

European Union-china Relations

Code: 42662

ECTS Credits: 12

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
European Union-China: Culture and Economy	OB	0

Contact

Name: Lluc Vidal López

Email: lluc.vidal@uab.cat

Teachers

Nilda Nora Sainz Gsell

(External) Federico Guerrero

(External) José García Cano

(External) Lluc López i Vidal

Teaching groups languages

You can view this information at the [end](#) of this document.

Prerequisites

Having completed Module I

Objectives and Contextualisation

Through a gradual learning process that goes from the generic to the specific, this module pretends to introduce students in the diversity and complexity of the political, economic and business relations between the EU and China. Then, the contents of the module are divided in two parts: a first one that contextualizes the student with the political relations between EU and China, while the second focuses on the commercial legal relations between both actors.

The first part (formed by 3 different courses, although related to each other) provides the student with basic concepts and ideas from the field of International Relations (International System, actors, powers, etc.): these concepts are necessary not only to understand the insertion of China as well as the EU in the International System, but also to understand their mutual relations and their relations with other actors.

Afterwards, the student is introduced to the world of the EU with the aim of obtaining the basic concept and ideas to understand the institutional and political complexity of this *sui generis* international actor. The origins and evolution of the European project will be explained together with its main institutions, its functioning and its decision-making processes. From this point onwards, the student reaches the EU as an international power

through the analysis of its external action. This approach lets the student to reach three goals: (1) analysis of EU-China relations through their security, economic and political agenda; (2) the cooperation and conflict areas between the EU and China at the time of establishing relations with different regions like Latin America, Central Asia and Southeast Asia; (3) the comparison of the positions and visions that EU, China and the United States hold regarding the functioning of the International System at different topics of the international agenda (sovereignty, human rights, climate change, etc.)

The second part of the module (commercial legal relations) provides the student basic concepts related to the Chinese and Spanish legal systems (constitution, civil code, legal personality, etc.); afterwards, the student enters into the mercantile sector of both countries (focusing on the role of the company) and make a small comparative study, providing practical elements for the future professional development of students in the trade sector between both countries.

Competences

- Apply distinct theoretical models to the analysis of complex discourse types (political, social, economic, business and cultural) from both an intercontinental and intercultural perspective.
- Carry out team work in interdisciplinary and multicultural environments.
- Compare and analyse the current political, institutional and legislative structures of the European Union and China, taking in their evolution and development in the 21st century.
- Continue the learning process, to a large extent autonomously.
- Make creative and original contributions in distinct fields, demonstrating an attitude of respect towards the opinions, values, behaviour and practices of others.
- Use acquired knowledge as a basis for originality in the application of ideas, often in a research context.

Learning Outcomes

1. Carry out team work in interdisciplinary and multicultural environments.
2. Continue the learning process, to a large extent autonomously.
3. Distinguish the differences among the political, institutional and legislative structures of the European Union and China.
4. Identify the languages of the political and social participants in the bilateral relations between the two regions.
5. Identify the main participants in those institutions relevant to relationships between the two regions.
6. Interpret and understand political and social evolution and development in the 21st century.
7. Make creative and original contributions in distinct fields, demonstrating an attitude of respect towards the opinions, values, behaviour and practices of others.
8. Make innovative proposals to address the problems and intercultural conflicts in the institutional relations between the European Union and China.
9. Recognise and apply theoretical models to specific cases in the field of institutional relations between the two regions.
10. Use acquired knowledge as a basis for originality in the application of ideas, often in a research context.

Content

The contents of this module are developed through 4 courses, grouped in two sections:

1) EU-China political relations

China as an international power: introduction to the basic concepts of the international system (Dra. Nora Sainz Gsell - 2 ECTS)

Introduction to the EU and its External Action (Federico Guerrero - 4 ECTS)

EU-China diplomatic relations (Dr. Lluc Vidal López - 2 ECTS)

2) EU-China commercial legal relations

Comparative research EU-China legal systems (José García Cano - 4 ECTS)

These are the contents of each course:

China as an international power: introduction to the basic concepts of the international system (Dra. Nora Sainz Gsell)

1. Introduction to the International System: basic concepts (actors, structures, dynamics and institutions)

- Basic analytical concepts of International Relations and main characteristics of the International Society
- Actors of International Society (Powers, hierarchy and intergovernmental organizations).

2. People's Republic of China in the International System

- Analysis of Chinese foreign policy: evolution of principles, discourse, policies, strategies and agenda of Chinese foreign policy

3. Chinese policy towards Latin America and Central Asia

- Political and economic strategies that EU and China follow separately towards Latin America and Central Asia. Possible complementarities and incompatibilities between these strategies

Introduction to the EU and its External Action (Federico Guerrero)

1. Introduction to the EU

- Historical process of its inception
- Institutional system and decision-making processes
- Competences and legal system

2. EU External Action

- Introduction to EU External Action (Common Foreign and Security Policy, Trade Policy, Development Aid Policy)
- Origins and historical evolution of EU Foreign Policy (CFSP/CSDP)
- Goals, tools and dimensions of CFSP, including EU's Global Strategy

3. The EU in a multipolar world

- Similarities and differences between the external action of China, the United States and EU

EU-China diplomatic relations (Dr. Lluc Vidal López)

1. EU-China relations: an introduction

- Introduction to post-Cold War regional order: a multipolar world?
- Main characteristics of EU-China relations
- Analysis of their relations in the security, economic and political sectors

2. Case study: the Responsibility To Protect principle: an European and a Chinese view

Comparative research EU-China legal systems (José García Cano)

1. Legal Systems

- Introduction to law and legal systems (*civil law, common law*)

- The Constitution (rights and duties of Chinese and Spanish people in China and Spain)
- Historical review of Chinese Law (Civil Code, Constitution and Laws)
- Natural and legal person
- Volunteer and legal representation

2. Commercial legal system

- Law of matrimonial property in Spain and China
- Law of succession in both countries and differences between them
- International trade and classification
- The company (classification, elements, constitutive requirements, operation, administration, accounting duties, dissolution and liquidation)

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
<hr/>			
Type: Directed			
Master classes	60	2.4	3, 5, 4, 6, 2, 9
<hr/>			
Type: Supervised			
Group assignment	60	2.4	3, 7, 8, 5, 4, 6, 2, 9, 10, 1
Individual essay	20	0.8	3, 5, 4, 2, 9, 10
<hr/>			
Type: Autonomous			
Mandatory and complementary readings; self-study; preparing classnotes and other study material from the module	96	3.84	3, 5, 4, 6, 2, 9, 10
<hr/>			

The dedication of students to this module is divided into several types of activities, each of them with a certain number of hours of workload. These diverse typologies of activities imply different work methodologies:

- Directed activities are activities completed in the classroom with the presence of the lecturer, basically formed by master classes, including practical exercises to analyze case studies, problems and examples regarding the contents of the module, oral presentation of assignments (being group or individual assignments) and individual exams
- Supervised activities are activities performed by the student out of the classroom according to a workplan designed and assessed by the lecturers. Here we will find the preparation of several group or individual assignments ordered by each of the 4 courses included in this module
- Autonomous activities are those activities that students perform on their own: these may include mandatory as well as recommended readings, the study of classnotes and any other activities that may complement the training achieved with the course. These activities represent most part of the time students devote to the whole module

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
Class attendance	20	54	2.16	3, 7, 8, 5, 4, 6, 2, 9, 10, 1
Group assignment oral presentation (one per subject)	40	4	0.16	3, 7, 8, 5, 4, 6, 2, 9, 10, 1
Individual essay (one per subject)	40	6	0.24	3, 5, 4, 6, 9

The 4 courses that are part of this Module will be assessed using the following system:

China as an international power: introduction to the basic concepts of the international system

1. Class attendance (20% of the grade of the course)
2. Group assignment regarding the preparation of a short report about topics of current international affairs that have been seen at the course (40% of the grade of the course).
3. Individual essay (40% of the grade of the course)

Introduction to the EU and its External Action

1. Class attendance (20% of the grade of the course)
2. Group assignment regarding the preparation of a report about the external action of the EU, China and the United States (40% of the grade of the course).
3. Individual essay (40% of the grade of the course)

EU-China diplomatic relations

1. Class attendance (20% of the grade of the course)
2. Group assignment at the classroom about the contents seen at the course (40% of the grade of the course)
3. Individual essay (40% of the grade of the course)

Comparative research EU-China legal systems

1. Class attendance (20% of the grade of the course)
2. Class participation (20% of the grade of the course)
3. Individual assignment about the contents seen at the course (35% of the grade of the course)
4. Final individual exam (25% of the grade of the course)

Bibliography

The mandatory bibliography to correctly follow the 4 courses within this module is the following:

China as an international power: introduction to the basic concepts of the international system

COX, Michael (2017), "Chapter 4. From the end of the cold war to a new global era?" en BAYLIS, John; SMITH, Steve y OWENS, Patricia (eds.), *The Globalization of World Politics. An Introduction to International Relations (Seventh edition)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 68-82.

EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT (2019) " The EU's new Central Asia strategy" (
[www.europarl.europa.eu/.../EPERS_BRI\(2019\)633162_EN.pdf](http://www.europarl.europa.eu/.../EPERS_BRI(2019)633162_EN.pdf)).

HURRELL, Andrew (2017), "Chapter 5. Rising powers and the emerging global order" en BAYLIS; SMITH y OWENS, *op.cit.*, pp.83-97

NYE Jr, Joseph S. (2003), "Capítulo 1. El coloso estadounidense" en *La Paradoja del Poder Norteamericano*, Madrid: Taurus, pp.21-69

PEYROUSE, Sébastien (2009) "Central Asia's Growing Partnership with China", *EUCAM Working Papers*, núm 4. (<http://www.ceps.eu/system/files/book/2009/12/WP4-EN.pdf>)

PEYROUSE, Sébastien (2016) "China: Discussing Sinophilia and Sinophobia in Central Asia" *Journal of Eurasian Studies*, 7, pp 14-23

PEYROUSE, Sébastien (2019) "On the (Belt &) Road to Failure? The Challenges of China's Soft Power Policy in Central Asia (and Beyond), *PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo* No. 613.

<http://www.ponarseurasia.org/memo/belt-road-failure-challenges-china-soft-power-central-asia>

RODRIGUEZ, Francisco y XU, Jinjing (2015) "¿La cara amable de China? Reflexiones sobre la diplomacia de Beijing", *Observatorio de la Política China*, en (<http://politica-china.org/wp-content/plugins/download-attachments/includes/download.php?id=858>).

SAINZ GSELL, Nora (2013) "Las relaciones China- América Latina en el actual sistema internacional. Apuntes sobre política , agenda y cooperación" en ZHOU, Minkang (ed.) *El impacto de China en el mundo iberoamericano. Política, economía, sociedad, lengua, cultura y traducción*, Barcelona, CERAO, Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, pp. 243-258.

SAINZ GSELL, Nora (2017) "Bilateralismo versus multilateralismos. Las relaciones China, Unión Europea (UE) y América Latina y el Caribe (ALC): discurso, políticas y praxis internacionales", en MARTINEZ CORTÉS, José I. (coord.) *América Latina y el Caribe y China. Relaciones políticas e internacionales 2017*, Ciudad de México, UNAM-Fac. de Economía- Centro de Estudios China-México, pp 257-277

SODUPE, Kepa y MOURE, Leire (coords.) (2013), *China en el escenario internacional: una aproximación interdisciplinar*, Bilbao: Universidad del País Vasco, (pp. 23 a 66 y pp.277 a 310)

YOPO HERRERA, Mladen (2011), "China y América Latina: una relación positiva con varias interrogantes", *Policy Paper 38*, Friederich Ebert Stiftung. (<http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/la-seguridad/08541.pdf>).

Introduction to the EU and its External Action

BORCHARDT, Klaus-Dieter (2017), *El ABC del Derecho de la Unión Europea*, Luxemburgo: Oficina de Publicaciones de la UE (extractos)

COMISIÓN EUROPEA (2014), *Comprender las políticas de la Unión Europea: Cómo funciona la Unión Europea*, Luxemburgo: Oficina de Publicaciones de la UE (leer sólo los apartados de "Parlamento Europeo", "Comisión Europea", "Consejo Europeo" y "Consejo de la UE")

CORBETT, Richard, PETERSON, John and KENEALY, Daniel (2018), "Chapter 3. The EU's Institutions" in KENEALY, Daniel; PETERSON, Johh and CORBETT, Richard (eds.), *The European Union: how does it work? (Fifth Edition)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press

DINAN, Desmond (2018), "Chapter 2. How did we get here?" in KENEALY, Daniel; PETERSON, Johh and CORBETT, Richard (eds.), *op.cit.*

GIEGERICH, Bastian (2015), "Chapter 18. Foreign and Security Policy. Civilian Power Europe and American Leadership", en WALLACE, Helene; POLLACK, Mark A. y YOUNG, Alasdair R. (eds.) *Policy-Making in the European Union, Oxford (Seventh edition)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 436-463.

KEUKELEIRE, Stephan and DELREUX, Tom (2014), "Chapter 8. The Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)" in *The Foreign Policy of the European Union (Second edition)*, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.172-196

MARTÍNEZ CAVERO, Pedro (2013), "Cap.3 Historia de la UE" en SCHRIEWER, Klaus y CAYUELA, Salvador (eds.), *Europa a un paso. Material Didáctico*, Murcia: Isabor, <http://www.catedrajeanmonnet.eu/Publicaciones/Publikationen%20-%20Europa%20a%20un%20paso%20-%20capitulos/Europa%20a%20un%20paso%20-%20cap%2003%20-%20historia%20de%20la%20UE.pdf>

SMITH, Michael E. (2017), "Chapter 8. Implementation: Making the European Union's International Relations Work" en HILL, Christopher; SMITH, Michael y VANHOONACKER, Sophie (eds.), *International Relations and the European Union (Third edition)*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 165-185

UNIÓN EUROPEA (2016), *Una visión común, una actuación conjunta: una Europea más fuerte - Estrategia global para la política exterior y de seguridad de la Unión Europea*, https://europa.eu/globalstrategy/sites/globalstrategy/files/eugs_es_version.pdf

VANHOONACKER, Sophie and POMORSKA, Karolina (2017), "Chapter 5. The Institutional Framework" en HILL, Christopher; SMITH, Michael y VANHOONACKER, Sophie (eds.), *op.cit.*, pp. 165-185

Website de la UE sobre instituciones y organismos de la UE:
http://europa.eu/about-eu/institutions-bodies/index_es.htm

EU-China diplomatic relations

EU-China Relations Factsheet
https://eeas.europa.eu/topics/external-investment-plan/34728/eu-china-relations-factsheet_en

CHE, Dingding and HU, Junyang (2019), "Are the European Union and China Systemic Rivals?". *The Diplomat*, April 8th 2019. <https://thediplomat.com/2019/04/are-the-european-union-and-china-systemic-rivals/>

LÓPEZ I VIDAL, Lluc; SERRA, Francesc y SORIANO, Juan Pablo (2014), "Relaciones de la Unión Europea con los socios estratégicos: Estados Unidos, Rusia y China" en BARBÉ, Esther (ed.), *La Unión Europea en las Relaciones Internacionales*, Madrid: Editorial Ariel, p.239-265.

LÓPEZ I VIDAL, Lluc (2019). "China Contestation of the EU's Promotion of the Responsibility to Protect: Between Solidarists and Sovereignists" in Elisabeth Johansson-Nogués et al. (Eds.) *European Union Contested. Foreign Policy in a New Global Context*. London: Springer, 55-74.

REES, Nicholas (2009), "EU-China Relations: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives" en WIESSALAS, Georg; WILSON, John y TANEJA, Pradeep (eds.) *The European Union and China. Interests and Dilemmas European*, Amsterdam/Nueva York: Rodopi (Serie European Studies núm. 27), pp. 31-46

ZHOU, Hong (2016), "An Overview of the China-EU Strategic Partnership (2003-2013)", en ZHOU, Hong (ed.) *China-EU Relations Reassessing the China-EU Comprehensive Strategic Partnership*, Beijing: Springer, pp. 3-34.

Comparative research EU-China legalsystems

España. Real Decreto de 24 de julio de 1889 por el que se publica el Código Civil.

España. Real Decreto Legislativo 2/2015, de 23 de octubre, por el que se aprueba el texto refundido de la Ley del Estatuto de los Trabajadores.

España. Constitución Española. Publicado en: «BOE» núm. 311, de 29/12/1978.

España. Real Decreto Legislativo 1/2010, de 2 de julio, por el que se aprueba el texto refundido de la Ley de Sociedades de Capital.

Constitución de la República Popular De China. Aprobado en la quinta sesión del quinto Congreso popular y promulgado para su implementación por la proclamación del Congreso Nacional del Pueblo el 4 de diciembre de 1982.

China. Ley de Sociedades de la República Popular China. Orden del Presidente de la República Popular China. No. 42

China. Ley de Matrimonio de la República Popular China. Adoptada en la tercera sesión del Quinto Congreso Nacional del Pueblo el 10 de septiembre de 1980 y promulgada por la Orden N° 9 del Presidente del Comité Permanente del Congreso Nacional del Pueblo.

China. Ley de Sucesión de la República Popular China. Adoptada en la Tercera Sesión del Sexto Congreso Nacional del Pueblo el 10 de abril de 1985 y promulgada por la Orden N° 24 del Presidente de la República Popular China.

China. Principios generales del derecho civil de la República Popular China. Aprobado en la Cuarta Sesión del Sexto Congreso Nacional del Pueblo el 12 de abril de 1986 y promulgado por Orden N° 37 del Presidente de la República Popular China.

GONZALEZ INCHAURRAGA, Iñigo (2015), *Derecho chino. Una introducción para diplomáticos, empresarios y políticos*, Ed. Aranzadi, SA

SMITS, Jan M. (2014), *Contract law. A comparative introduction*, Ed. Edward Elgar Publishing Limited

Software

No need of any special software beyond the use of Moodle

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
(TE) Theory	1	Spanish	first semester	afternoon
(TE) Theory	2	Spanish	first semester	afternoon