Institutions and Politics of the European Union

Code: 101083
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Political Science and Public Management	OB	3
International Relations	OB	2

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Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the end of this document.

Prerequisites

For students enrolled in the Degree Political Science and Public Management: It is assumed that the student is familiar, at minimum, with the concepts, theories and knowledge covered in the courses ' Political Science' and 'Administration and Public Policies'. In addition, it is recommended that they have completed and passed the course 'Comparative Politics I'.

For students enrolled in the Degree International Relations: It is assumed that the student is familiar, at a minimum, with the concepts, theories, and knowledge covered in the course 'Political Science'. In addition, it is recommended that they have completed and passed the course 'Public Policy Analysis.

Students are assumed to be able to read texts in English. They are also assumed to regularly follow newspapers, blogs, and other reliable sources of information.

Objectives and Contextualisation

This subject is compulsory in the 3rd year of the Degree in Political Science and Public Management and in the 2nd year Degree in International Relations. Overall, the course's main objective is for students to acquire fundamental theoretical and empirical knowledge of the European Union and develop the skills to use this knowledge in the analysis and interpretation of European political processes. The most specific objectives are: first, learning the historical process of European integration, the evolution and current functioning of the main political institutions and the inter-institutional relations; secondly, learning the main political dynamics and decision-making processes of the EU through the analysis of some of the most relevant recent political events at European level; third, becoming familiar with institutional data sources on the European Union and to learn how to use them for conducting empirical studies; finally, understanding the main theoretical approaches that currently dominate the field of European studies.

Competences

Political Science and Public Management

- Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
- Arguing from different theoretical perspectives.
- Assess the social, economic and environmental impact when acting in this field of knowledge.
- Connecting the different components that shape the structure and operations of political systems and the environment where they interact.
- Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.
- Demonstrating knowledge about the structure and working of the European Union and its main institutions, as well as identifying the main political actors and recognising the main means of integration.
- Demonstrating the comprehension of the structure and functioning of political systems in the internal and international arena, both in the analytic area and in the elaboration of intervention proposals or public policies.
- Develop critical thought and reasoning and be able to communicate them effectively, both in your own language and second or third languages.
- Develop strategies for autonomous learning.
- Identifying sources of data and conducting bibliographic and documentary searches.
- Interpreting and applying English texts in an academic way.
- Make changes to the methods and processes of the area of knowledge to provide innovative responses to the needs and wishes of society.
- Managing the available time in order to accomplish the established objectives and fulfil the intended task.
- Realising effective oral presentations that are suited to the audience.
- Showing a good capacity for transmitting information, distinguishing key messages for their different recipients.
- Synthesizing and critically analysing information.
- Take sex- or gender-based inequalities into consideration when operating within one's own area of knowledge.
- Using the main information and documentation techniques (ICT) as an essential tool for the analysis.
- Working autonomously.
- Working by using quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques in order to apply them to research processes.
- Working in teams and networking, particularly in interdisciplinary conditions.

International Relations
- Analyse the structure and operation of international institutions and organisations (political, economic, military and security, environmental, development and emergency aid) both in the universal and regional spheres, with particular emphasis on the European Union, from either real or simulated cases.
- Identify data sources and carry out rigorous bibliographical and documentary searches.
- Learn and analyse the impacts of the globalisation process on domestic political systems and on the behaviour of the political actors and the public.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
- Use metatheoretical data to argue and establish plausible relation of causality and establish ways of validating or rejecting them.

Learning Outcomes

1. Act with ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights and duties, diversity and democratic values.
2. Arguing from different theoretical perspectives.
3. Assess the social, economic and environmental impact when acting in this field of knowledge.
4. Connecting the different components that shape the structure and operations of political systems and the environment where they interact.
5. Demonstrating good writing skills in different contexts.

6. Demonstrating knowledge about the structure and working of the European Union and its main institutions, as well as identifying the main political actors and recognising the main means of integration.
7. Demonstrating the comprehension of the structure and functioning of political systems in the internal and international arena, both in the analytic area and in the elaboration of intervention proposals or public policies.
8. Develop critical thought and reasoning and be able to communicate them effectively, both in your own language and second or third languages.
9. Develop strategies for autonomous learning.
10. Distinguish how member states and the EU implement measures and policies aimed at intervening in globalisation processes.
11. Explain the functioning of the European political institutions, their competences and the way in which they draw up their agendas, take political decisions and implement the results.
12. Identify data sources and carry out rigorous bibliographical and documentary searches.
13. Identifying sources of data and conducting bibliographic and documentary searches.
14. Interpreting and applying English texts in an academic way.
15. Make changes to the methods and processes of the area of knowledge to provide innovative responses to the needs and wishes of society.
16. Managing the available time in order to accomplish the established objectives and fulfil the intended task.
17. Realising effective oral presentations that are suited to the audience.
18. Reconstruct the decision-making process of community policies and evaluate the results.
19. Showing a good capacity for transmitting information, distinguishing key messages for their different recipients.
20. Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
21. Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
22. Synthesizing and critically analysing information.
23. Take sex- or gender-based inequalities into consideration when operating within one's own area of knowledge.
24. Use metatheoretical data to argue and establish plausible relation of causality and establish ways of validating or rejecting them.
25. Using the main information and documentation techniques (ICT) as an essential tool for the analysis.
26. Working autonomously.
27. Working by using quantitative and qualitative analysis techniques in order to apply them to research processes.
28. Working in teams and networking, particularly in interdisciplinary conditions.

Content

CONTENTS

BLOCK 1. Creation of the European Communities and evolution of the process of European integration

Unit 1. Historical origins of the European Communities. The ECSC, the EEC and EURATOM

Unit 2. The Single European Act and the Maastricht Treaty

Unit 3. The Amsterdam Treaty, the Nice Treaty, the failed 'Constitutional Treaty'

Unit 4. The Lisbon Treaty

BLOCK 2. Main institutions and bodies of the European Union

Unit 5. The European Council

Unit 6. The Council of the European Union

Unit 7. The European Commission

Unit 8. The European Parliament

Unit 9. The Court of Justice of the European Union

Unit 10. The European Central Bank

Unit 11. Other bodies of the European Union

BLOCK 3. The decision-making process in the European Union

Unit 12. The institutional triangle Commission - Parliament - Council. The legislative process

BLOCK 4. The EU in times of crisis

Unit 13. Attitudes, Euroscepticism, and the far-right

Unit 14. The EU and Turkey

Unit 15. The EU and Ukraine

Unit 16. The EU and the global challenges

BLOCK 5. Theories of European integration

Unit 17. The debate neofunctionalism - intergovernmentalism; the liberal intergovernmental - constructivism debate; the new institutionalism; multilevel governance; the European Union as a political system

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Master sessions (by the professor)	30	1.2	7, 6, 4
Oral presentation of essays	7.5	0.3	2, 6, 5, 13, 14, 22, 27, 26, 25
Seminars and practical sessions	15	0.6	2, 6, 17, 19, 22, 27
Type: Supervised			
Tutorials	15	0.6	16
Type: Autonomous			
Preparation of an essay in groups	15	0.6	2, 6, 13, 22, 26, 28
Readings	30	1.2	6, 14, 22
Study	30	1.2	6, 16, 14, 22, 26

The methodology of the Institutions and Politics of the European Union combines various training activities designed so that the student reaches the learning outcomes. These include autonomous, directed and supervised activities. The autonomous activities include the individual study (30 hours), the reading of texts (30 hours) and the preparation of works in groups (15 hours). The directed activities include master sessions (30 hours), seminars and practical sessions (15 hours), and the public presentation of essays (7.5 hours). Supervised activities include tutorized follow-up (15 hours).

Type of activity	Activity	Hours	Learning outcomes
Directed 52.5 hours (35%)	Master classes with ICT support and group discussion	30	Understanding the historical process of European integration, the functioning of the institutions, the political processes of the EU and the main theories of European integration
	Public presentation of essays	7,5	Public presentation of the knowledge acquired in a proper way
	Seminars and practical classes	15	Active, informed and conceptually correct participation in the debates and practical sessions
Supervised 15 hours (10%)	Tutoring	15	Clarification of doubts and complementary supervision of the training activities
Autonomous 75 hours (50%)	Reading texts	30	Understanding the main theoretical and empirical contributions on the European Union
	Study	30	Understanding concepts and institutional dynamics in the European Union
	Preparation of team work	15	Demonstrate the understanding of EU political processes

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes

Oral participation in seminars and sessions	5%	0.5	0.02	1, 23, 3, 2, 24, 6, 5, 9, 8, 17, 13, 12, 14, 15, 19, 20, 22, 27, 28, 25
Preparation of an essay and oral presentation	25%	2.5	0.1	1, 23, 3, 24, 6, 9, 8, 17, 16, 13, 12, 14, 15, 19, 22, 27, 26, 28, 25
Test on readings	20%	2	0.08	1, 23, 3, 2, 7, 6, 9, 8, 10, 16, 14, 15, 18, 4, 22
Written exam	50%	2.5	0.1	1, 23, 3, 2, 7, 6, 5, 9, 8, 10, 11, 16, 15, 21, 18, 4, 22

Continuous evaluation

The evaluation represents approximately 5% of the total hours, equivalent to 7.5 hours.

The assessment consists of the following deliverables by the student:

• Written exam on knowledge about the subject: 50% of the final grade. Passing the exam is a necessary but not sufficient condition to pass the course

• 2 reading exams: 20% of the final grade (each control counts for 10% of the final grade)

• Submission and presentation of a group coursework: 25% of the final grade. Passing the coursework is a necessary but not sufficient condition to pass the subject

• Oral participation in seminars and practical sessions: 5% of the final grade

Important considerations:

- Students who have neither taken the exam nor submitted the coursework assignment will receive a grade of NOT EVALUATED
- The exam will be made at the end of the semester, the date scheduled by the Faculty, which will be made public enough in advance
- The schedule of sessions, activities, and reading exams will be made public during the first days of the course
- Students who have not passed the final exam will have the opportunity to re-take the exam. They may take a second examination on the date determined by the Faculty, having completed the term of the second semester. Under no circumstances will students be able to take part in the recovery activities to raise their marks.
- None of the other evaluable activities is recoverable
- In case of detection of plagiarism inthe submitted work, the penalty will be a fail inthe course. On the Virtual Campus, you can consult the Guide on how to cite and how to avoid plagiarism.

Single evaluation

The single evaluation of the assignment represents approximately 5% of the total hours, equivalent to about 7.5 hours.

The single evaluation will consist of the following evidence from the students:

- Final exam: 50% of the final grade. Passing the examis a necessary but not sufficient condition to pass the subject
- Two reading controls: 20% of the final grade
- Submission of an individual coursework: 30% of the final grade. Passing the coursework is a necessary but not sufficient condition to pass the subject

Important considerations:

- Students who have neither taken the exam nor submitted the coursework assignment will receive a grade of NOT EVALUATED
- All deliveries will be made on the same day at the end of the semester, specifically, the date set by the Faculty to take the final exam, which will be madepublic sufficiently in advance
- Students who have not passed the final exam will have the opportunity to re-take the exam. They may take a second examination on the date determined by the Faculty, having completed the term of the second
- In no case will students be able to recover activities to raise their grade
- None of the other evaluable activities are recoverable
- In case of detecting plagiarism in the submitted work, the sanction will be failing the course. On the Virtual Campus you can consult the Guide on how to cite and how to avoid plagiarism

Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

For this course, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies is allowed exclusively for support tasks, such as bibliographic or information searches, text correction, or translations.

Bibliography

Basic bibliography

Michelle Cini & Nieves Perez-Solorzano, *European Union Politics*, Oxford University Press, pp 157-175

Hix, S. & B. Hoyland (2022), *El Sistema Político de la Unión Europea.* McGraw Hill

Hix, S. & B. Hoyland (2022), *The Political System of the European Union*. McGraw Hill. https://ebookcentral-proquest-com.are.uab.cat/lib/uab/detail.action?pq-origsite=primo&docID=6992939

Ripoll Servent, A. (2017), The European Parliament, Palgrave MacMillan

Complementary bibliography

Anghel, V. & Erik Jones (2023) Is Europe really forged through crisis? Pandemic EU and the Russia - Ukraine war, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 30:4, 766-786, DOI: 10.1080/13501763.2022.2140820

Ares, C. & L. Bouza García (2019), Política de la Unión Europea. Crisis y continuidad, Madrid: Centro de Investigaciones Sociológicas.

Genschel, P. (2022) Bellicist integration? The war in Ukraine, the European Union and core state powers, *Journal of European Public Policy*, 29:12, 1885-1900, DOI: 10.1080/13501763.2022.2141823

Morata, F. (1998), *La Unión Europea*, Barcelona: Ariel. Caps. 1, 2.

Zestos, G. K., & Benedict, J. M. (2018). European Monetary Integration: A History. *Encyclopedia of International Economics and Global Trade*. https://www.researchgate.net/profile/George-Zestos/publication/325070683_European_Monetary_Integration_A_I

Zeitlin, J., F. Nicoli & B. Laffan (2019), 'Introduction: the European Union beyond the polycrisis? Integration and politicization in an age of shifting cleavages', *Journal of European Public Policy* 26(7): 963-976. https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13501763.2019.1619803

Institucional websites

Portal de la UE: http://europa.eu/

Parlament Europeu: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/public/default_en.htm?redirection

Parlament Europeu, Handbook on the Ordinary Legislative Procedure:
https://www.europarl.europa.eu/olp/en/ordinary-legislative-procedure/handbook-on-the-ordinary-legislative-proc

Consell Europeu: http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/european-council/index_es.htm

Consell de la UE: http://consilium.europa.eu/showPage.ASP?lang=es

Comissió Europea: http://ec.europa.eu/index_es.htm

Tribunal de Justícia de la UE: http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/court-justice/index_es.htm

Observatori Legislatiu de la UE: http://www.europarl.europa.eu/oeil/home/home.do

Web European Parliament on EU institutions:
https://www.europarl.europa.eu/factsheets/en/section/187/las-instituciones-y-los-organos-de-la-union-europea

EUR-Lex: https://eur-lex.europa.eu/homepage.html?locale=es

Webs on the EU:

Politico: https://www.politico.eu/

Eurobserver: http://www.euobserver.com

Eupolitix: http://www.eupolitics.com

Software

Excel

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this link. To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	Spanish	second semester	morning-mixed
(PAUL) Classroom practices	51	English	second semester	afternoon
(SEM) Seminars	1	Spanish	second semester	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	10	Spanish	second semester	morning-mixed
(SEM) Seminars	51	English	second semester	afternoon
(SEM) Seminars	510	English	second semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Spanish	second semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	51	English	second semester	afternoon