UAB
Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona

Basics of the European Union Foreign Action

Code: 45621
ECTS Credits: 15

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
International Relations, Security and Development	OP	1

Contact

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Teachers

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Teaching groups languages

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

Prerequisites

Students have to work correctly in both languages Spanish and English.

Objectives and Contextualisation

Become familiar with the theoretical and political debates raised by the European Union's role in the international arena.

Examine the EU's external action across its various dimensions: political, economic, and security-related.

Acquire a solid theoretical understanding of the EU's external action through the analysis of key readings and documents addressing its core aspects.

Analyze the instruments of EU external action through case studies, with particular emphasis on their versatility, limitations, and effectiveness.

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Use of Artificial Intelligence (AI)

The use of AI technologies is permitted exclusively for support tasks: proofreading, or translations. Students must clearly identify which sections were generated with this technology, specify the tools used, and include a reflection on how they influenced the process and final outcome of the activity. Lack of transparency in the use of AI in assessable activities will be considered academic dishonesty and may result in a partial or total penalty on the grade for the activity, or greater penalties in serious cases.

Learning Outcomes

1. CA28 (Competence) Draw up politically viable proposals for EU external actions that are in line with the principles of ethical responsibility and respect for fundamental rights, diversity and democratic values.
2. CA29 (Competence) Demonstrate proactiveness and adaptability during teamwork to formulate proposals relating to one of the EU's priority areas for external action.
3. KA24 (Knowledge) To compare theoretical frameworks and approaches regarding the implementation of European external action in a case study,
4. KA25 (Knowledge) To select relevant primary sources from among the documents published by European institutions to analyse the EU's external action.
5. KA26 (Knowledge) To describe the challenges and opportunities of the EU's external action in a changing context.
6. KA27 (Knowledge) To identify the key decision makers in matters of external action, with consideration for legal and political factors.
7. SA30 (Skill) To apply qualitative analysis techniques to explain how relations between the EU and other international actors have been shaped and developed.
8. SA31 (Skill) To transmit information clearly and coherently through solid arguments based on literature and the knowledge acquired on matters of the EU's external action.
9. SA32 (Skill) To analyse relevant data from official sources on the implementation of the EU's external action.
10. SA33 (Skill) To analyse the impact of the EU's institutional structure on its external action.

Content

Session 1. From Informality to Formality: From EPC to CFSP

Session 2. The European Union's External Action: Conceptual Delimitations

Session 3. Theories of External Action

Session 4. The EU and the Concept of Power

Session 5. Objectives and Principles of the European Union's External Action

Session 6. Instruments of External Action

Session 7. The New Institutional Architecture of the European Union's External Action

Session 8. The EU and Palestine

Session 9. Development Cooperation

Session 10. Europeanisation and De-Europeanisation

Session 11. The Analysis of the European Union's International Competences

Session 12. The EU and Strategies

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Master class with ICT support	25	1	KA27, SA32, KA27
Tutorials and regular monitoring of activities	112	4.48	KA26, KA27, SA30, KA26
Type: Supervised			
Seminar activities and practical sessions	50	2	CA28, CA29, KA24, KA25, KA26, KA27, SA30, SA31, SA32, SA33, CA28
Type: Autonomous			
Individual study and work related to seminars and practical sessions	188	7.52	CA28, KA24, KA25, KA26, KA27, SA30, SA31, SA32, SA33, CA28

The methodology combines active learning and problem-based learning approaches, structured around four main components: lectures, student presentations, debates among students, and practical case studies or simulation sessions.

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 discussion and follow-up practical session	50%	0	0	CA28, CA29, KA24, KA26, KA27, SA30, SA31
Delivery of assignments previously assigned	50%	0	0	CA28, CA29, KA24, KA25, KA26, KA27, SA30, SA31, SA32, SA33

The module is assessed through continuous assessment and is divided into three graded blocks.

To pass the module, it is essential to pass all three blocks with a minimum grade of 5 in each.

The weighting is as follows: Block I (60%), Block II (30%), and Block III (10%).

Each block is led by one or more instructors, and each of them provides specific guidelines regarding assessment in their respective part of the syllabus.

Bibliography

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BARBÉ, E. (ed.) Política exterior europea, Ariel, Barcelona, 2000. Barbé, E. (ed.), ¿Existe una brecha transatlántica? Estados Unidos y la Unión Europea tras la crisis de Irak, Madrid, Libros de la Catarata, 2005.

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Knodt, M. y S. Princen, (eds.), Understanding the European Union's External Relations, London, Routledge, 2003.

Software

No use of "programari".

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.