



STUDY PROGRAMME

POL & MATA

ACADEMIC YEAR

2021-2022

SEMESTER

1st & 2nd

COURSE TITLE

Negotiation and Decision-making in the European Union: a Simulation Game

COURSE PROFESSORS

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COURSE ASSISTANTS

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NATURE OF COURSE (COMPULSORY, OPTIONAL)

Compulsory

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

English

ECTS CREDITS

7

1. COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course empowers students to play an active role in an EU negotiation based on a real legislative proposal with the aim of reaching a credible outcome. In doing so they experience in a lively and concrete manner how multilateral negotiations operate within and between EU institutions under the ordinary legislative procedure. While acquainting themselves with the process and techniques of negotiation and decision-making, the students also observe the ways in which factors such as time pressure, communication ability, expertise, credibility, emotions, informality, or personality can affect outcomes.

2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

On completion of the course, students are expected to have an in-depth understanding of the EU legislative process, the negotiation dynamics among institutions as well as the methods that other stakeholders use to influence the outcome. Students are also expected to be able to play any of the institutional or civil society roles involved in the simulation. This implies developing analytical skills to understand pre-existing documents, writing skills to draft ad hoc briefings to be used for the negotiation, communication and debate skills for the proper simulation, including using social media or other methods that can impact the outcome of the legislative process. Traditionally, the simulation game is key to developing group dynamics, collaboration, as well as engagement among students.



These learning outcomes link up with the following programme-specific learning outcomes:

POL:

- Students possess a pluri-disciplinary understanding of European integration, allowing them to understand fully the nature, dynamics and functioning of the EU system.
- Students have a general knowledge of the main components of the EU political system: institutions, actors, decision-making procedures, competences, and policies.
- Students possess an in-depth knowledge of fundamental aspects of the EU political system (institutions, actors, policies etc.).
- Students develop a concrete understanding of the logics of policy-making and negotiations within the EU political system, thanks to simulation exercises and the drafting of policy papers.
- Students can communicate in both French and English in an academic or professional context.
- Students can analyse the process and actors of EU policy-making at different levels of governance and can reflect on potential developments.
- Students are able to analyse, in a limited amount of time, complex and new issues, by finding and investigating various sources of information and delivering an analytical and critical synthesis.
- Students are capable of working as part of a complex project, individually or collectively, and they develop skills of planning, organisation, prioritisation and time management.
- Students can communicate clearly and effectively, through oral presentations or written documents, to different kinds of audiences.
- Students are capable of evolving in a multi-cultural context and of taking into account the variety of political systems, institutional logics and cultural backgrounds.

MATA:

- The graduate is capable of processing a large amount of information and appropriately analyse relevant sources depending on his or her disciplinary focus within a short period of time and of suggesting possible actions that contribute to problem-solving in a creative way.
- The graduate has the intellectual maturity and skills to take responsibilities and function autonomously in a professional environment at national or international level, and especially in a transatlantic context, and to work efficiently and effectively through planning, organizing, setting priorities, meeting deadlines, cooperating across cultural boundaries and networking.

3. COURSE CONTENTS

The course is divided into two main parts: the preparatory phase (October - November) and the proper simulation (January – February). It consists of a complementary mix of theoretical insights and practical tasks. The game takes place on the basis of a real Commission proposal still under discussion at EU level at the time of the exercise.



The simulation includes the main players involved in the real EU decision-making process under the ordinary legislative procedure, including selected stakeholders. It therefore counts on the participation of representatives of the Commission, of all EU Member States and of Members of the European Parliament coming from all political groups (and reflecting their relative size) as well as journalists and representatives of relevant interests.

The negotiation takes place at the initial stage of the ordinary legislative procedure when the co-legislators have the opportunity to find an agreement at first reading. The bulk of the negotiations take place within the responsible EP committee and in Coreper. The students enjoy a large degree of autonomy in organizing their time and arranging meetings with a view to reaching a credible outcome.

4. TEACHING METHOD

This course includes several lectures, one introductory lecture during the first semester of studies, a further introductory lecture at the beginning of the second semester which launches the actual simulation game, one further lecture explaining the methodology of writing a "briefing", and finally a feedback session after the end of the simulation game. The course also includes a conference bringing together real-life actors and practitioners, which takes place on the final day of the simulation game.

Students are required to draft a "position paper" during the first phase of the course. When the actual simulation game starts, they are expected to actively participate in the various meetings and activities, as well as to use where appropriate the TwitCol social media software (specifically designed for the purpose of this Simgame), consistently with their role. Towards the end of the negotiation, students are required to submit a "briefing" or an equivalent written assignment depending on their role.

5. COURSE MATERIAL

Students are encouraged to find their own information and documentation concerning the simulation topic and the positions they will have to prepare/defend.

A number of key official texts, including background information and documents on the negotiation topic, the internal rules of procedure of the Council and the European Parliament, and a guide to drafting EU legislation will nonetheless be made available on the intranet page dedicated to the simulation game.

Although not strictly required, students wishing to acquaint themselves with the relevant literature on negotiation and persuasion techniques are encouraged to refer to the materials listed below.¹

On negotiations in general

R. B. CIALDINI, *Influence: the psychology of persuasion*, (3rd edn.), New York: Harper Collins, 2007.

¹ This bibliography has been put together by the Professors. The formatting of the references does not necessarily correspond to the referencing rules applicable in the Department.



R. FISHER & W. URY, *Getting to Yes: Negotiating an Agreement without giving in*, (2nd edn.), London: Random House, 1999.

W. URY, *Getting past No: Negotiating with difficult people*, London: Business Books Limited, 1991.

R. FISHER & D. SHAPIRO, *Beyond Reason: using emotions as you negotiate*, New York: Penguin Books, 2005.

R. SANER, *The Expert Negotiator: Strategy, Tactics, Motivation, Behaviour, Leadership*, (3rd edn.), Leiden/Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 2008.

On EU negotiations

M. BRUNAZZO & P. SETTEMBRI, *Experiencing the European Union: Learning how EU negotiations work through simulation games*, Soveria Mannelli: Rubbettino, 2012

P. SETTEMBRI & M. BRUNAZZO, 'Mission Impossible? Verisimilitude in EU Simulations', in P. BURSENS, V. DONCHE, D. GIJBELS & P. SPOOREN (eds.), *Simulations of Decision-Making as Active Learning Tools*, New York, Springer, 2018, pp. 63-76.

P. SETTEMBRI, R. VAN GASSE, L. COERTJENS & S. DE MAYER, 'Oranges and Apples? Using Comparative Judgement for Reliable Briefing Paper Assessment in Simulation Games', in P. BURSENS, V. DONCHE, D. GIJBELS & P. SPOOREN (eds.), *Simulations of Decision-Making as Active Learning Tools*, New York, Springer, 2018, pp. 93-108.

A. DÜR, G. MATEO & D. C. THOMAS (eds.), 'Negotiation Theory and the EU; The State of the Art', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 17, No. 5, 2010, special issue.

P. W. MEERTS & F. CEDE (eds.), *Negotiating European Union*, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004.

A. RASMUSSEN, C. BURNS & C. REH (eds.), 'Twenty years of legislative codecision in the European Union', *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol. 20, No. 7, 2013.

J. WORTH, 'Working with the Media and Social Media in the EU', in A. HARDACRE (eds.), *How to Work with the EU Institutions: A Practical Guide to Successful Public Affairs in the EU*, John Harper Publishing, 2020.

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6. EVALUATION

The students are assessed on the position paper assigned to them in the first part of the exercise (30%)



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towards the final mark), on an individual briefing (or equivalent written assignment) they will have to prepare before the final ministerial/plenary meeting (30%) and on their overall involvement in the simulation game (40%). In addition, the Professors may add or subtract points to the entire class depending on the quality of the overall exercise.

Assessment at second attempt

During the second examination session the course is assessed 100% on the basis of a written resit exam.

**The evaluation modalities may be subject to adaptations in function of the evolution of the sanitary situation.*