



STUDY PROGRAMME

POL, MATA & ECO-EPPA

ACADEMIC YEAR

2023-2024

SEMESTER

First

COURSE TITLE

Politics and Policy-Making of the European Union

COURSE PROFESSOR

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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

The purpose of the course is to undertake a critical analysis of the EU's institutional structure and political functioning from the perspective of political science. The course proposes a reflection on the nature of the EU political system, by looking at its historical and constitutional design. It then examines how the EU institutions are appointed; how they function; their respective powers; how they interact with each other, and with the national political institutions and civil society actors. It discusses the process of European policy-making, institutional reform and the challenges and crises the EU is facing today. It finally looks at the key policies and programmes of the European Union.

2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The above course objectives 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 comprehend the disciplinary knowledge and theories specific to EU studies.
- Students possess an in-depth knowledge of fundamental aspects of the EU political system (institutions, actors, policies etc.).
- Students recognize the normative assumptions and implications of theories of European



integration.

- Students can recognize, contextualize, explain, and interpret political, societal and economic phenomena in European integration. They can assess events, governance problems and political crises.
- Students can analyse the process and actors of EU policy-making at different levels of governance and can reflect on potential developments.
- Students can transform a complex problem into a research question, mobilize theories, develop a research design, and conduct empirical work to provide solutions in an analytical and balanced way.
- Students can flexibly apply theories and analytical frameworks from different disciplinary perspectives to the main issues of EU politics and policies.
- 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 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 masters the most important theoretical approaches and concepts of, depending on his or her disciplinary focus, Economics, International Relations and Diplomacy Studies, Legal Studies and/or Political Science relevant for the analysis of transatlantic affairs.
- The graduate has good knowledge of, depending on his or her disciplinary focus, the political and/or legal systems, the decision-making processes, the economic structures and the main internal and external policies of the European Union and the United States.
- The graduate has the ability to critically reflect upon problems regarding an extensive range of transatlantic affairs, to adopt well-informed points of view and to communicate them effectively orally and in writing, whether working independently or in a team.
- The graduate can independently transform complex transatlantic issues into a research question within the broader field of transatlantic affairs and, depending on his or her disciplinary focus, find, select and critically assess relevant sources, answer the question using appropriate concepts and methods and present the research results in line with the ethical rules of the chosen discipline.
- 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.

3. COURSE CONTENTS

Themes of the course lectures:

1. Historical overview of the EU political system
2. The main theoretical approaches in EU Studies
3. The executive power
4. The legislative power
5. Democracy, legitimacy and decision-making in the EU
6. EU competences and policies, Europeanization
7. The EU decision-making process from a public policy perspective



8. Priorities of the EU: internal and external policies

Topics of the discussion groups:

- I. Intergovernmentalism vs. neofunctionalism
- II. EU institutions and the policy cycle
- III. Democracy & legitimacy
- IV. Internal policies & internal market
- V. External policies

4. TEACHING METHOD

The course contains two main teaching components: lectures and discussion groups. Tutorials might be organised by the coordinating assistants, if deemed necessary by the Professor, the assistants or upon request of the students. Full attendance is compulsory for all the POL students (including EPPA-POL). The EPPA-ECO students will only attend 20 hours of the lectures and will not attend the discussion groups. They will equally not be required but are welcome to attend the tutorials. All components will be taught in English.

5. FURTHER DETAILS ON THE TEACHING METHOD

Tutorials: Occasional tutorials might be organised if needed. In view of the exam, a revision/exam preparation tutorial will be organised.

Discussion groups: Course participants will be divided into discussion groups, each of which will be led by one of the Academic Assistants of the Department. The format of the discussion groups revolves around student presentations on set topics, which are then followed by a group discussion. The discussion group topics are framed around broad areas of academic enquiry. Within these broad areas, certain specific topics will provide a particular focus for the group sessions.

All group members must prepare for the discussions by:

- a) reading the listed required readings;
- b) supplementing this with appropriate and sufficient reading from the list of further suggested readings;
- c) if appropriate, students should also look for corresponding newspaper or media articles (originating from quality press).

Students are also expected to make use of the additional readings that are listed later in this course document to prepare for the discussions.

Students will equally be required to write an essay on the topic of their presentation.

6. COURSE MATERIAL

Students are provided with various readings and materials in the framework of the course. These include:

- PowerPoint presentations used during the lectures;
- Articles and book chapters selected for the tutorials and discussion groups as both



compulsory and suggested readings.

For the full reading list of the course, please refer to the detailed course outline.

7. EVALUATION

Grades for the course are based on three elements:

a) 50% - an unseen written exam of 3 hours at the end of the course.

The exam will be closed-book, and will take place on-site in a digital format.

The exam will be structured in two parts:

Part 1 will consist of three questions, out of which two must be answered. The questions will be designed to test whether key features of the nature and functioning of the EU are understood. A typical question would be 'What are the most important features of the Community method?' The answers should be relatively short and may be written in 'report' form, with the use of numbers and/or bullet points – but avoiding personal abbreviation or telegraphic style. This Part will account for 50 per cent of the total exam mark.

Part 2 will consist of three questions, out of which one must be answered. The questions will be of a traditional essay type and so will call for the customary features of good essays to be displayed – a strong structure and organisation, relevance, use of illustrative material, analysis, etc. This Part will also account for 50 per cent of the total exam mark.

In both parts, the student must clearly answer the questions, and not just give disordered elements for reflexion to the reader.

b) 25% - an individual paper, which must be of a maximum of 2.700 words and a minimum of 2.200 words.

The title of the paper will correspond to the title of the presentation assigned in class. Differently to the latter, however, students are expected to take a balanced view and – although allowed to advance a forceful point of view – to put forward a well-rounded argument which considers all sides of the debate in question. Papers must be submitted by the deadline assigned for each topic. The paper will be assessed by the Academic Assistant in charge of the discussion group and by the Professor.

c) 25% - discussion group performance.

This mark will be assigned for individual performance in the discussion groups and in the debates.



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ECTS CARD

Assessment at second attempt

During the second examination session the course is assessed 100% on the basis of a written resit exam. The format of the resit exam is identical to that of the first session.

Assessment for EPPA-ECO students

The Course Assessment for EPPA-ECO students will be a specific unseen, 2-hour written exam at the end of the semester. The exam will be closed-book, and will take place on-site in a digital format.

The exam will consist of four questions, of which three must be answered. The questions will be designed to test whether key features of the nature and functioning of the EU are understood. The answers should be relatively short and may be written in 'report' form, with the use of numbers and/or bullet points – but not with personal abbreviations or using a telegraphic style.

The exam will only cover material discussed in the first 20 hours of the course, as followed by the students.