

UNIVERSIDAD PABLO DE OLAVIDE
Centro de Estudios para Extranjeros

ECON/POL 321: THE EUROPEAN UNION

This course is taught in English.

3 semester credits (45 contact hours)

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Office Hours: Tuesday 12:30-1:30

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

The aim of this interactive course is that on its completion students will have a much better understanding of the 'identity' and functioning of the EU both as a geographical regional polity and as an on-going process of political and economic integration, and, in addition, its wider significance within the global text. The complexity of the EU means it can be studied from a number of different perspectives. The course adopts a general *multidisciplinary* approach: historical, geographical and cultural aspects considered necessary accompaniments to the main politico-economic framework adopted.

After initially situating the students within the context of the present EU of 27 members, the course begins by offering the students an historical overview (both theoretical and empirical in nature) of the motives and often conflictual forces lying behind the creation and subsequent development of the EU, best reflected in the main treaties signed: Paris, Rome, SEA, Maastricht, Amsterdam etc. The decision-making procedure as embodied in the intricate institutional/legal framework of the EU is then analyzed, with special attention being paid to the Council, European Commission, European Parliament and European Court of Justice. The course will then study key common policy areas and their surrounding debates.

At the heart of the EU is the Single Market and its connected Competition Policy. As regional/global social forces push the *four freedoms* and deepen the process of economic integration (not without some resistance) pressure for Economic and Monetary Union increases. How and why the member states chose to abandon their currencies in favor of an untested common currency needs to be examined as does the *euro's* effect on the region, and on the international monetary system in general (e.g. US\$).

But the EU claims to be more than just an 'economic club', frequently stressing how its various common policies have improved quality of life in the region. The effectiveness of said policies will be assessed with special attention being paid to the most expensive and polemic of the EU's collectively financed programmes, the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). One of the biggest recipients of CAP money of the years has been Spain. The course analyses Spain's participation in the European integration process as well as profiling its contemporary economic, political and social situation.

Under the title 'External Relations' the EU's place in the world will be addressed: both the in the economic sphere – involving an assessment of the region's Common Commercial Policy with the rest of the world (e.g. the US, ACP Countries, China etc) – and in the political sphere – where new challenges arising in the globalized post-Cold War world have forced otherwise reticent EU member states to contemplate greater coordination and even institution-building (albeit often unsuccessfully) in the areas of security, foreign policy, immigration and crime.

Recent Enlargement (2004/7) has posed many challenges for 'old' and 'young' members alike, requiring substantial economic and institutional reform and accompanied by debates on efficiency, democracy, equality and identity, intensified even further with the potential future incorporation of that eternal 'bridesmaid', Turkey.

Finally the course will compare and contrast the EU with other regional integration projects, and explain their attraction for countries competing in the era of globalisation.

MATERIAL

Core Text:

- McCORMICK, John, *Understanding the European Union: a Concise Introduction*, 3rd Edition (Cambridge, MA: Westview Press, 2005).

Other Texts:

- Bainbridge, T: *The Penguin Companion to the European Union*. London, Penguin Books, 2002.
- Baylis, J; & Smith, S: *The Globalisation of World Politics*. Oxford University Press, Oxford 2005.
- Wallace, H; Wallace, W & Pollack, M (Eds): *Policy-making in the European Union*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2005.
- *Annex*: A specially designed booklet containing a collection of course notes/ press articles relevant to course (Economist, Financial Times, New York Times)

GRADING

This course will have two exams. The student's final grade will also include a mandatory oral presentations/paper addressing relevant EU topics and debates. Throughout the term students will be required to complete various reading/written assignments (article summaries etc) outside class and to actively participate in class discussions/debates etc all of which will be reflected in their final 'participation' grade.

Midterm Exam 30%

Final Exam 30%

Presentations 20%

Participation 20%

Exam dates will not be changed under any circumstances. Attendance is mandatory. Unexcused absences will result in the lowering of the final grade. Students with more than two such absences may not challenge the final grade received.

PROGRAMME SUMMARY

1. Evolution of the EU I: Early Integration

- Post-War/Cold War context; European Coal & Steel Community; European Defense Community

2. Evolution of the EU II: Key Treaties

- European Economic Community; 1960s/70s; Single European Act; Treaty of Maastricht; EEA

3. Institutional Framework I: Decision-making

- European Commission; Council; European Council; European Parliament; ECJ; Others

4. Institutional Framework I: EU Law

- Unique aspects; Legislative Process; Sources of Law; Important Case-laws. Problems

5. Economic & Monetary Union I: Economic Integration

- Integration Theory; Road to EMU; Maastricht Timetable; Convergence Criteria; Membership

6. Economic & Monetary Union II: The Euro

- Functioning; Macro Management Debates; ECB; Stability & Growth Pact; Global Significance

7. Competition Policy

- Legislation (Art 81-88 TEC); Role of Commission; Merger & Acquisitions Policy; Cases

8. Improving the Quality of Life I: Common Agricultural Policy

- Creation & Objectives; Financing; Effects; CAP in Global Trade; Attempts at Reform; Future

9. Improving the Quality of Life II: Various

- Regional Policy; Environmental Policy; Social Policy

10. Spain and the European Union

- Post-war History; Contemporary Economic & Political Profile; Attitude to EU; Social Debates

11. External Relations I: Political Relations

- Foreign Policy; Security & Defenses Policy; EU-US Relations; Terrorism; Transnational Crime

12. External Relations II: Economic Relations

- Global Player; Common Commercial Policy; WTO; EU-US Relations; EU-ACP relations; China

12. Enlargement I: Candidates

- Command Economies; Negotiation Process; Copenhagen Criteria; 'shock therapy'; Challenges

13. Enlargement II: EU

- Challenges; Costs/benefits for EU; Pending Issues; Future Enlargement: Turkey Case

14. Regional Integration in the Global Economy

- Conceptualizing Regionalism; Transnational Social Forces; Compare EU to NAFTA etc

WEBS

- www.europa.eu.int - EU web-page - history, policies, legislation, statistics, decisions,

- www.eurunion.org/infores/euguide/euguide.htm - The EU: a Guide for Americans 2007

- www.consilium.europa.eu/ - Council web-page

- www.economist.com - Analytical articles on world economic/political affairs

- www.ft.com - EU & World news, economy, country profiles, corporate activities, shares

- www.jeanmonnetprogram.org - Selection of EU law & politics articles

- www.realinstitutoelcano.org/default_eng.asp - Real Instituto Elcano - Spain, IR, politics articles

- www.uaces.org/JCMS.htm - Essays/articles on wide-covering EU issues