



STUDY PROGRAMME

European General Studies

ACADEMIC YEAR

2023 - 2024

SEMESTER

Second

COURSE TITLE

Green transition and fair European societies

COURSE PROFESSOR

Sandrine Dixson-Declèves & Antoine Varoquié

COURSE ASSISTANT

Margaux Cognard

NATURE OF COURSE (COMPULSORY, OPTIONAL)

Optional Course

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

English

ECTS CREDITS

LAW : 3 ECTS ; ECO : 3 ECTS ; EEIB : 3 ECTS ; POL : 4 ECTS

1. COURSE OBJECTIVE

Human history and development are marked by constant change and its intensity fluctuates from minor adaptations to deep structural disruptions. Presently – as documented in many political statements and ambitious strategy documents like the European Green Deal – humanity as a whole is undergoing what historians would label a Great Transformation: leaving the fossil fuel age whilst at the same time entering a digital one whilst facing intensifying ecological risks and limitations as well as growing social inequality forces societies into making radical choices: do they manage to implement structural change of their current modes of production and consumption quick and comprehensively enough to achieve desirable societal goals like those in the sustainable development agenda by design? Or will politically enabled transition processes be too slow or unambitious and transformation will happen by responding to disaster? Scholars and practitioners working on green and fair transitions clearly opt for the design-approach and visiting both, current theory and practice will be subject of this course.

Sustainability transitions are described as a co-evolutionary and interdependent change of multiple societal dimensions: knowledge and resource base, technological possibilities and infrastructures, market and industry patterns, user practices and cultural meanings, and political relations and frameworks. The course is thus by definition a non-disciplinary one, drawing on natural sciences, social sciences and political economy as well as the humanities to invite all participants to see their own role in shaping our common future.

2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Overview of global and European political processes, negotiation fora and implementation strategies dealing with the goals of Sustainable Development, Green Transitions and Fair Societies – e.g. the Rio World Conferences and their Conventions (COP), the Millennium and



Sustainable Development Goals, the European Agenda from Sustainable Development to Europe2020 to the European Green Deal

- Understanding of key reports and concepts describing the current time as a turning point in human existence on Earth – e.g. Limits to Growth, Anthropocene, Great Acceleration, Great Transition, Digital Age, Great Reset
- Introduction to the theoretical field of transformation and transition research and its different schools with an emphasis on reflexive approaches and political economy
- Mapping success criteria in transition processes regarding designs and outcomes, with a particular focus on the agenda of Just Transition and on policies promoting climate justice – both in research and in the current policy designs of the EU
- The importance of agency in the context of structural change – why individuals matter, and which capabilities are helpful for engaging in transition processes

3. COURSE CONTENTS (to be updated)

22.2.2022 Session 1 – Prof. Dixon-Declèves: Overview of the concept of sustainable development: origins, political dimensions and evolution

23.2.2022 Session 2 – Prof. Dixon-Declèves: Key reports and concepts describing the current time as a turning point in human existence on Earth – e.g. Limits to Growth, Anthropocene, Great Acceleration, Great Transition, Digital Age, Great Reset

07.03.2022 Session 3 – Prof. Varoquié: The European Union in the international fora promoting sustainable development: Rio World Conferences and their Conventions (COP), the Millennium and Sustainable Development Goals (SDG's), the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC)

08.03.2022 Session 4 – Prof. Varoquié: Transition processes for "fair" and "just" European policies: from concepts to regulations

21.03.2022 Session 5 – Prof. Varoquié: The European Green Deal – state of play

22.03.2023 Session 6 – Prof. Varoquié: Just transition: the multiple policy agenda – transforming co-benefits into sustainable wellbeing ?.

04.04.2023 Session 7 – Prof. Varoquié *and speakers*: Just Transition research and experiences in Europe and international relations and the concept System Innovation (systems change compass, Earth4all)

05.04.2023 Session 8 – Prof. Varoquié *and speakers*: Humans make history – paradigm shifts towards agency emphasis in education, work and innovation as discussed in theory and policy.

4. TEACHING METHOD(S)

The course combines instructor and group presentations and discussions, small group work in class, field research between classes, short games

5. COURSE MATERIAL

Required Reading contains 1 piece per session and each presentation introduces one publication in the field that thus serve as voluntary further background reading for all. See the outline for more information about the required readings and the organisation for the presentation.

6. EVALUATION



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Collège d'Europe



Natolir

ECTS CARD

Oral presentation (20% of the final Grade)

Each student gets to choose one additional reading piece and present the main arguments in class so that those can be incorporated in the discussions.

Mid-Semester Essay (40 % of the final Grade – building on presentations)

The essay should summarize the content of one's presentation in the context of the session subject, present key findings and argue which most important research questions and policy proposals the individual would propose for the future – according to one's own view. The length of the essay should be between 3600 to 4400 words and be submitted on the intranet on April 11th.

Oral Exam (40 % of the final Grade)

The oral exam (in English) will take place on June 14, 15 or 16. It will be an oral exam of 15 minutes long.