



STUDY PROGRAMME

Interdepartmental European Advanced Studies

ACADEMIC YEAR

2026 - 2027

SEMESTER

First

COURSE TITLE

From Nation States to Member states: European Integration and State Transformation

COURSE PROFESSOR

Christopher BICKERTON

COURSE ASSISTANT

Pauline THINUS

NATURE OF COURSE (COMPULSORY, OPTIONAL)

Fundamental course

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

English

ECTS CREDITS

LAW 3 ; ECO 3 ; POL 3

1. COURSE OBJECTIVE

The goal of this course is to introduce students to the conceptual and empirical challenges that surround the topic of the member states of the European Union (EU) and to provide them with some means of engaging with and mastering these challenges from an inter-disciplinary perspective.

2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Give an account of the meaning of member statehood, in juridical and political terms, and to be able to differentiate EU member states from other socio-historical forms of statehood that preceded the creation of the EU but that also co-exist today with EU member states.
2. Identify the commonalities between EU member states that bind them together and form the basis for a sense of shared identity and interest.
3. Identify the differences between EU member states that are sources of division within the EU and instability in the process of European integration.
4. Appreciate the multiple perspectives that one can have regarding the nature of the EU and European integration, depending on factors such as state size, geographical location, national growth model and date of entry into the EU.
5. Have a general sense of the evolution of European statehood (and types of European statehood) prior to the creation of the EU and since its creation.
6. Give a detailed account of the national experiences of some of the EU member states, taking into account different national outlooks on policy areas and the different internal constitutional and political structures of EU member states.



3. COURSE CONTENTS

The detailed course outline is available to students on the intranet. The course is structured as follows:

1. The concept of the member state in relation to other forms of statehood.
2. The EU seen from the perspective of large states: the case of the Franco-German axis.
3. The EU seen from the perspective of small states: do small states always love the EU?
4. Are some political systems better suited to European integration than others?
5. Macro-economic imbalances in the EU: do some countries prosper whilst others loose out?
6. Joining Europe: the Iberian experience.
7. Joining Europe: the Central and Eastern European experience.
8. European diversity and the future of European integration: conclusions.

4. TEACHING METHOD(S)

- Interactive lectures.
- Oral presentations.
- Class debates.

5. COURSE MATERIAL

Students are expected to read the core reading for each week and to explore if they have time optional readings. Please refer to the intranet course page for access to the detailed reading list (required and supplementary readings).

6. EVALUATION

The course will be examined in the following way. There will be an end of course written exam which will account for 40% of the final mark. The term paper will count for 40%. Students will have a choice of questions for their term paper. The remaining 20% correspond to the participation score. Students are expected to take part in class discussions, class debates and class presentations.

Guidelines on the Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in the IDEAs Programme

As per study regulations updated in June 2025, the IDEAs programme enforces the following rules on AI:

Non-Generative use of AI:

The **non-generative use of AI** in the form of assistance through AI-powered tools for purposes like searching information, spell checks or reference style management – without generating



original content – **is by default allowed for all course work and the master's thesis.**

Generative use of AI (genAI):

The IDEAs programme has decided to allow a restricted use of Generative AI, as specified in Article 38 of the Study Regulations:

Restricted use – at foundational stages of the work process only, tasks like brainstorming on structure/approach, literature screening or the organisation of data can be supported by the use of genAI if appropriately acknowledged and checked by the student. The analysis/interpretation of data, the generation of arguments and writing or similar advanced uses of genAI remain strictly prohibited.

Section 4.4. - Artificial intelligence / academic misconduct

Article 38. Use of artificial intelligence (AI)

Students must provide a comprehensive account of how they used AI at each stage of their IDEAs paper: during conception, writing and editing.

Transgressions regarding the permitted level or incomplete acknowledgement of genAI use will be considered academic misconduct and sanctioned on a progressive scale proportionate to the scope of the infringement.