amorós Molina et al., *Integrating the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals into Higher Education Globally: A Scoping Review*, 16(1) GLOB. HEALTH ACTION 2190649 (2023).

136. Kristina M. Gjerde & Marjo Vierros, *Achieving SDG 14: Time for a Global Ocean Approach*, in FULFILLING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: ON A QUEST FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD 375 (Narinder Kakar, Vesselin Popovski & Nicholas A. Robinson eds., Routledge, 2021); see also Karina von Schuckmann, Elisabeth Holland, Peter Haugan & Peter Thomson, *Ocean Science, Data, and Services for the UN 2030 Sustainable Development Goals*, 121 MARINE POL’Y 104154 (2020).

137. See Annick de Marffy-Mantuano, *Legal Tools in Combatting Marine Pollution and Mitigating the Effects of Acidification*, in FULFILLING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

are few, if any, published examples of how multiple SDGs can be embedded in the law of the sea curriculum. However, educators can draw lessons from policy initiatives that implement ocean literacy into national curriculum frameworks, such as the development of “blue curricula” more broadly.¹³⁹

A law of the sea subject is taught as an elective in some law schools and covers maritime zones and boundaries, navigation, marine resource management (including living resources such as fisheries and non-living resources such as minerals), marine environmental protection, marine scientific research, and settling maritime disputes.¹⁴⁰ The course’s overall objective is to impart knowledge of ocean governance, focusing on marine resource management and the conservation of marine biodiversity.

Likewise, SDG 14 aims to conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas, and marine resources.¹⁴¹ It sets 10 targets with 10 indicators to be achieved within a specified timeframe by the global community.¹⁴² These targets include reducing marine pollution, protecting and restoring ecosystems, reducing ocean acidification, ensuring sustainable fishing, conserving coastal and marine areas, and ending subsidies that contribute to overfishing. Achieving these targets requires creating a new understanding of ocean governance and imparting knowledge of ocean law and policy to all stakeholders involved in ocean regulation. So, academic and research institutions can play a vital role by providing necessary education and training on ocean law and policy to future leaders by integrating knowledge of the SDGs in their law of the sea subject. The subject can also help students become aware of the challenges of ocean governance and encourage them to find innovative solutions to those challenges.

K. Taxation Law

Taxation law is central to distributive justice in any economy.¹⁴³ The purpose of taxation law is to provide guidelines for revenue collection that support government operations while causing the “least amount of

GOALS: ON A QUEST FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD 388 (Narinder Kakar, Vesselin Popovski & Nicholas A. Robinson eds., Routledge 2021).

138. See Tessel van der Putte, *Climate Change and Small Islands*, in FULFILLING THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS: ON A QUEST FOR A SUSTAINABLE WORLD 357 (Narinder Kakar, Vesselin Popovski & Nicholas A. Robinson eds., Routledge 2021).

139. IOC-UNESCO, *A New Blue Curriculum: A Toolkit for Policy-Makers*, Paris, IOC MANUALS AND GUIDES 90 (2022) https://aquadocs.org/bitstream/handle/1834/42195/380544_eng.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y.

140. See generally Rothwell & Stephens, *supra* note 127.

141. See G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 23–24.

142. *Goal 14: Life Below Water*, EUROPEAN COMM’N, <https://knowsdgs.jrc.ec.europa.eu/sdg/14> [<https://perma.cc/Z7AV-22AW>] (last visited Aug. 4, 2024).

143. Colin Farrelly, *Taxation and Distributive Justice*, 2(2) POL. STUD. REV. 185, 185–86 (2004).

harm to the economy.”¹⁴⁴ Taxation law therefore paints a picture of society’s priorities through revenue collection legislation and the policy that underpins it. All governments must collect revenue; however, their means of doing so will say much about their objectives in terms of eliminating poverty, ensuring gender equity, and guaranteeing every person has access to productive employment and “decent work.”¹⁴⁵ When considering the relationship between the SDGs and taxation law, we can also make an assumption that the promotion of each of the seventeen SDGs will require some government support and resourcing, which should, in turn, be collected in a manner that supports equity and fairness.¹⁴⁶ Further, individuals within an economy can influence economic development through their choices in terms of education and research investment.¹⁴⁷ These decisions are, in turn, influenced by fiscal policy.¹⁴⁸

Government resources are derived from revenue collection. However, the way a government allocates its funds is not usually taught in a traditional taxation law course. Rather, taxation law tends to focus on the legal requirements for individuals, companies, and other entities in responding to reporting obligations.¹⁴⁹ Importantly, an introductory taxation law course must be selective and build a foundation of knowledge for students before they can fully understand the power of the system that is revenue collection. Hence, not every one of the seventeen goals can be taught in an introductory setting unless, of course, there is ample time to teach both the basic concepts and advanced topics (such as carbon pricing, biodiversity credit schemes, clean energy rebate provisions, and concessions for primary producers).¹⁵⁰ However, SDGs 1, 3, 4, 5, 8, and 10 can certainly be tools that a scholar can use to enhance student learning from as early as the first lecture.¹⁵¹ For instance, students can (and arguably should) be introduced to the concepts of regressive and progressive taxation in an introductory lecture on the subject.¹⁵² This is important for inculcating a depth of knowledge about taxation that basic legal compliance concepts

144. Md Abdul Halim & Md Mominur Rahman, *The Effect of Taxation on Sustainable Development Goals: Evidence from Emerging Countries*, 8(9) HELIYON e10512, at 2 (2022).

145. See G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 14 (SDGs: 1, 5, 8, and 10).

146. Wilson Prichard et al., *Tax to Finance the SDGs, but Not to Undermine Them*, Brookings (July 1, 2019), <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/tax-to-finance-the-sdgs-but-not-to-undermine-them/> [<https://perma.cc/4ELZ-UTGC>].

147. Halim & Rahman, *supra* note 144, at 2.

148. *Id.*

149. Kerrie Sadiq, et al., *PRINCIPLES OF TAXATION LAW 2023* (Thomson Reuters 2023).

150. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 14 (SDGs: 13, 14, 15, 7 & 2 respectively).

151. Explaining to students the sources of government revenue is an important introductory topic.

152. Peter Varela, *What are progressive and regressive taxes?*, AUSTRAL. NAT’L. UNIV., https://taxpolicy.crawford.anu.edu.au/files/uploads/taxstudies_crawford_anu_edu_au/2016-11/progressive_varela_feb_2016_complete.pdf [<https://perma.cc/ZS6C-XNB7>] (last visited Aug. 4, 2024) (explaining that regressive taxation is taxes that impact lower income peoples more than higher income earners, and therefore undesirable in any given system).

will not provide. The explanation of regressive taxation does not need to be lengthy. Even a short discussion can support a better understanding of power and equality within any system. This, in turn, can lead to observations of the progressive nature of income taxes versus the more regressive consumption-based taxation.¹⁵³ When an academic is conscious of incorporating the SDGs into the curriculum, discussion can include reference to SDGs 1, 2, 3, and 10.

Teaching students about distributive justice, tax policy, and the importance of the SDGs in fiscal law reform will both enhance knowledge of a system as it is and provide clear concepts for potential reforms. For instance, explaining that specific deductions for childcare would support gender equity in a given economy¹⁵⁴ explains the importance of the reform and, at the same time, underscores how the general deductions provisions in Australia do not include it.¹⁵⁵

L. Trade Law

In terms of the SDGs and trade, each of the seventeen goals can be either promoted or disregarded by domestic and international trade laws and policies. For instance, international trade and global climate change mitigation are international issues that must be addressed through multilateral negotiations.¹⁵⁶ In addition, trade is necessary for economic growth and development. The economic growth in China since their “gradual liberalization of trade and investment policies” provides an example of this.¹⁵⁷ Access to markets, foreign investment, and technology transfer are critical for economic growth and development. At the same time, and relevant to the SDGs, increased growth and trade can lead to widespread environmental degradation and can also exacerbate income inequality within a given economy.¹⁵⁸

Teaching trade law requires consideration of two main categories of international law alongside domestic laws that have an extraterritorial impact. First, the organization and the rules of the World Trade Organization (WTO) must be introduced to students. The WTO, which has 164 members, is the main institution that governs trade across the globe, and it is the primary means for implementing and monitoring trade policy

153. Helen Hodgson & Kerrie Sadiq, *Gender Equality and a Rights-Based Approach to Tax Reform*, in 4 TAX, SOC. POL’Y & GENDER 99 (Miranda Stewart ed., ANU Press 2017).

154. Hodgson & Sadiq, *supra* note 153, at 99. This aligns with SDG 5. See G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 18.

155. *Id.*; see generally Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 (Cth) s 8–1 (Austl.).

156. See U.N. on Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, U.N. Doc. A/Res/70/1 (2015); see also G.A. res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 19, 23 (SDGs: 7 and 13).

157. Abigail R. Jahiel, *China, the WTO, and Implications for the Environment*, 15(2) ENV’T POLS. 310, 312 (2006).

158. *Id.*

internationally. The rules of the WTO are underpinned by principles that, in fact, support the realization of the SDGs. The preamble of the WTO Agreement highlights the need for “raising standards of living,” employment and income, and utilization of global resources for achieving sustainable development.¹⁵⁹ At the same time, it highlights the need for the protection and preservation of the environment “in a manner consistent with their respective needs and concerns at different levels of economic development.”¹⁶⁰ It also recognizes “that developing countries, and especially the least developed among them, secure a share in the growth of international trade commensurate with the needs of their economic development”¹⁶¹

The recognition of these values in the WTO Agreement preamble does not necessarily mean that the WTO rules (to which all members agree to comply with) will align or support these values. Further, there have been many decisions of the WTO Dispute Settlement bodies that could be said to conflict with them. However, the premise of these inclusions is that the rules and the objectives of the states who are members of the WTO should align with these values as much as possible.¹⁶² For this reason, the WTO and the commitments of members are “central to achieving the SDGs.”¹⁶³

The second topic in trade law that cannot be overlooked now involves the arrangements and trends of preferential trade agreements (PTAs). The number of PTAs has increased dramatically over the course of the past decade and, therefore, it would be remiss to ignore their impact on global trade (even when teaching trade law at an introductory level). Although the norms developed at a WTO level often align with those encapsulated by PTAs, PTAs often include WTO-Plus provisions, as negotiations are simpler with fewer parties involved.¹⁶⁴ PTAs can, therefore, provide a sandbox for emerging issues. Interestingly, some of these PTAs have overlooked the inclusion of environmental and development concerns, and they provide examples of agreements that fail to prioritize the SDGs.¹⁶⁵

159. Marrakesh Agreement Establishing the World Trade Organization, Apr. 15, 1994, 1867 U.N.T.S. 154.

160. *Id.*

161. *Id.*

162. See Felicity Deane, *The Context-Integrity of the Global Carbon Regime: The Relevance and Impact of the World Trade Organization*, in 6 *ETHICAL VALUES AND THE INTEGRITY OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE REGIME* 73 (Hugh Breakey, Vesselin Popovski & Rowena Maguire eds., Taylor & Francis 2016).

163. Raima Nazar, Muhammad Saeed Meo & Sajid Ali, *Role of Public Health and Trade for Achieving Sustainable Development Goals*, 22(3) *J. PUB. AFFS.* e2585 (2022).

164. See Stephanie Garibaldi & Felicity Deane, *Cyberspace as a Fifth Dimension of National Security: Trade Measure Exceptions*, 10 *J. INT'L TRADE L. & POL'Y* 67, 78 (2023).

165. For instance, Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership does not include a chapter on environmental concerns. See MICHAEL D. SUTHERLAND, *CONG. RSCH. SERV., REGIONAL COMPREHENSIVE ECONOMIC PARTNERSHIP* (2022).

Means of teaching the SDGs through the topic of trade law can, therefore, be descriptive or prescriptive. In other words, we can show how the SDGs are promoted (or ignored) in different trade agreements or, in some cases, it may be possible to extend student learning by considering how they should be addressed in trade relations. Hence, domestic trade policies should align with the SDGs, and this should have a flow-on effect on any international agreements.

The omission of the SDGs in international agreements makes it even more important for students of trade law to be taught the importance of the SDGs. Again, this can support a better depth of understanding of international trade and the impacts domestic policies can have on trading partners. For instance, intellectual property laws can impact foreign direct investment, which can lead to positive or negative outcomes for economic growth and capacity-building in developing economies.¹⁶⁶ As law students may one day seek roles in international relations or diplomacy, teaching awareness of the impacts of policies on trading partners (and economic development beyond a nation's borders) should be a priority for law schools.

M. Health Law

The topic of health law has a clear alignment with SDG 3, which concerns “healthy lives” and “wellbeing.”¹⁶⁷ SDG 3 is supported by the right to health, as protected by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights,¹⁶⁸ the *ICESCR*,¹⁶⁹ and various other international and regional human rights instruments.¹⁷⁰ Health and the right to health are interconnected with various other rights and the SDGs. The right to health has been described as a necessary precondition for the successful achievement of the SDGs generally.¹⁷¹ Equally, there are mutually supportive relationships between the right to health and other specific

166. See Chelsea Bodimeade & Felicity Deane, *Evolving Theory of IP Rights: Promoting Human Rights in the Agreement on Trade-Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights*, 18(8) J. INTELL. PROP. L. & PRAC. 603, 606 (2023).

167. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 16.

168. *Id.* (SDG: 3); see also G.A. Res. 217 (III) A, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Dec. 10, 1948).

169. International Covenant on Economic Social and Cultural Rights art. 11, *adopted* Dec. 16, 1966, 993 U.N.T.S. 3 (entered into force Jan. 3, 1976) [hereinafter *ICESCR*] at art. 12.

170. See, e.g., Audrey R. Chapman, *The Contributions of Human Rights to Universal Health Coverage*, 18 HEALTH & HUM. RTS. 1, 4 (2016).

171. U.N. Secretary-General, *Rep. of the Special Rapporteur on the right of everyone to the enjoyment of the highest attainable standard of physical and mental health*, U.N. Doc. A/71/150 [36] (Aug. 5, 2016).

human rights, including the right to adequate food, water, housing, and education.¹⁷²

“Public health law” is a developed field of study within health law. Public health law is concerned with “the legal powers and duties of government . . . to assure the conditions for people to be healthy and safe.”¹⁷³ Therefore, there is a direct connection between public health law and the realization of the right to health. Universal health coverage, described as “a practical expression of the right to health,”¹⁷⁴ is generally achieved through healthcare provided (or funded) by the government and health insurance regulated by the government. Public health law is concerned with the legal mechanisms behind these benefits, including mechanisms that enforce their equitable distribution, like discrimination-based challenges.¹⁷⁵ Various other aspects of public health law support the right to health, like laws regulating the health professions and laws aimed at reducing the spread of infectious diseases.¹⁷⁶ Thus, including a focus on public health law within the health law curriculum is a straightforward way to ensure that SDG 3 and other health-impacted SDGs are considered.

In addition to public health law, a necessary focus of the health law curriculum is the law that applies to individual disputes over the provision of health care. Private law matters, like legal redress when medical treatment goes wrong, are central foci of legal practice in health law. Therefore, private law will have ongoing importance in the curriculum. Unlike in public health law, in this area, the prevention of interference with negative rights, like autonomy, privacy, and freedom, has the most prominence.¹⁷⁷ Within the broader ambit of health law, it is possible to find tension between these negative rights and the right to health. This tension exists, for example, within disputes over compulsory treatment for mental illness¹⁷⁸ or the restriction of the advertising and sale of tobacco.¹⁷⁹ Therefore, a task of the health law curriculum is to teach students to

172. Dineke Zeegers Paget & David Patterson, *The Essential Role of Law in Achieving the Health-Related Sustainable Development Goals*, 30(1) EUR. J. OF PUB. HEALTH i32, i32 (2020).

173. Lawrence O. Gostin, *Law and the Public's Health*, in OXFORD TEXTBOOK OF GLOB. PUB. HEALTH 291 (Roger Detels et al. eds., Oxford University Press 7th ed. 2021).

174. Report by Secretariat, *Health in the post-2015 development agenda*, WTO Doc. A66/47 (May 1, 2013).

175. U.N. Comm. on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights: General Comment No. 14 (2000): The Right to the Highest Attainable Standard of Health, ¶ 18 U.N. Doc. E/C.12/2000/4 (May 11, 2000).

176. See Gostin, *supra* note 173, at 291.

177. See Lawrence O. Gostin, *A Theory and Definition of Public Health Law*, 10 J. HEALTH CARE L. & POL'Y 1, 4 (2007).

178. See Kay Wilson, *The Call for the Abolition of Mental Health Law: The Challenges of Suicide, Accidental Death and the Equal Enjoyment of the Right to Life*, 18(4) HUM. RTS. L. REV. 651, 660 (2018).

179. See Christopher P. Manfredi, *Expressive Freedom and Tobacco Advertising: A Canadian Perspective* 92(3) AM. J. PUB. HEALTH 360 (2002).

identify the point at which the promotion of SDG 3 and the right to health becomes an unacceptable infringement of those other rights.

N. Intellectual Property Law

Attaining sustainable development requires a simultaneous effort to facilitate the protection of the natural environment, facilitate social development as well as ignite economic advancement.¹⁸⁰ These three components of sustainable development rely on the development and dissemination of technological innovations in various ways.¹⁸¹ Since technological innovation and its dissemination are closely tied with intellectual property (IP) rights,¹⁸² discussions as to sustainable development, as well as regarding the implementation of the SDGs, remain incomplete without addressing IP laws and vice versa. Hence, IP laws should integrate the issue of sustainable development and, more specifically, relevant SDGs. In this regard, the IP law curriculum, especially the patent law syllabus, may incorporate SDG 9, which urges the building of “resilient infrastructure, [promotion of] inclusive and sustainable industrialization, and [fostering of] innovation.”¹⁸³

Separately, the IP law syllabus should adopt several topics reflecting various other SDGs, for instance, understanding the role of patent laws in attaining global food security and ending hunger. This is because food security has a direct association with agricultural and technological innovation, which most commonly are protected by patents.¹⁸⁴ For that, the patent law syllabus should consider specifically engaging with SDG 2, which concerns the elimination of hunger and the achievement of food security.¹⁸⁵ At the same time, discussions as to the appropriate application of patent laws for pharmaceutical and/or medical equipment-related innovation are closely associated with promoting global health, which is related to SDG 3.¹⁸⁶ A similar claim is applicable to SDG 6, as innovation and utilization of safe water technologies are essential for “water and sanitation for all.”¹⁸⁷

180. See Md Mahatab Uddin, *CLIMATE CHANGE LAW, TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER AND SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT 5* (Routledge 2021).

181. See *id.* at 9.

182. See Md Mahatab Uddin & Md Saiful Karim, *International Law and South–South Cooperation for Innovation and Transfer of Green Technologies*, 52 *GEO. WASH. INT’L L. REV.* 355, 357 (2020); Md Mahatab Uddin, *Intellectual Property Rights and Competition Law for Transfer of Environmentally Sound Technologies*, 34 *PACE INT’L L. REV.* 63, 80 (2022).

183. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 21–22.

184. See Md Mahatab Uddin, *Impact of Intellectual Property Rights over Food Security in Developing and Least Developed Countries*, *J. JUD. ADMIN. TRAINING INSTITUTE*, XXI (2021).

185. See G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 15–16.

186. *Id.*

187. *Id.*

Moreover, IP law curricula at universities may integrate SDGs 7, 13, and 14, which deal with energy, climate change, and the ocean, respectively.¹⁸⁸ While SDGs 7 and 14 contain stand-alone importance, attaining these two goals is also associated with realizing SDG 13. This is because SDG 7, which advocates for sustainable modern energy, calls for replacing fossil fuel-based energy with renewable energy,¹⁸⁹ which is essential for combating climate change by reducing greenhouse gas emissions.¹⁹⁰ Similarly, SDG 14, which calls for conserving the marine environment, and which will help combat climate change by preventing heat trapping in the ocean,¹⁹¹ requires due consideration. Finally, several SDG targets urge states to build cooperation for transferring technology,¹⁹² and existing legal scholarships have already described and analyzed means of doing so in the Global South for promoting sustainable development and attaining the SDGs.¹⁹³ This can be incorporated in the IP law curriculum.

O. Technology Law

Law schools are increasingly orienting their curriculum to address the impact of digital technologies on society and the development and practice of relevant law.¹⁹⁴ The reshaping of legal education saw further accelerations in response to the interruptions of the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly with work-integrated learning (legal clinical programs) and online instruction.¹⁹⁵ This curriculum design necessitates addressing both

188. *See id.*; *see also* Md Mahatab Uddin and Md Saiful Karim, *SDG 14, Ocean Sustainability and Transfer of Marine Technology: The Role of UNCLOS and International Intellectual Property Law*, in *ELGAR COMPANION TO INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS*, 447 (Bita Amani, Caroline B. Ncube & Matthew Rimmer eds., Edward Elgar Publishing 2024).

189. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 19.

190. Tricia White & Michael A. Fisher, *Countering Climate Change with Renewable Energy Technologies*, *FED’N OF AM. SCIENTISTS* (June 8, 2021), <https://fas.org/blogs/science-policy/countering-climate-change-with-renewable-energy-technologies/> [<https://perma.cc/5XAX-8RQF>].

191. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 23–24; *see also* *How Climate Change Relates to Oceans*, WWF, <https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/how-climate-change-relates-to-oceans> (last visited Aug. 4, 2024).

192. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 15–27 (SDGs: 1(4), 2(a), 4(b), 5(b), 7(a), 7(b), 9(b), 9(c), 14(a), 17(6), 17(7), 17(8)).

193. *See generally* Uddin, *supra* note 180; Uddin & Karim, *supra* note 182; Uddin, *supra* note 182.

194. *See, e.g.*, Brydon Wang, *Prompts and Large Language Models: A New Tool for Drafting, Reviewing and Interpreting Contracts?*, 6(2) *LAW, TECH. & HUMS.* 88, 89 (2024); Monika Zalnieriute, Lyria Bennett Moses & George Williams, *Automation of Government Decision-Making* 82(3) *MOD. L. REV.* 425, 426–27 (2019); and Judith Bennett et al., *Current State of Automated Legal Advice Tools* Discussion Paper, Networked Society Institute (Apr. 2018).

195. *See* Sarah R. Boonin & Luz E. Herrera, *From Pandemic to Pedagogy: Teaching the Technology of Lawyering in Law Clinics*, 68 *WASH. UNIV. J. L. & POL’Y* 109, 109–10 (2022).

existing areas of law that have been stretched to address the myriad ways we learn, work, and socialize online, as well as *sui generis* laws that engage with novel opportunities and challenges that come with extant and emerging digital technologies.

Within the gamut of digital technologies that are increasingly made available to us in volume and variety, a key emphasis for law schools is the data-focused technologies that collect, store, model, analyze, and help augment or automate decision-making processes. These technologies reduce the friction and costs of communication and cooperation, help support inclusive and equitable education¹⁹⁶ and extend our ability to gather information to enhance tracking of progress of implementation across all the SDGs. As technologies such as sensors, automated decision-making systems, machine learning, Large Language Models (LLMs) and other generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) models are increasingly embedded in society,¹⁹⁷ legal education needs to focus on how data impacts all aspects of daily life to ensure that technology develops appropriately to directly support the SDGs. For example, students could be made aware of how the law, as one of Lessig's four modalities of regulation,¹⁹⁸ can support the deployment and adoption of technology within various sectors and between jurisdictions to support sustained and inclusive economic growth (SDG 8).¹⁹⁹ Similarly, as these technologies are integrated into the infrastructure of cities as sites of "fusion of data and automation,"²⁰⁰ the regulation of such technologies can help support resilient infrastructure and sustainable industrialization (SDG 9)²⁰¹ and ensure that the way such technologies are deployed supports the development of cities that are inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable (SDG 11).²⁰²

However, while these data-focused technologies give us opportunities to support the SDGs, they also bring with them significant threats, particularly online. Focus should be paid to how the law engages with the erosion of privacy protections,²⁰³ misuse of data to distort democratic systems, cybercrime and cyberwarfare, hate speech and online

196. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 17.

197. See Brydon Wang, *The Machine Metropolis: Introduction to the Automated City*, in 1 AUTOMATING CITIES: DESIGN, CONSTRUCTION, OPERATION AND FUTURE IMPACT 2 (Brydon T. Wang & C. M. Wang eds., Springer 2021).

198. Lawrence Lessig, CODE: VERSION 2.0 94 (Basic Book, 2006).

199. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 19–20.

200. Wang, *supra* note 197.

201. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 20–21.

202. See Wang, *supra* note 197; G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 21–22; and Brydon Wang, *An Updated Model of Trust and Trustworthiness for the use of Digital Technologies and Artificial Intelligence in City Making* (2024) PROCEEDINGS OF THE 6TH MEDIA ARCHITECTURE BIENNALE CONFERENCE. Association for Computing Machinery (ACM) US, 69-80. See generally NEW URBAN AGENDA IN ASIA-PACIFIC: GOVERNANCE FOR SUSTAINABLE AND INCLUSIVE CITIES 3 (B. Dahiya & A. K. Das eds., Springer 2020).

203. See Mark Burdon & Brydon Wang, *Implementing COVIDSafe: The Role of Trustworthiness and Information Privacy Law*, 3(1) L. TECH. & HUM., 35–50 (2021).

discrimination, online defamation, and commercial threats such as copyright infringement. Likewise, attention should be paid to the definitional challenges that reduce coherence and clarity in the law, to helping students understand code,²⁰⁴ and to the distortion of the regulatory landscape posed by the significant market power of technology companies that has led to the creation of regulatory sandboxes and safe harbor provisions.

These challenges within the law have impacted our ability to conceptualize how the law should regulate to support trustworthy applications of technologies. In response, we are beginning to see development in the European Union with the Trustworthy Artificial Intelligence (AI) policies²⁰⁵ and the AI Act, as well as the attempts in the United States to pass the Algorithmic Accountability Bill.²⁰⁶ With the increasing availability and use of generative AI, the development of the law has again fallen behind and has the potential to diminish progress towards achieving the SDGs.²⁰⁷ Consequently, it is essential that law schools consider how the impact of data-focused technologies can be integrated with all aspects of the curriculum to improve access to justice and build effective, accountable, and inclusive institutions (SDG 16).

P. Human Rights Law

The recognition of the mutually supportive relationship between the environment and human rights goes back at least as far as the Stockholm Declaration of 1972.²⁰⁸ Most recently, the close links between human rights and sustainability were acknowledged by both the UN Human Rights Council and the General Assembly in resolutions recognizing the right to a clean, healthy, and sustainable environment.²⁰⁹ These resolutions specifically acknowledged the importance of the SDGs as a set of people-

204. See Alfredo Contreras & Joe McGrath, *Law, Technology, and Pedagogy: Teaching Coding to Build “Future-Proof” Lawyer*, 21(2) MINN. J. L. SCI. & TECH. 297, 297 (2020).

205. EUROPEAN COMMISSION, ETHICS GUIDELINES FOR TRUSTWORTHY AI 6 (2019); see also Luciano Floridi, *Establishing the Rules of Building Trustworthy AI*, 1 NATURE MACH. INTEL. 261, 261–62 (2019).

206. Jakob Mokander, Prathm Juneja, David S. Watson & Luciano Floridi, *The US Algorithmic Accountability Act of 2022 vs The EU Artificial Intelligence Act: What Can They Learn from Each Other?* 32 MINDS AND MACHINES 751, 751 (2022).

207. See Jon Truby, *Governing Artificial Intelligence to Benefit the UN Sustainable Development Goals*, 28(4) SUSTAINABLE DEV., 946, 946 (2020).

208. U.N. Conference on the Human Environment, *Report of the United Nations Conference on the Human Environment, Stockholm, 5–16 June 1972*, ch. 1, U.N. Doc. A/CONF.48/14/Rev.1 (1973); see also Bridget Lewis, *Environmental Rights or a Right to the Environment? Exploring the Nexus between Human Rights and Environmental Protection*, 8 MACQUARIE J. COMPAR. & INT'L ENV'T L. 36, 36–37 (2012) (discussing in detail the relationship between the environment and human rights).

209. Human Rights Council Res. 48/13, U.N. Doc. A/HRC/RES/48/13, ¶ 1 (Oct. 8, 2021); G/A. Res. 76/300, ¶ 1 (July 28, 2022).

centered targets which support the enjoyment of human rights. The close relationship between the environment and human rights makes human rights law a natural home for the SDGs in the curriculum.

The complementarity between human rights and the SDGs is evident in the fact that the seventeen goals map closely to specific rights guaranteed within human rights law. For example, the right to an adequate standard of living, encompassing rights to adequate food, water, and housing,²¹⁰ aligns with SDGs 1, 2, 6, and 11.²¹¹ The right to the highest attainable standard of health²¹² also supports these goals, as well as SDG 3. Rights relating to equality and non-discrimination, particularly in employment and education,²¹³ are closely associated with SDGs 4, 5, 8 and 10.²¹⁴ Many of the rights protected in the *International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights*, such as the rights to liberty and security of the person and participation in public affairs, the right to a fair trial, and freedom of information and expression, interact with SDG 16.²¹⁵

In terms of thematic content, the human rights curriculum clearly offers ample opportunity to highlight most of the SDGs. It could, therefore, be tempting to see human rights as a catch-all for SDG teaching and learning, although some caution is advised. One challenge to consider is that human rights law involves more than just broad goals for advancing human wellbeing. It also consists of a framework of international, regional, and domestic laws which establish specific obligations and design processes to enforce them. Human rights case law has produced a large body of jurisprudence relating to the nature of obligations, the identity of rights-holders and duty-bearers, and principles for determining when a violation has occurred. In short, human rights is a legal discipline of its own, with a structure and logic that does not necessarily align with those of the SDGs.²¹⁶

Law graduates are expected to have the knowledge and skills necessary to practice within this area of law. Embedding the SDGs into the

210. ICESCR, *supra* note 169.

211. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 15, 18, 21.

212. ICESCR, *supra* note 169, art. 12; Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities art. 25, *adopted* Dec. 13, 2006, 2515 U.N.T.S. 3 (entered into force May 3, 2008); Convention on the Rights of the Child art. 24, *adopted* Nov. 20, 1989 1577 U.N.T.S. 3 (entered into force Sept. 2, 1990).

213. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights arts. 2, 26 *opened for signature* Dec. 19, 1966, 999 U.N.T.S. 171 (entered into force Mar. 23, 1976) [hereinafter ICCPR] (equality before the law); ICESCR, *supra* note 169, arts. 7, 13 (employment and education, respectively); Convention on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination, *opened for signature* Mar. 7, 1966, 660 UNTS 195 (entered into force Jan. 4, 1969); Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, *opened for signature* Mar. 1, 1980, 1249 U.N.T.S. 13 (Sept. 13, 1981).

214. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 17–19, 21.

215. *Id.* at 24.

216. John H Knox, Human Rights, *Environmental Protection, and the Sustainable Development Goals*, 24(3) WASH. INT'L L. J. 517, 518 (2015).

human rights law curriculum needs to be done in a way which does not overly complicate the content and allows coverage of core human rights knowledge and skills. This is one of the reasons why we argue for embedding the SDGs across the whole law curriculum rather than just concentrating them in human rights or environmental law subjects. While these areas clearly have a strong correlation with the themes of the SDGs, they still need to retain their own areas of focus to ensure learning objectives are met.

CONCLUSION

The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development establishes the global aspirations for people, planet, and prosperity. As shown in the case studies presented in the previous sections, law and legal education may play an important role in achieving the SDGs for a better world for the present and future generations. As noted by the General Assembly of the UN in the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development:

The new Agenda recognizes the need to build peaceful, just and inclusive societies that provide equal access to justice and that are based on respect for human rights (including the right to development), on effective rule of law and good governance at all levels and on transparent, effective and accountable institutions.²¹⁷

The rule of law is a *sine qua non* for a just and flourishing world. The rule of law, both in national and international contexts, will play a fundamental role in achieving the SDGs. Achieving some SDGs, particularly those related to human rights, labor rights and gender equality, will be contingent on meaningful legal reform. Major legal reform will be difficult without creating awareness among the next generation of lawyers, many of whom will become policy and lawmakers. Therefore, the integration of the SDGs into legal education is inherently interlinked with the progress of society toward a just and equitable world.

Awareness of the SDGs will be critically important for the legal profession in a changing world. Not everyone with a professional degree will join the profession. Many students may work in fields related to the global and national development agendas. There is a need to embed awareness of the SDGs in professional law curricula to make legal education pro-people and to equip our students with necessary knowledge about this central global agenda. Due to the profession's requirements, including an SDGs-related core subject will not always be possible and, arguably, not even advisable considering the cross-cutting relevance of the

217. G.A. Res. 70/1, *supra* note 1, at 9.

SDGs for many areas of law. However, this does not preclude the opportunity to introduce specialized sustainability-related advanced subjects in the law curriculum. As noted earlier, heavy emphasis on the SDGs in just one existing subject may not be advised because that may have an impact on the main learning outcomes and professional requirements of that subject. Therefore, law schools should try to embed SDGs education across the relevant core and optional subjects without disrupting the existing curriculum structure.