

Selected topics : International Social Sciences Field Research

*The European Union and the EU decision making process*  
SCS3210/4210 ECH4210

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## COURSE OUTLINE

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### OFFICIAL COURSE DESCRIPTION

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The European Integration process is one of the most exciting phenomena of the 20th and 21st century. After 1945, first Western Europe and then Southern and Eastern Europe merged together to one unity without borders and a common currency, the European Union (EU). Nevertheless, the EU is not without its challenges and problems. Brexit, Grexit and the refugee crisis are just a few challenges. Faced with these challenges, the EU is also in a crisis of acceptance, with declining numbers of citizens supporting the EU. Among others, the EU institutions are perceived as undemocratic, difficult to understand and slow in making decisions. In this course, which will be jointly organized with Dr. Wolfgang Muno from the University of Mainz, we will partly debunk these myths providing a better understanding of the EU decision making process. At the heart of the course, is a five day simulation of the EU decision making process. During the 5 days in Mainz participants abandon their role of passive citizens to take the role of active players in the European political process. The simulation aims at being as realistic as possible. Participants do not only play the roles of Members of the European Parliament (MEP) and Ministers in the Council of the EU; some of the participants assume the roles of journalists, critically reporting on the proceedings in the two chambers. This simulation will be embedded in a one week intensive course about the functioning of European institutions at the University of Mainz, and a one week study trip to Brussels. During this one week study trip will get to know the European Institutions through study visits and discussions with relevant actors.

The course has 3 parts (please see the preliminary program for a detailed description)

### **European Integration: the nuts and bolts:**

We will examine the historical process of European Integration from 1945 to 2017. We will also examine a range of theoretical perspectives that might help us explain the EU and the process of

European integration. We will read some classics of integration theory, but also examine the

EU comparatively as an instance of more common political phenomena drawing on some specific general theories of international relations, state formation, and comparative (domestic)

politics. Finally, we will discuss challenges of European Integration including Brexit, Grexit and the refugee crisis.

### **A one-week excursion to Brussels**

A one-week study trip to Brussels should familiarize participants with Europe, the European Union and the European decision making process. The trip includes a visit to major EU institutions such as the EU Parliament, the European Commission, and the Council of Europe, and discussions with parliamentarians and lobbyists.

### **A five-day simulation of the EU decision making process:**

This last part is the most innovative part of this course. The simulation itself will have the following format. It will start with the presentation of two legislative proposals from the European Commission to the European Parliament (EP) and the Council. MEPs and Ministers in the Council will then start to discuss the two proposals, draft amendments and build coalitions in order to find majorities for their causes. Both chambers will be chaired jointly by a President and a Vice-President. The main task of the Presidency is to chair discussions and ensure that participants adhere to the rules of procedure. At the core of the simulation is the idea that both legislative proposals will be discussed at the same time. The procedure begins with the simultaneous introduction of proposal one to the EP and proposal two to the Council. In the course of the simulation the proposals will be exchanged several times between the EP and the Council with both institutions having the chance to pass amendments to the texts of the Commission proposals. During the final reading, both the Council and the EP have the choice (each institution for one of the two proposals) to either accept the version as amended from the other chamber or to reject it in its entirety. In order to avoid proposals being rejected at the final voting, MEPs and Ministers are advised to find compromises well in advance of the voting procedure. Negotiators from both chambers (the so-called Rapporteurs) are supposed to engage in discussions and find agreements with their respective colleagues.

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## PARTICIPANTS

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4<sup>th</sup> year undergraduate students and Master´s students

The course will be organized with my colleague Dr. Muno from the University of Mainz. Aside from University of Ottawa students, our course will include students from three universities; the University of Mainz, the University of Dijon (France) and the University of Oppeln (Poland); all of which have joint programs in political science. We will accept 15 to 20 students from each country.

## LOGISTICS

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### Housing:

Students will stay in double rooms in the youth hostel de Bosco in Mainz, and in double rooms in a two star hotel in Brussels

### Transportation:

For all our excursions we will use the German railway company (Deutsche Bahn). For their stay in Mainz students will get tickets for the local public transportation system. (Insert text here)

## REQUIREMENT/ ASSESSMENT METHODS

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### Requirements:

I expect that participants have basic knowledge of European Integration. For students that have not taken any class on Europe, I recommend reading the textbook listed below. The course will be student focused. The course will be held in English and active knowledge of the English language is required.

### Reading (recommended prior to the course):

Glencross Andrew. 2014. Politics of European Integration: Political Union or a House Divided? London: Blackwell.

### Assignments and Grading:

Daily Diary about your experiences during course	30%
Preparation of a position paper	20%
Interview of 3 participants from Germany, Poland and France	20%
Participation during the simulation	20%
General course participation	10%

### Daily Diary:

Students are requested to write a daily diary about their experience during the trip. As they were to do for a personal diary, participants should summarize their day, write about positive and negative aspects of this field research course, their thoughts about the material covered, the excursions and their personal experiences during the 3 weeks. (I expect that students write 1 to 2 pages per day).

### Interview:

All Canadian students will be asked to interview three other participants from the other three participating countries about one “hot” political topic in Europe. You are asked to prepare an interview guide where you also explain the relevance of your chosen interview

topic. I suggest you plan approximately 30 minutes for the interview. After the interview transcribe your taped interview. Your written assignment consists of three parts: the guide or protocol of questions you prepared prior to your interview (1-2 pages); the transcription of the interview (2-3 pages); and your reflection on what you have learnt from the interview substantively and in terms of how you might conduct interviews in the future (2-3 pages). In this last section you might also want to address strength and weaknesses of your interview and situate it within a broader context.

#### Position Paper:

You are asked to write a position paper (8 to 10 pages), which reflects your country's position in the simulation. Before writing the paper you should try to find some facts about your country, such as population, major industries, political culture, history of its membership in the EU (how long has it been a member, under what circumstances did it join) and some specific information about the proposed law. Your position paper represents the argument you will make during the simulation. Remember that you are role-playing an elected official - you may well lose your job if your citizens are unhappy with the proposed law that is going to be discussed. Make sure to describe the issue from your country's perspective and answer the following questions: Does the country have a stake in this issue or not? Suggest on which points and under what conditions might your country be willing to negotiate. When and where will it draw the line?

#### Participation during the simulation:

The simulation can only be successful if all participants actively participate in the simulation. To encourage participation I will count your participation in the simulation at 20 percent toward your final grade.

#### Participation in class and during activities:

I will count participation during the first week in class and during excursions at 10 percent toward your final grade.

### Policy on language quality and late submissions

Class attendance is necessary to successfully complete this course.

You will also be judged on your writing abilities. It is recommended to take the appropriate measures to avoid mistakes such as spelling, syntax, punctuation, inappropriate use of terms, etc. You may be penalized up to 15%, to the professor's discretion.

Late submissions are not tolerated. Exceptions are made only for illness or other serious situations deemed as such by the professor. *There will be a penalty for late submissions.* University regulations require all absences from exams and all late submissions due to illness to be supported by a medical certificate.

Absence for any other serious reason must be justified in writing, to the academic assistants of the Faculty, within five business days following the date of the exam or submission of an assignment. The Faculty reserves the right to accept or refuse the reason. Reasons such as travel, jobs, or any misreading of the examination timetable are not acceptable.

For your information: use as needed

In the case of illnesses, medical certificates are accepted. However, the Faculty who needs additional information concerning a medical certificate or who wants to verify its authenticity must send it to the University of Ottawa Health Services (located at 100 Marie-Curie).

A penalty of 5% will be given for each subsequent day following the due date (weekends not included). This goes for assignments submitted through e-mail as well, and, in this case, the time that the e-mail was received will be counted as the time of submission of the document.

We suggest that you advise your professor as early as possible if a religious holiday or a religious event will force you to be absent during an evaluation.

### COURSE SCHEDULE (preliminary)

Friday June 15th

Departure to Frankfurt

Saturday June 16th

Arrival in Frankfurt/ Mainz

Sunday June 17th

Barbecue so that participants from Poland, Germany, France and Canada can get to know each other.

Monday June 18th

10 - 12 Introduction to the course/ discussion of the three week program

14 - 16 History of European Integration I (1945-1990)

Tuesday June 19th

10 - 12 History of European Integration II (1990-2017)

14 - 16 The European Institutions (Commission, European Parliament, Council of Europe)

Wednesday June 20th

10 - 12 Theories of European Integration (functionalism, interparliamentarism etc).

14 - 16 Challenges of European Integration (Grexit, Brexit, refugee crisis etc.)

Thursday June 21th

10 - 12 Europe and its citizen/ why is there so much Euro-skepticism?

Friday June 22nd

Day Trip to Frankfurt and visit of the European Central Bank. Conference on the role of the European Central Bank in the EU and the banking union.

Saturday June 23rd

Leisure time

Sunday, June 24th

Train journey to Brussels

Evenings: Tour through the European capital Brussels

Monday, June 25th

9 am Visit of the Information Center of the European Parliament

11 am Visit of the plenary of the European Parliament.

12:30 pm Discussion with a Member of the European Parliament

Tuesday June 26th

10 - 12 Visit of the European Commission/ Conference about the Organization of the European Commission.

14 - 16 Visit of the Council of Europe/ Conference about the significance of the Council of Europe in the European legislative process.

Wednesday, June 27th

10 - 12 Visit of the mission of the Federal State Rheinland Pfalz in Brussels/ Conference about the important of the federal state's permanent mission.

14 - 16 Visit of the permanent mission of Canada/ Conference about the importance of Canada's mission in the EU.

Thursday June 28th

10 - 12 Visit to NATO/ Discussion about the NATO-EU relations

14 - 16 Visit to the European Consumer Agency/ Discussion with a lobbyist.

Friday June 29th

10 - 12 Visit to the Committee of Regions/ Conference about the importance of the committee of regions.

Afternoon: Return journey to Mainz

Saturday June 30th and Sunday July 1st

Leisure time/ students can and should conduct their interviews and work on the interview assignment

Monday July 2nd and Tuesday July 3rd

Preparation of the simulation, participants meet in small groups with and without their tutors.

Students are also supposed to work on their interview assignment and finish it.

Wednesday July 4th to Saturday July 8th

EU Simulation (see extra document for more information)

(Saturday July 8th, large farewell party)

Sunday 9<sup>th</sup> July

Return trip for the Canadian participants (arrival in the afternoon).

## *Resources for you*

### *Mentoring Centre - <http://www.sciencessociales.uottawa.ca/mentor/fra/>*

The goal of the Mentoring Centre is to help students with their academic and social well being during their time at the University of Ottawa. Regardless of where a student stands academically, or how far along they are in completing their degree, the mentoring centre is there to help students continue on their path to success.

A student may choose to visit the mentoring centre for very different reasons. Younger students may wish to talk to their older peers to gain insight into programs and services offered by the University, while older student may simply want to brush up on study and time management skills or learn about programs and services for students nearing the end of their degree.

In all, the Mentoring Centre offers a place for students to talk about concerns and problems that they might have in any facet of their lives. While students are able to voice their concerns and problems without fear of judgment, mentors can garner further insight in issues unique to students and find a more practical solution to better improve the services that the Faculty of Social Sciences offers, as well as the services offered by the University of Ottawa.

### *Academic Writing Help Centre - <http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/writing/>*

At the AWHC you will learn how to identify, correct and ultimately avoid errors in your writing and become an autonomous writer. In working with our Writing Advisors, you will be able to acquire the abilities, strategies and writing tools that will enable you to:

- Master the written language of your choice
- Expand your critical thinking abilities
- Develop your argumentation skills
- Learn what the expectations are for academic writing

### *Career Services - <http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/careers/>*

Career Services offers various services and a career development program to enable you to recognize and enhance the employability skills you need in today's world of work.

### *Counselling Service- <http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/personal/>*

There are many reasons to take advantage of the Counselling Service. We offer:

- Personal counselling
- Career counselling
- Study skills counselling

### *Access Service - <http://www.sass.uottawa.ca/acces/>*

The Access Service contributes to the creation of an inclusive environment by developing strategies and implementing measures that aim to reduce the barriers to learning for students who have learning disabilities, health, psychiatric or physical conditions.

### *Student Resources Centres - <http://www.communitylife.uottawa.ca/en/resources.php>*

The Student Resources Centres aim to fulfill all sorts of students needs.

### *Beware of Academic Fraud!*

Academic fraud is an act committed by a student to distort the marking of assignments, tests, examinations, and other forms of academic evaluation. Academic fraud is neither accepted nor tolerated by the University. Anyone found guilty of academic fraud is liable to severe academic sanctions.

Here are a few examples of academic fraud:

- engaging in any form of plagiarism or cheating;
- presenting falsified research data;
- handing in an assignment that was not authored, in whole or in part, by the student;
- submitting the same assignment in more than one course, without the written consent of the professors concerned.

In recent years, the development of the Internet has made it much easier to identify academic plagiarism. The tools available to your professors allow them to trace the exact origin of a text on the Web, using just a few words.

In cases where students are unsure whether they are at fault, it is their responsibility to consult the University's Web site at the following address:

[http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/eng/writing\\_tools.asp](http://www.socialsciences.uottawa.ca/eng/writing_tools.asp) « *Tools for Writing Papers and Assignments* ».

Persons who have committed or attempted to commit (or have been accomplices to) academic fraud will be penalized. Here are some examples of the academic sanctions, which can be imposed:

- a grade of « F » for the assignment or course in question;
- an additional program requirement of between 3 and 30 credits;
- suspension or expulsion from the Faculty.

Last session, most of the students found guilty of fraud were given an « F » for the course and had between three and twelve credits added to their program requirement.

For more information, refer to:

[http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/info/newsletter/fraud\\_e.html](http://www.uottawa.ca/academic/info/newsletter/fraud_e.html)