



STUDY PROGRAMME

1. POL
2. MATA

ACADEMIC YEAR

2025-2026

SEMESTER

Spring

COURSE TITLE

The Political Economy of European Integration: Trade

COURSE PROFESSOR

Michele CHANG

COURSE ASSISTANT

Marco NICOLICH, Harm VAN DE PLASSCHE

NATURE OF COURSE (COMPULSORY, OPTIONAL)

Compulsory course

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

English

ECTS CREDITS

2

1. COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course provides an overview of some of the EU's major economic policies relating to trade. It is a continuation of the fall course on the euro and the single market, and students are expected to be able to use the knowledge learned in the second semester. No economics background is assumed, and the course will provide explanations of the major economic concepts relevant to each policy area. The course considers the objectives and institutional framework for the EU economic policies and some of the major ideas from the political economy literature to explain their development.

At the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Identify the main elements of European economic integration, particularly relating to trade policy;
- Analyse and interpret current and historical developments in EU economic policy in a critical manner from national and European perspectives;
- Evaluate academic and policy-oriented research;
- Develop communication skills and learn how to address policy-oriented audiences
- Apply major economic and political theories to European economic integration.





2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course objectives link up with the following programme-specific learning outcomes:

POL:

Knowledge-based

- A.1 Students develop a multidisciplinary understanding of the European political system.
- A.2 Students have a general knowledge of the main components of the EU political system: institutions, actors, decision-making procedures, competences and policies.
- A.3. Students comprehend the disciplinary knowledge and theories specific to EU studies.
- A.6 Students recognize the normative assumptions and implications of theories of European integration.

Skills-based

- B.1 Students can recognize, contextualize, explain, and interpret political, societal and economic phenomena in European integration. They can assess events, governance problems and political crises.
- B.2 Students can analyse the process and actors of EU policy-making at different levels of governance and can reflect on potential developments.
- B.3 Students can transform a complex problem into a research question, mobilize theories, develop a research design, and conduct empirical work to provide solutions in an analytical and balanced way.
- B.4 Students can flexibly apply theories and analytical frameworks from different disciplinary perspectives to the main issues of EU politics and policies.
- B.5 Students can analyse, in a limited amount of time, complex and new issues, by finding and investigating various sources of information and delivering an analytical and critical synthesis.
- B.7 Students can communicate clearly and effectively, through oral presentations or written documents, to different kinds of audiences.

MATA:

- The graduate has good knowledge of, depending on his or her disciplinary focus, the political and/or legal systems, the decision-making processes, the economic structures and the main internal and external policies of the European Union and the United States.
- The graduate has insights into historical, political, legal and economic aspects of transatlantic affairs as well as into those policy areas that are of essential importance to transatlantic affairs. He or she can use these insights to contextualize and interpret new developments.
- The graduate is capable of processing a large amount of information and appropriately analyse relevant sources depending on his or her disciplinary focus within a short period of time and of suggesting possible actions that contribute to problem-solving in a creative way.

3. COURSE CONTENTS

- History and governance of the common commercial policy
- Europe and the WTO
- European trade relations
- External trade relations: US and China



4. TEACHING METHOD

Lectures outlining the main empirical and theoretical content of the course; group presentations on assigned topics; class discussions

Further details on the teaching method

Assignments include:

- 1) reading the assigned articles and book chapters;
- 2) group presentation of 5-7 minutes on assigned topics.

5. COURSE MATERIAL

Please refer to the detailed course outline for the full reading list.

6. EVALUATION

- a) 20% Group presentation
- b) 80% A final exam that will consist of a written essay taken during the exam period. No outside materials are permitted.

Plagiarism: Pursuant to Articles 39a and subsequent provisions of the College of Europe Study Regulations 2025–2026, plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, and the falsification of data are expressly prohibited and shall be deemed to constitute academic misconduct. All written work submitted by a student shall be subject to assessment with regard not only to its originality but also to the scope and rigor of the research undertaken. Any instance of plagiarism, self-plagiarism, collusion, or falsification of data, as defined in the aforementioned Study Regulation, shall give rise to the imposition of penalties in accordance with Article 40 thereof.

Artificial Intelligence: Pursuant to Articles 38 and subsequent provisions of the College of Europe Study Regulations 2025–2026, the category of permitted generative AI (genAI) use for the present course is restricted use. Students may employ genAI tools exclusively at the foundational stages of the work process, such as brainstorming on structure or approach, screening of literature, or the organisation of data. The use of genAI for advanced stages of the work process, including the analysis or interpretation of data, the generation of arguments, the drafting or writing of text, or translation and rewriting of content, is strictly prohibited.

The non-generative use of AI tools, such as for spell-checking, reference style management, or information searches, is by default permitted for all course work and the Master's thesis.

Any use of genAI, even within the restricted category, must be transparently acknowledged in accordance with the departments referencing guidelines. Students bear full responsibility for the entirety of the content they submit, irrespective of the tools used, and must ensure compliance with College regulations on academic integrity, data protection, and intellectual property.

Violations of the permitted scope of AI use, or failures to acknowledge such use, shall constitute academic misconduct and will be sanctioned in line with Articles 39a, 39b, and 40 of the Academic Regulations on plagiarism, falsification of data, and related infringements.





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7. Assessment at second attempt

ECTS CARD

During the second examination session the course is assessed 100% on the basis of a written resit exam.



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