



College of Europe
Collège d'Europe

Brugge



Natolin

European Political and Governance Studies
Academic Year: 2022-2023
Professor: Albane DEMBLANS
Academic Assistant: Miguel SILVA

OPTIONAL COURSE

WORKING IN THE EU INSTITUTIONS, WHY, WHAT AND HOW: THEORY AND PRACTICE

Language of instruction: English

Profile of the Professor: Albane Demblans

Albane Demblans is Deputy Head of the Unit “Sustainable Finance” in the Directorate-General for Financial Stability, Financial Services and Capital Markets Union of the European Commission (DG FISMA) in Brussels. She is fluent in French, English, Italian, Spanish and German.

Previous professional responsibilities: Albane Demblans joined the European Commission as an Administrator in 2011. After working as Economic Analyst in charge of Italy at the Directorate-General for Economic and Financial Affairs (DG ECFIN) of the European Commission in Brussels, she became Policy Coordinator at the Secretariat-General of the European Commission, responsible for the European Semester, the Europe 2020 strategy and economic governance. She then joined the Joint Research Centre of the European Commission in Seville, as Policy Coordinator and Scientific Officer, dealing with research and innovation policies, in particular Smart Specialisation in the European Union and worldwide, before being appointed Policy Counsellor to the Director for “Growth and Innovation”, and Programme Manager of the Directorate. In the past, she also worked as a Lecturer in Sciences Po Paris, in charge of preparing students for the competitions of the European institutions.

Education: Albane Demblans graduated from ESCP Business School (Ecole Supérieure de Commerce de Paris) in 2008, Sciences Po Paris in 2010 and the College of Europe in 2011 (Promotion Albert Einstein).

Publications:

- Demblans, A., Lavalle, C., Palazuelos Martínez, M., Chapter “Place-based solutions to territorial challenges: how policy and research can support successful ecosystems” in Šucha, V. and Sienkiewicz, M. (editors), Science for Policy Handbook, 2020, Elsevier
- Demblans, A., Cagnin, C., Gómez Prieto, J., Smart Specialisation, an innovation bridge between the EU and Latin America - Evidence and lessons from the International Urban

Cooperation Programme, EUR 30232 EN , Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2020, ISBN 978-9 2-76-19001-1, doi:10.2760/39443, JRC120873

- Gómez Prieto, J., Demblans, A., Palazuelos Martínez, M., Smart Specialisation in the world, an EU policy approach helping to discover innovation globally, Publications Office of the European Union, Luxembourg, 2019, ISBN 978-92-76-08393-1, doi:10.2760/962643, JRC117005

Course Objectives

This course aims to equip students interested in a career in the institutions of the European Union (EU) with an adequate set of tools: (i) the **knowledge** about career trajectories in the EU institutions, the different types of status, contracts and positions, as well as the priorities governing work therein, (ii) the **know-how** on the competitions organised by the European Personnel Selection Office (EPSO) through a comprehensive training covering all the phases of the selection procedure, building on detailed guidance and a wide range of concrete cases, examples and simulation exercises and (iii) the **know-be** about the culture of the EU institutions and the core values of the European public service. As such, this course offers students an interesting mix of theory and practice to guide them in their future career paths.

Course Contents

1. Analysis and presentation of the European public administration from the point of view of careers in the EU institutions, as well as their overarching political priorities and strategic agenda
2. The EPSO competition and its steps and stages
3. Exercises: preparation for the tests and the assessment centre (simulations of written and oral tests)
4. Masterclass on how to carry out successful interviews

Teaching Method

This course is a highly interactive class providing academic, professional and practical insights. The teaching modalities combine a lecture followed by a discussion, and numerous written and oral exercises to practice the various exams of the competition, as well as a masterclass to prepare and train students for interviews. The students are expected to actively take part in the various activities of the course, to pursue a reflection on their motivation for working in the EU institutions and to follow up on the content of the class through additional readings and exercises. The final, written exam (70% of the final grade) will cover the whole spectrum of the class, and part of it will be inspired by the EPSO competition. The grade obtained will be combined with an assessment of their homework in the form of a written assignment (30% of the final grade).

Further details on the teaching method

At the end of this course, the students are expected to have gained in-depth knowledge about working in the EU institutions from several angles (priorities, careers, positions, status) and to have acquired and developed a range of key competences, which will be useful to embrace a European career, and beyond. They will have built upon their organisational skills, their quick-wittedness and their abilities in terms of time management to cope with new situations and challenges. Moreover, they will have deepened several core competences, such as Critical thinking, analysing & creative problem-solving, Decision-making & getting results, Information management, Self-management, Working together, Learning as a skill, Communication and Intrapreneurship. Their written and oral English language skills will have grown further through the participation of students in the different parts of the course.

Course Material *

- *Working for the EU: How to Get In*, Johannes de Berlaymont, 4 May 2018, John Harper Publishing
- *The Ultimate EU Test Book, Administrators (AD) Edition 2020*, András Baneth, March 2020, John Harper Publishing
- *The Ultimate EU Test Book, Assessment Centre 2010*, András Baneth and Jan De Sutter, March 2021, John Harper Publishing
- *The Ultimate EU Career Development Book*, Jan De Sutter, 22 April 2016, John Harper Publishing
- *Préparer les concours européens - Volume 2 - Epreuves de sélection et démarches de recrutement - Edition 2016*, Nicolas Dross, Martin Pouliot, 25 May 2016, La Documentation française
- *How the EU institutions work and... How to work with the EU institutions*, Alan Hardacre and Erik Akse, 22 June 2015, John Harper Publishing
- *Préparer les concours européens - Volume 1 - Les tests de présélection sur ordinateur - Edition 2014*, Nicolas Dross, Laure Gaillochet, Martin Pouliot and Sandra Sornin, 27 November 2013, La Documentation française
- *The EU explained - How the European Union works - Your guide to the EU institutions*, European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication, 29 October 2014
- *You're Hired! Interview Answers: Impressive Answers to Tough Interview Questions*, Ceri Roderick and Stephan Lucks, 15 March 2010, Trotman UK edition
- [Priorities and goals of the European Commission](#), 2020
- [Website](#) of the European Personnel Selection Office

- [EU staff regulations](#), 1 January 2022

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

Evaluation

- Homework (**30% of the final grade**): students will be asked to carry out a written exercise replicating the model of the EPSO exam as homework.
- Final examination (**70% of the final grade**): based on the substance and the training provided in class, the written examination will include tests inspired by and in line with the spirit of the EPSO competition, as well as an assessment of students' understanding of the notions and concepts studied in class, in relation to European careers and EU priorities.

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 of the final exam may be subject to adaptations in function of the evolution of the sanitary situation

Note:

1/ **Submission:** Papers can only be submitted once. Only the first version received will be corrected.

2/ **Referencing:** Any written work submitted by a student is assessed on its originality as well as the depth and breadth of research undertaken. (It follows that plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion and the falsification of data are all prohibited.) No written work (even if it is not strictly academic e.g. policy brief, memo, etc.) can consist of assembling existing texts, unless the sources used are clearly indicated. If an exercise does not provide for the possibility of indicating sources, verbatim reproduction of an existing document is prohibited.

3/ **Language:** all papers must be submitted in the language of the course.

4/ **Penalties** regarding late submissions: for every 24 hours of delay, or part thereof, after the specified submission deadline, 2 points will be deducted from the final mark of the paper.