



## STUDY PROGRAMME

1. POL
2. MATA

## ACADEMIC YEAR

2020 - 2021

## SEMESTER

Second

## COURSE TITLE

**International Organisations, Globalisation and the Changing Role of the State**

## COURSE PROFESSOR

**Peter VAN HAM**

## COURSE ASSISTANT

**Pauline THINUS**

## NATURE OF COURSE (COMPULSORY, OPTIONAL)

1. Optional
2. Optional

## LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

English

## ECTS CREDITS

5

## 1. COURSE OBJECTIVE

The role of the European state is changing rapidly. European states harbour few illusions that they can manage and solve the serious challenges they are facing on their own. In order to cope with a globalising world, states increasingly pool their capabilities and sovereignty to achieve shared goals. This course tracks the evolution of the European state from the Treaty of Westphalia, evaluates the role and scope of International Organisations, and examines the impact of globalisation.

With the Peace of Westphalia (1648), European states agreed that their political power was limited to specific geographic borders. The modern state was therefore based on the principle of territoriality. That is: no external power can gain authority over a state's territory, unless it has willingly agreed to give up its sovereignty with respect to certain policy issues. Over the centuries, international law has modified state behaviour. But it was only after World War Two that robust International Organisations (such as the EU, NATO and the UN) have emerged, establishing regimes which now deal with almost all imaginable policy issues, from managing world trade to dealing with climate change. Obviously, the nature and role of states have changed dramatically during this period. How do contemporary European states position themselves and look after their national interests in these changed circumstances? What will be the role of International Organisations in the future?

The course will further map out the on-going debate about the effects of globalisation on the governance-capacity and role of the state, a question which has again become politically important after the major financial crisis (starting in 2008), and the current "crises of sovereignty" (e.g. re. borders). Some authors claim – either with enthusiasm or with regret – that the state is becoming obsolescent.



Others take a more nuanced stance, claiming that the state may have become weaker in fulfilling its traditional roles (like redistribution), but that it is gaining strength with respect to other policy-functions (such as creating international standards on trade and investment). The on-going Euro-crisis will be analysed against this background. How should we interpret the possible development of the EU into a Political Union? For example, will it be possible for the EU to realize its ambition to become a Global Security Actor? Is this an inevitable (and possible) to reinterpret what sovereignty means in the 21st century, or will we witness a political backlash of the state, and even the break-up of the EU as we know it? Moreover, the on-going COVID-19 crisis has demonstrated the tendency of states to find national "solutions", and the limits of international cooperation to tackle even the most urgent, common challenges. Will the COVID-19 crisis reshuffle the cards of global politics, encouraging a radical rethink of the risks and benefits of globalization?

This course explores the main academic and policy debates and asks whether the European state (as we know it) will still exist at the end of this century. It will evaluate these questions in the context of the dynamic development of key International Organisations with a specific emphasis on the EU.

On completion of this course, the students will be expected to be able to understand complex issues such as the role of International Organisations and the reasons why states are prepared to relinquish parts of their national sovereignty and decision-making capability to them, the impact of the concept of "self-determination", etc.

The acquisition of knowledge will allow them to think creatively about the future of the the EU, the European state, globalisation and the prospects for European and global governance.

Thanks to their oral participation, the students will enhance their communication and debating skills. Thanks to the written exercises, they will be able to articulate their opinion on complex issues, with the help of theoretical tools as well as concrete examples.

## 2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

These learning outcomes link up with the following programme-specific learning outcomes:

- 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;

For MATA students, the following MATA programme-specific learning outcomes are relevant:

- 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 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;
- 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 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

Seminar 1: Origins of the European State

Seminar 2: The State and Self-Determination in Modern International Politics

Seminar 3: Transnational Governance – Relevance and Prospects

Seminar 4: International Organisations, Identity, and the Importance of Values

Seminar 5: Managing Money and Markets – Possible / Desirable?

Seminar 6: Globalisation and Democracy - A Cosmopolitan Illusion?

Seminar 7: Globalisation, Violence and Security Post 9/11

Seminar 8: Globalization and the European State in 2030

### 4. TEACHING METHOD(S)

This course takes the form of a lecture given to a maximum of 25 students. Active participation is required to allow for a fruitful interaction among Professor and students.



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# ECTS CARD

## 5. COURSE MATERIAL

Please refer to the detailed course outline for the full reading list.

## 6. EVALUATION

This course requires students to write an essay, participate actively in class, and pass a final oral examination.

During the semester, each student should write a short paper on one of the topics discussed during the course and/or on the basis of the reading material. The paper should be 3000 words long (+/- 10%, footnotes included, bibliography excluded). The organisation of both the footnotes and the bibliography should strictly follow College standards.

At the end of the semester, there is an oral examination. Students are asked to answer a diverse set of questions regarding the content of the course, including their paper.

Students also receive a grade for their oral participation in class, which should reflect their dynamism and the quality of their argumentation.

Their final grade therefore takes into account: the oral exam (50%) class participation (25%) and the paper (25%).

### **Assessment at second attempt**

During the second examination session the course is assessed 100% on the basis of a written resit exam.