

IAF SPACE EDUCATION AND OUTREACH SYMPOSIUM (E1)
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DEVELOPING THE NEXT GENERATION OF SPACE LAWYERS

Abstract

As the space industry continues to grow and evolve, and as increasing numbers of states are: (a) becoming more active in space; and (b) passing national legislation to regulate space activities, there is an increasing need for education, mentorship, and training on the legal issues related to human activity in space. In fact, in July 2017, an appropriations committee of the U.S. Senate provided up to USD \$1,000,000 to NASA to encourage legal research in this area.

But what is Space Law? Who is a space lawyer? How are space lawyers developed and trained? This paper will analyze these questions through four perspectives. Firstly, it will examine how some U.S. and non-U.S. law schools teach the subject of Space Law to both undergraduate and graduate students. This section will note the work of the United Nations Committee on the Peaceful Uses of Outer Space (U.N. COPUOS) over a six year period to compile a model curriculum for a foundational course on space law to be used in particular by developing countries. Space law education, training, and capacity-building work together to foster international cooperation in space activities while providing a foundation for increased understanding of the interdependent roles of science, technology and law.

Secondly, the paper will then examine how newly minted lawyers are trained within space companies and space agencies. Thirdly, the paper will look at a variety of potential careers in the field of Space Law. Finally, the paper provides examples of some of the myriad ways that established lawyers in the space industry affirmatively take steps to mentor and inspire the next generation of space lawyers who will be tasked with sorting out thorny legal issues that can just barely be imagined today.