



Institute of Law, Nirma University
Organizes

A Virtual International Conference on Language, Law, Literature: Dialogic Interfaces



Date: March 23 - 24, 2021

A Virtual International Conference on Language, Law, Literature: Dialogic Interfaces

Date: 23 & 24 March, 2021

The Institute of Law, Nirma University, Ahmedabad will organize a Virtual International Conference on the theme “Language, Law, Literature: Dialogic Interfaces” to explore the avenues and possibilities of conceptual and pedagogical enrichment across language, legal and literary studies through meaningful exchange of ideas and methods on March 23-24, 2021. The Conference is a pioneering event for a project initiated by ILNU, which aims to develop library resources and pedagogical approaches in this area.

Concept Note

The most evident rationale for mapping a space for dialogic exchanges between law, language and literature is expansion and enrichment of all the three as disciplines and practices. Quite a few literary and legal scholars and professionals have a rather partial or pragmatic understanding of what such an enrichment entails. Most of the scholarly investigations and interventions tend to look at 'enrichment' in terms of tangible utility and gains. As far as scholars and practitioners of law are concerned, the profit of being well-versed in language and literature is often limited to nurturing a persuasive style of communication, rhetorical skills and the ability to cite from literary texts in legal documents and judgments. For literary scholars or writers, law is perhaps yet another sphere of existence that merits conceptualization, imaginative probing and creative expression. The field may also inspire them to probe into interrelated concepts of equality, rights, justice and the like. A more idealistic view of this interface could be that it generates an awareness of the 'experiential' and 'affective', hence bestowing an ethical and empathetic turn to legal norms, conventions and practices. Here the 'enrichment' becomes synonymous with virtues. The 'Law, Language, Literature' intervention would work around these notions, and take the investigation further ahead. The intervention is intended for exploring the interfaces of the fields of language, literature and law to design a pedagogy, take cognizance of its range of prospects, define its goals/ desired outcomes and optimize the benefits expected from the intervention through continuous experimentation with methods.



As law, language and literature have a vital role in our everyday socio-political existence, dialogic interfaces cutting across these domains would facilitate mutual understanding, critique and bridging of gaps in terms of pedagogy and practice. The potential of language and literature for unravelling the self, life-worlds and social situations would help law contemplate on nuanced interpretations, wide-ranging possibilities and deeper semantics of crime, punishment, justice and working of the legal system. Law and functioning of the legal mechanism have inspired numerous literary texts that engage with being, knowing and doing from diverse perspectives. Language and literature may problematize seemingly mundane social phenomena and simultaneously elucidate the complexities of social life through multidimensional processes of representation. The ability of language and literature to tease out intricate and profound aspects of human psyche and social phenomena offers such pedagogical richness that several realms of inquiry can benefit from, law being no exception. The fact that the concerns of such realms of inquiry overlap and inform each other further emphasizes the need for a dialogic and discursive pedagogical approach. The power of observation, combined with imaginative and creative potential implicit in literary expressions paves the way for countless quests for exploring law in its conceptual and applied aspects. In the field of law, the theoretical insights and practical procedures often intermingle in intriguing and ambivalent ways. The context(s) and text(s) of law can definitely benefit from the figurative, stylistic and interpretative discernments that language and literature bring to our cognition and expression.

Beyond such obvious benefits, could there be a more substantial epistemic logic for bringing law, language, and literature together in an interdisciplinary and dialogic platform? While this Conference would seek to find answers to this query, at its core is a pedagogical impetus with a focus on the following topics:

- (a) Develop a collection of texts that would tap into the interdisciplinary/ dialogic possibilities of language, law and literature
- (b) Compile a working bibliography as the first step to this process
- (c) Design a pedagogical strategy that could put to use this collection for a more perspicacious understanding of law as a discipline, practice and system
- (d) Develop a clear understanding of the potential benefits and desired outcome of the intervention through continuous experimentation and reorientation
- (e) Setting an action plan and goals concerning the degree and types of competency projected as the outcome of this intervention

We invite academicians and professionals in the areas of language, law and literature who would like to share their insights and experiences on diverse thematic possibilities indicated in the concept note to be part of the Conference.

Contact Details:

Conference Chair

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Faculty Conveners

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Student Convener

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The possible themes for papers could be

1. Law in/as Literature: Thematic and Methodological Convergences
2. Interfacing Language, Law and Literature: Narrative, Interpretative and Rhetorical Enrichments
3. Literary Texts in Teaching Law: Pedagogical Innovations and Possibilities
4. Theatre, Films and Other Performances as Conceptual and Pedagogical Tools in Research and Studies in Law
5. Exploration of Politico-Legal Concepts in Literature and Performance
6. Literature as Social Critique for Rights, Justice and Ethics
7. Law, Imagination and Creative Interventions
8. Beyond Crime and Punishment: Textual/ Visual Representations of the Legal Processes
9. Law and Popular Culture: Thrillers, Crime Fiction, Graphic Novels, Games, etc.
10. Courtroom as Theatre and Popular Politics
11. Literary Allusions in Judgments
12. Paving Ways to Legal Revisions: Literature and Performance

Please note that the themes and methods that you may discuss in the Conference need not be limited to the areas mentioned above. We also request you to respond to the questionnaire (Appendix 1) when you send your abstract.

Important Deadlines

Submission of Abstract: February 20, 2021 (Word-limit – 500 words)

You are requested to provide the following information when you submit the abstract: The full name, designation, institutional affiliation, and contact information [phone number and email] of the presenter(s).

Please email the abstract to the Conference ID (ilnu.conference@nirmauni.ac.in) and mark a copy to Dr. Bini B.S. (bini.bs@nirmauni.ac.in).

Confirmation from the Institute of Law, Nirma University about the selection of the abstract: February 25, 2021

Submission of full-paper: March 15, 2021

Registration Deadline: March 15, 2021

Submission of Revised Final Draft of the Paper for the Conference Volume: May 31, 2021



Appendix : Questionnaire

1. What is your view on the rationale behind such a dialogic/ interdisciplinary program as “Law, Language and Literature”?
2. If your educational institute or academic program already has dialogic and interdisciplinary areas of study, what are the tangible benefits that you have observed in terms of cognitive enrichment and skill development?
3. If your educational institute or academic program already has such interdisciplinary and dialogic areas of study, what innovative pedagogy is being used to explore these areas of study?
4. What was the vision and objective behind the innovative pedagogy? Please shed light on the criteria for making the choice(s) in terms of pedagogical methods and approaches?
5. Do you have a system in place to measure the effectiveness of the pedagogical methods and approaches? If yes, please explain?
6. What conceptual and practical benefits do you anticipate from “Law, Language, Literature” program?
7. As areas of academic pursuit and skills, language studies, literature and law might seem to put to use vastly different pedagogical methods, how can we think in terms of an epistemic/ methodological convergence?
8. What in your view could be a potential challenge to the conceptualization and implementation of “Law, Language and Literature” program?
9. Your recommendations on lab facilities and other course-related infrastructure?
10. Any recommendations on library resources, book titles and databases?



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