



STUDY PROGRAMME(S)

(1) EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies

(2) Transatlantic Affairs

ACADEMIC YEAR

2023-24

SEMESTER

2

COURSE TITLE

The Evolving Relations between the EU and China: Partnership and Competition in a Changing World Order

COURSE PROFESSOR(S)

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NATURE OF COURSE (COMPULSORY, OPTIONAL, ELECTIVE)

(1) Optional course

(2) Elective course

ECTS CREDITS

4.5

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

English

1. COURSE OBJECTIVES

The aim of this optional course is to examine the evolving and increasingly contentious relationship between the EU and China in a changing global context. It is geared towards a three-pronged learning outcome: 1) to convey an understanding for the development of EU-China relations from the mid-1990s up to the present day, with a special focus on the EU-China strategic partnership, regional strategies, such as the Belt and Road Initiative, and EU-US-China relations; 2) to critically assess the differences in outlook on and understanding of international norms and global governance of the EU and China, respectively, including the contending approaches to diplomacy, and review the implications of a changing international system from the perspective of International Relations theory; 3) to analyze the prospects of EU-China relations from a number of policy areas, such as international security, global economic relations, including international trade, technology, international development and bilateral aid, as well as the relations of EU and China, respectively, to Asia and Africa. The course will also cover the EU member states' bilateral relations with China and the implications for the overall conduct of EU foreign and security policy.

At the end of the course, the student will be able to

- understand the complexities of contemporary EU-China relations, including the EU-China Strategic Partnership and areas of structured cooperation;
- critically analyse the challenges that the changing multilateral order poses for EU-China relations as well as the impact of the on-going geostrategic shift on international security and diplomacy;
- critically assess the bilateral relations of EU member states with China and their impact on the cohesiveness of the EU's stance towards China.
- explain the challenges of EU-China cooperation in policy areas, such as international trade, development aid and technology.
- understand the impact of the US-China rivalry as well as of the wider Asian political and strategic environment on the EU and its member states.



2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course objectives tie in with the following learning outcomes of the programme **EU International Relations and Diplomacy Studies**:

- 1.1 The graduate masters the most important approaches and concepts of International Relations, EU Studies and Diplomacy Studies relevant for the analysis of the role of the European Union in international affairs.
- 1.2 The graduate can describe, explain and illustrate the current state of scientific research in the field of EU external relations in a broad sense and is able to critically assess the results of this research.
- 1.4 The graduate has acquired insights into the political, legal and economic aspects of EU external action and can use these insights to contextualise and interpret new developments.
- 2.1 The graduate can approach the field of national, European and international diplomacy analytically by assessing the challenges in this domain with an open mind for diversity and for complex situations.
- 2.2 The graduate has the ability to critically reflect upon problems in international and European affairs, to adopt well-informed points of view and to communicate them effectively orally and in writing, whether working independently or in a team.
- 2.3 The graduate can independently formulate a research question within the field of European affairs, find, select and critically assess relevant sources, answer the question using typical concepts and methods and present the research results in line with the ethical rules of the discipline.
- 2.4 The graduate is capable of processing a large amount of information within a short period of time and of suggesting possible action that contributes to problem-solving in a creative way.
- 2.5 The graduate has the intellectual maturity and skills to function responsibly and autonomously in a professional context at national, European or international level and to work efficiently and effectively through planning, organising, setting priorities and meeting deadlines.
- 3.3 The graduate has acquired multi-faceted knowledge of bilateral and/or multilateral relationships between the EU and important third countries or international organisations and can contextualise them in the EU's broader external relations.

The course objectives tie in with the following learning outcomes of the programme **Transatlantic Affairs**:

- 1.1 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.
- 1.2 The graduate can describe, explain and illustrate the current state of scientific research in the field of transatlantic affairs in a broad sense and, in line with his or her disciplinary focus, able to critically assess the results of this research.
- 1.4 The graduate has insights into historical, political, legal and economic aspects of transatlantic affairs as well as into those policy areas that are of essential importance to transatlantic affairs. He or she can use these insights to contextualize and interpret new developments.
- 2.1 The graduate can approach the field of transatlantic affairs in a broad sense analytically by assessing the challenges in this domain with an open mind for diversity and for complex situations.
- 2.2 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.
- 2.3 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.
- 2.4 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.
- 2.5 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

Session 1: Introduction to the Course. Historical Overview of EU-China Relations and Main Challenges

Session 2: Competing Theoretical Perspectives of EU-China Relations. The Strategic Environment and Security, International Cooperation and the Changing World Order

Session 3: The EU and China as Global Actors: European and Chinese Foreign Policy

Session 4: Competition on Norms: Human Rights, Diplomacy and Global Governance

Session 5: Economic Relations: Trade, Technology, and Regulatory Approaches

Session 6: The EU, China and the Significant Others: The US and Asian States

Session 7: The EU, China and Africa

Session 8: EU-China Relations: Contemporary Challenges and Future Perspectives

Please refer to the intranet course page for access to the full course outline.

4. TEACHING METHOD

- Participation: Students are expected to regularly attend the class, to prepare the required readings and to participate actively in the discussions.
- Interactive lectures
- Oral group presentations
- Paper: each student will write a research paper, which can be based on the topic of the presentations, but students can also choose a different topic.

Please refer to the intranet course page for access to further information and instructions.

5. COURSE MATERIAL

Please refer to the intranet course page for access to the detailed reading list (required and supplementary readings) and the slides.

6. EVALUATION

- a group presentation and class discussion (15%)
- a research paper (35%): 2,000-2,500 words
- a closed-book written exam (50%): 2h

In case of a second-session resit, the closed-book written exam (2h) counts for 100% of the mark.

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