



College of Europe
Collège d'Europe



NatoLin

ECTS CARD

STUDY PROGRAMME(S) / STUDY TRACK(S)

Master of Arts in European Interdisciplinary Studies
Master of Arts in European Interdisciplinary Studies (Study Track: European Security and Strategy)
Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs (Study Track: European Interdisciplinary Studies)
Master of Arts in Transatlantic Affairs (Study Track: European Interdisciplinary Studies - European Security and Strategy)

YEAR

2026-2027

COURSE TITLE

Introduction to International Relations

SEMESTER

1

PROFESSOR(S)

SCHUMACHER Tobias

ACADEMIC ASSISTANT(S)

STEINGASS Sebastian

COURSE TYPE

Introductory Course

MAJOR(S)

Not applicable

ECTS CREDITS

0

TEACHING HOURS

0

INDIVIDUAL & GROUP STUDY TIME

10

TUTORIAL(S)

0

COEFFICIENT

0

LANGUAGE(S)

EN

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course introduces students to International Relations (IR) as a discipline and IR theory in particular. After providing an overview of the evolution of IR as a discipline, and the most relevant terms and challenges associated with the discipline, the course seeks to equip students with a conceptual/theoretical toolbox needed to analyze developments in the international system and (EU) foreign policy from a more conceptual perspective.

In this regard, the course discusses meta-theoretical approaches, such as Foreign Policy Analysis, (Neo-)Realism and (Neo-)Liberalism, as well as more recent schools of thought and frameworks, such as Constructivism, Europeanization, and Liberal Intergovernmentalism. It also discusses the EU's role in international politics in a more conceptual way and helps students to better grasp the characteristics and (limited) explanatory value of role concepts such as Civilian Power Europe, Normative Power Europe, and Market Power Europe.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

At the end of the course, the students will be able to:

- 1) Understand International Relations as an academic discipline, including relevant IR theories, and methodologies and techniques from related sub-disciplines (A1, B7, MATA1.1);
- 2) Analyse (EU) foreign policy, which helps them to study the EU's role in the world and the EU's neighbourhood in an interdisciplinary, cross-disciplinary and multi-disciplinary fashion at an advanced level (A1, A6, A7, B7);

- 3) Use analytical tools to critically examine the merits and limitations of conceptual and theoretical approaches related to the study of the EU foreign policy, as well as local domestic and regional developments in the EU's neighbourhood (A6, A7, B7);
- 4) Apply a first 'analytical toolbox' which will help them in choosing the conceptual and/or theoretical framework for their research at Master's level (A3, B5, B7).

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION

None.

TEACHING METHOD(S)

E-learning.

ASSESSMENT METHOD(S)

None.

COURSE CONTENTS

Module 1: Introduction to International Relations as an academic discipline

Module 2: Foreign Policy Analysis (FPA) & current trends in foreign policy (analysis)

Module 3: (Neo-)Realism

Module 4: (Neo-)Liberalism

Module 5: The Constructivist school of thought

Module 6: Intergovernmentalism and Europeanisation

Module 7: The EU and International Relations and world politics

COURSE MATERIALS (readings and other learning resources/tools)

Course materials include videos, readings (articles and chapters), interactive materials, and quizzes.