Syllabus "External Relations of the European Union"

Course Details:
Full Title: External Relations of the European Union
Course ID: 8248000519
First session: Thursday, April 16, 1 p.m.
Room: GER/50/U

Lecturer:
Dr. Markus Gastinger
Email: Markus.Gastinger@tu-dresden.de
Office hours: Room GER/201, appointments by prior arrangement
Phone: 0351 / 463 37498

Link to OPAL ⇨ https://bildungsportal.sachsen.de/opal/auth/RepositoryEntry/8248000519

I.) Basic information

This seminar will introduce students to the external dimension of the European Union (EU), excluding CFSP/CSDP matters. Ever since the Treaty of Rome the EU had powers to act vis-à-vis third countries in certain instances. Most importantly, the EU—and with it the Commission—was put in the driver's seat of the Common Commercial Policy (CCP). At the same time, member states have always seen "external relations" as their *domaine réservé* par excellence, i.e. an area in which they are extremely hesitant to forego competences. In this seminar we will be looking at some of the main developments, negotiations, and battles within the EU's institutional triangle. We will start with a cursory overview of the current main actors (Council, Commission, European Parliament and, since Lisbon, the European External Action Service) to make sure that everyone has a reasonable level of understanding of how the EU works and which preferences each institution holds. We then identify and critically reflect on alternative theories explaining why sovereign states may choose to delegate competences to the EU and consequences that follow from this decision. The insight generated in this first part of the seminar will be substantiated through in-depth case studies of the EU's trade, development, and environmental policy as well as its role in International Organizations (IOs). Throughout the seminar we will keep an eye on the latest developments in EU external relations (e.g. through newspapers and press releases) and train to practically apply theories and concepts. We will end the seminar with a (partly normative) discussion if the EU should attract yet more external competences in the future.

II.) Course objectives & overview

By attending this seminar you should attain the following objectives:

1. Learn more about the EU as a political polity beyond the nation state and regional IO.
2. Train your ability to reflect critically on alternative theories that explain European integration and everyday policy-making, in particular concerning external relations.
3. Discover various ways of gathering information on European politics and become skilled at linking empirical data with theoretical concepts.
4. Get a brief overview of social scientific methods employed to test theoretical claims.
5. Acquire a basic understanding of topical issues and challenges faced by the EU on the world scene, grasp their complexities and consider how they may be overcome.
6. Improve your English speaking and writing skills, which will surely help you find your feet in a wide variety of situations.

At the beginning of the seminar we will focus on general issues, such as theories, methods, actors and preferences by drawing on your previous experiences. Specifically, you will be asked to form groups and discuss which theories and methods you have used in the past to study particular topics and whether you found them useful for that purpose. Eventually we will engage in a moderated open debate with the goal to formulate some dos and don'ts that everyone can apply in the future. On the

question of actors and preferences we will form groups according to which EU institution you know best (Commission, Council, EP and EEAS) and, guided by a few discussion questions, consider which preferences they may have. Furthermore, you will get to know some (on-line) sources where you can find information on European affairs and—in each session—we shall shortly discuss one topical issue in the light of our seminar's findings. Finally, at the end of the first part you will get the chance to shortly present a first outline of your seminar paper (which *topic* do you want to explain with which *actors* drawing from which *theory* and using which *method*?) and receive invaluable feedback.

In the second part we will tackle four case studies to deepen our understanding of European policy-processes: CCP, development policy, environmental policy and the EU's involvement in other IOs (e.g. UNO, WTO, OECD, World Bank). To this end we will form four groups of equal sizes. Every group will tackle one case study each and prepare a Wiki on OPAL, where you will be asked to introduce your case study to the students of the other three groups drawing as heavily as possible from the first part of the seminar. Before the last session you will be able to vote the best Wiki and the winning group will receive a small prize.

All Wikis should be composed of the following sections:

- **Introduction**: including a table of contents with hyperlinks.
- **EU institutions:** the role of Commission, Council, EEAS and EP.
- **Main challenges:** only real-life empirical challenges ("the stuff of newspapers").
- **Solutions:** how could each EU institution help overcome these challenges.
- **Theories:** what would different theoretical frameworks (fail to) explain of your case.

Within these sections, you are free to create as many sub-sections as you like. You can also include as many tables, pictures, videos etc. in your Wiki as you think is useful. The most important thing is that your Wiki is interesting *for others*. Please also reveal the sources used. You can have no more than one additional level in your Wiki. For example, you could hyperlink to "the Commission" in the EU institutions' section and *briefly* explain what "the Commission" is (e.g. a supranational body going back to the High Authority of the ECSC that shall neither take nor seek instructions from Member States). Do not go on to create hyperlinks to explain "High Authority" or "ECSC". Use this second level sparsely to introduce the most important bodies, concepts, definitions etc.

Towards the end of the second part we will be increasingly shifting towards a workshop style, where you will be able to refine your argument based on comments from your fellow students. This should help you to take your seminar paper to the highest possible level. Groups 1 and 2 will present first, while members of groups 3 and 4 will act as discussants. In the following session we will reverse this procedure. Please prepare a Power Point presentation for this occasion. You can find guidelines on how I will grade your presentation in section six of this syllabus. We will end the seminar with a big debate on the question whether the EU should get its own Foreign Minister or not. In this debate we will adopt the rules of the Oxford Union debating society to see which side managed to swing more of the audience. In our last meeting we will have a short debriefing and evaluation session.

> **Disclaimer!** Alongside this seminar I am preparing the *Sächsisches Hochschuldidaktik-Zertifikat*. There are a few things and methods that I will try out on you throughout this semester, primarily in connection with OPAL. While generally this should *improve* what you get out of this experience, there may be some bumps along the way where things may not proceed as smoothly as they should. I hope for your understanding in those cases.

III.) Assessment & Grading

Students' performance will be assessed and graded based on three sources:

>   a) In-class participation (1/6 of the final grade),
>   b) Power-Point presentation (1/6 of the final grade),
>   c) Seminar paper (2/3 of the final grade).

Ad a) In-class participation (1/6 of the final grade)
One sixth of your final grade will be determined by your in-class performance. Included here is active participation in open debates throughout the seminar, to effort you put into preparing the Wiki, and how well you fulfill your role as discussant. Active participation on OPAL (e.g. answering questions of your fellow students in the forum) also count towards this mark.

Ad b) Power-Point presentation (1/6 of the final grade)
Another sixth of your grade is the presentation of your seminar paper in workshop II. You can find the framework that I will use to grade your presentation in section VI. For the most part it is not the content that will influence your score but technical aspects like structure, presentation and (body) language. This contrasts starkly with the seminar paper.

Ad c) Seminar paper (2/3 of the final grade)
The biggest part of your grade will go back to your seminar paper. This paper can cover whichever aspect of EU external relations you found the most interesting in the seminar. If you want to write your paper on a topic of EU external relations *not* covered in the seminar, you may do so after prior consultation. Generally, you can freely choose your theoretical and empirical angles. But formally the seminar paper needs to meet the following requirements:

- 10-15 pages long. This excludes the cover page, table of contents, and list of abbreviations (paginated with Roman numerals). It includes the main text, any tables, figures etc. and the list of references (pages carry Arabic numbers).
- All margins are 2.54 cm (1 inch).
- Font type is Times New Roman.
- Font size is 12 pt.
- Line spacing is set to 1.5.
- Feel free to use any standard citation format of the social sciences that your prefer.

The framework for grading the paper is reproduced in section V of this syllabus.

> **Disclaimer!** All parts of this syllabus are still preliminary. Individual sections may still be adjusted. All changes will be clearly communicated throughout the seminar.

IV.) Session outline

Part	Day	Topic	Content	Notes section for students & important deadlines
Intro	April 16	A first glance	Introduction to the topic and the seminar; getting to know each other; exchange of expectations on all sides; Q&A.	
Part 1 "Ground-work"	April 30	Theories & Methods	Group work on alternative theories and methods that can be used to analyze European integration and policy-making; a few tricks of the trade that make things easier; open debate.	
	May 7	Actors & Preferences	Group work on the composition, history and preferences of European institutions; on-line sources for keeping abreast with European affairs; open debate.	
	May 21	Workshop I	First rough sketch of your seminar paper (topic, actors, theory, method). Please circulate a one-page handout until Monday, May 18. No Power Point.	Handout by May 18.
Part 2 "Case studies"	June 4	CCP	Group 1 presents their Wiki to all seminar participants; Q&A; feedback.	
	June 11	Development	Group 2 presents their Wiki to all seminar participants; Q&A; feedback.	
	June 18	Environment	Group 3 presents their Wiki to all seminar participants; Q&A; feedback.	
	June 25	IOs	Group 4 presents their Wiki to all seminar participants; Q&A; feedback.	
	July 2	Workshop II (Group 1)	Group 1+2 circulate a two-page handout until Monday, June 29. Use Power Point. Group 3+4 act as discussants.	Handout by June 29 (groups 1+2).
	July 9	Workshop II (Group 2)	Group 3+4 circulate a two-page handout until Monday, July 6. Use Power Point. Group 1+2 act as discussants.	Handout by July 6 (groups 3+4).
Part 3 "Wrapping up"	July 16	Quo vadis	The "Oxford Union" Debate Speaking with a single voice—should the EU get its own foreign minister?	
	July 23	Debriefing	General Q&A concerning all topics covered in the seminar; election of the winning Wiki; debriefing; feedback; evaluation.	

V.) Grading scheme (written work)

	1 (Sehr Gut)	2 (Gut)	3 (Befriedigend)	4 (Ausreichend)	5 (Nicht ausreichend)
Structure	The paper is well structured. Individual sections are always well connected. The reader never loses sight of where in the paper (s)he is.	The paper is well structured. Individual sections are mostly well connected. The reader never loses sight of where in the paper (s)he is.	The paper is not well structured. Individual sections are sometimes well connected. The reader sometimes loses sight of the "big picture".	The paper is not well structured. Individual sections are rarely well connected. The reader is often confused where in the paper (s)he is.	The paper has no recognizable structure. Individual sections are not connected. The reader feels lost from start to finish.
Argument	The paper makes a consistent argument. It clearly hypothesizes the relationship between its dependent and independent variable(s), carefully describes what previous contributions have stated, and rigorously tests this relationship with empirics.	The paper makes a consistent argument. It clearly hypothesizes the relationship between its dependent and independent variable(s), rather carefully describes what previous contributions have stated, and tests this relationship in the empirical section.	The paper makes an identifiable argument. It is not always clear which (in)dependent variable(s) have been chosen and the "state of the art" is presented somewhat fuzzy. The student has made some effort to reconcile theory and empirics.	The paper makes an identifiable argument but the reader only has some remote understanding of what the student wants to explain and how. The literature review is seriously underdeveloped and the theoretical and empirical parts hardly fit together.	The paper makes no argument. It is not at all clear what the student aims to achieve. The theoretical part is missing or reduced to the point where it resembles a "caricature". The empirical part is not connected to previous sections in the paper.
Presentation	Formatting rules (font type & size, line spacing, margins, upper/lower page limits etc.) have been followed. Table of contents and list of abbreviations are complete. Tables and figures illustrate the underlying data well. There are no typos in the manuscript.	Formatting rules have been followed. Table of contents and list of abbreviations are complete. Tables and figures illustrate the underlying data rather well. The manuscript contains individual typos.	Formatting rules have not been followed. Table of contents and/or list of abbreviations miss individual items. Tables and figures illustrate the underlying data (rather) well. The manuscript contains some typos, suggesting that it has been prepared "last minute".	Formatting rules have not been followed. Table of contents and/or list of abbreviations show some gaps or tables and figures illustrate the underlying data (rather) poorly. Frequent typos give the impression of careless working habits.	Formatting rules have been disregarded. Table of contents and/or list of abbreviations missing. No tables and/or figures. The manuscript is rife with typos.
References	Sources are marked clearly in the text. The citation style is used consistently throughout the paper without errors. The references are complete and contain all sources (no more, no less).	Sources are marked clearly in the text. The citation style is used consistently but with some errors that do not hamper finding the source or individual items in the references are misplaced.	Sources are marked clearly in the text. The citation style is used inconsistently. Finding the source is occasionally difficult or some items in the references are misplaced.	Sources are not always (!) marked clearly in the text or finding the source is often difficult or many items in the references are misplaced.	Sources are not marked in the text (plagiarism!?). No recognizable citation style used. List of references contains many errors.
Sources & Data	The paper draws from a large number of high quality and/or appropriate sources and data.	The paper draws from a good number of high quality and/or appropriate sources and data.	The paper draws from a sufficiently large number of sources and data, mostly of high quality and/or appropriate.	The paper draws from a sufficiently large number of sources and data, mostly of low quality and/or inappropriate.	The paper contains few to no sources and data, which are mostly of low quality and/or inappropriate.

VI.) Grading scheme (presentations)

	1 (Sehr Gut)	2 (Gut)	3 (Befriedigend)	4 (Ausreichend)	5 (Nicht ausreichend)
Handout	The handout looks very good. It helps to prepare for and follow the presentation. It was circulated on time.	The handout looks good. It helps to prepare for and follow the presentation. It was circulated on time.	The handout looks (very) good but it misses to prepare or guide the reader or the handout is very good but was circulated a bit after the deadline.	The handout is helpful to follow the presentation but it was circulated too late (i.e. too close to the actual presentation). The audience therefore had no chance to prepare for the presentation.	No handout was prepared.
Content	The presentation is very interesting to listen to. The information presented is well selected (not too much, not too little) and the audience is able to follow with ease (introduction, main part, conclusions). The presenter handles questions from the audience confidently.	The presentation is interesting to listen to. The presented information has been selected beforehand, but individual parts of the presentation are too long/short. The presenter handles questions from the audience mostly confidently.	The presentation is interesting. The information has been selected, but is sometimes tedious. The presenter reacts nervously to questions.	The presentation is not very interesting. The information presented is not (well) selected and the audience is often bored. The presenter reacts nervously to questions	The presentation is not interesting. Information seems not to have been selected beforehand and the audience hardly manages to follow what is being said. The presenter ignores questions.
Visualization	The slides contain just the right amount of information (not too much, not too little). The text on slides can be read easily (font size, background color etc.) and videos, pictures, tables, figures etc. reinforce what is said and can be explained/understood quickly enough.	Slides are mostly well assembled, but some contain too much information and/or are hard to read. Videos, pictures, tables, figures etc. reinforce what is said but sometimes take a bit long for the audience to process.	Many slides contain too much information/text. It is not always clear why certain videos, pictures, tables, figures etc. are shown and/or they take long the presentation.	The slides generally contain too much information/text. Videos, pictures, tables, figures etc. are shown almost randomly and/or they drag out the presentation.	No Power Point presentation has been prepared (even though the preparation of such a presentation was mandatory).
(Body) Language	The presenter always speaks very clearly and neither too slowly/quickly nor too loudly/quietly. The body language signals that the presenter is at ease with standing in front of a group of people.	The presenter speaks mostly (very) clearly and neither too slowly/quickly nor too loudly/quietly. The body language signals that the presenter is (mostly) at ease with standing in front of a group of people.	The presenter speaks clearly, but sometimes too slowly/quickly and/or too loudly/softly. The body language signals discomfort with the situation.	The presenter is generally difficult to understand. The body language signals discomfort.	The presenter is incomprehensible. The body language is hostile.
Time management	The presentation takes exactly as long as it should (+/- 10 percent).	The presentation takes almost as long as it should (+/- 20 percent).	The presentation takes approximately as long as it should (+/- 30 percent).	The presentation took considerably longer/shorter than it should have been (+/- 40 percent)	The presentation was never formally closed. The lecturer had to abort it (>40 percent).