



STUDY PROGRAMME

1. POL
2. MATA-POL

ACADEMIC YEAR

2025-2026

SEMESTER

Second

COURSE TITLE

The Green Deal – Unpacking the EU’s energy and climate policies

COURSE PROFESSOR

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COURSE ASSISTANT

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NATURE OF COURSE (COMPULSORY, OPTIONAL)

1. Optional
2. Optional

LANGUAGE OF INSTRUCTION

English

ECTS CREDITS

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1. COURSE OBJECTIVE

The energy sector has been at the heart of the European integration project from the early days. There is also no sector more fundamental to our societies, economies and individual lives. A motor of the industrial revolution and globalization, as well as a subject of geopolitical conflict, it is increasingly being viewed from yet another perspective: decarbonization. Our traditional ways to produce and consume energy are the reasons behind climate change, mankind’s biggest challenge in the 21st century. The Green Deal has become a new narrative for the integration process. Bold and smart energy policy changes are also necessary for the way out of the global warming crisis. We are already in an energy transition, which will profoundly affect the way we are living in Europe and beyond. This transition will bring a multitude of challenges, from disruptive innovation to green finance, to inequalities and new geopolitical conflicts. Future decision-makers should be prepared to meet these challenges, and have the tools and the knowledge needed to make the transition a success. This is even more important now as the Green Deal will need to cover and integrate other aspects such as social, industrial and trade policy under the Von der Leyen II Commission.

What is key is understanding governance – the objectives, instruments, processes and institutions shaping the Green Deal, Europe’s great energy and climate transition. Within the European Union, the energy governance has significantly evolved over the last few years, and will continue to do so. At the same time, Europe’s energy governance is closely and increasingly intertwined with global developments such as the Paris Agreement or trade with the US and China. Getting into and keeping up to speed with the European and international energy transition governance is the key objective of the course.

The Course aims at making students understand the complexity of the Green Deal and the energy transition, its objectives, stakeholders and decision-making processes on a global and European level.



They should be empowered to participate in the transition debate, and ultimately help shaping the new energy and climate policy, including its relations with global partners. They will understand the specifics of the energy sectors, learn how European and international energy governance has evolved, its current state and the perspectives and challenges it faces. They will also be encouraged to establish a practical affinity with the sector and expand their network, including through interaction with professionals in the field (through participating in Energy Governance Labs).

2. LEARNING OUTCOMES

Course-specific learning outcomes

- Students possess a pluri-disciplinary understanding of European integration, allowing them to understand fully the nature, dynamics and functioning of the EU system.
- Students have a general knowledge of the main components of the EU political system: institutions, actors, decision-making procedures, competences and policies.
- Students possess an in-depth knowledge of fundamental aspects of the EU political system (institutions, actors, policies etc.).
- Students develop a concrete understanding of the logics of policy-making and negotiations within the EU political system, thanks to simulation exercises and the drafting of policy papers.
- Students can recognize, contextualize, explain, and interpret political, societal and economic phenomena in European integration. They can assess events, governance problems and political crises.
- 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.
- Students can flexibly apply theories and analytical frameworks from different disciplinary perspectives to the main issues of EU politics and policies.
- Students are able to 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.
- Students are capable of working as part of a complex project, individually or collectively, and they develop skills of planning, organisation, prioritisation and time management.
- Students can communicate clearly and effectively, through oral presentations or written documents, to different kinds of audiences.

For MATA students, the following MATA programme-specific learning outcomes are relevant

1. Knowledge

1.1 Theoretical mastery

The graduate demonstrates advanced and critical mastery of the principal theoretical approaches and analytical concepts in their disciplinary focus (International Relations and Diplomacy Studies, Political Science, Regional Studies) or interdisciplinary focus and can apply them to the analysis of transatlantic affairs.

1.2 Command of the scientific state of the art

The graduate can identify, interpret and critically assess the current state of academic research on transatlantic affairs and can situate them within broader scholarly debates, in line with their (inter-) disciplinary focus.

1.3 Comparative political-institutional knowledge

The graduate possesses in-depth and comparative knowledge of the political systems of the European Union and the United States, including their institutional structures, policy-making processes, and core internal and external policies, and can analyse their interactions in a transatlantic context.

1.4 Historical and contextual understanding



The graduate can contextualise and interpret contemporary transatlantic developments by integrating historical, political, legal and economic perspectives, and can meaningfully explain how past dynamics shape current policy choices, debates and institutional frameworks.

1.5 Integrative, multi-perspective knowledge

The graduate can synthesise and integrate insights from multiple disciplines relevant to transatlantic affairs (e.g., International Relations, Political Science, Regional Studies or an interdisciplinary focus) and can adopt and compare both European and U.S. perspectives in analysing and evaluating transatlantic issues

1.6 Analysis of relative geopolitical standing of the EU and/or US

The graduate can analyse developments within Europe and/or the US that impact their relative geopolitical standing, thereby influencing EU and/or US interests relevant to transatlantic affairs.

1.7 Assessment on capacity to act in transatlantic affairs

The graduate acquires a nuanced perspective of internal political, economic, and/or social pressures and how they may impact, either directly or indirectly, the transatlantic relationship and the capacity of the transatlantic partners to act in accordance with the needs of the transatlantic partnership.

2. Skills

2.1 Analytical openness

The graduate can analyse transatlantic affairs in a broad and multidisciplinary manner, assessing challenges in this domain with intellectual openness, sensitivity to diversity of perspectives, and the ability to understand and navigate complex and ambiguous situations.

2.2 Critical reflection, argumentation, and communication

The graduate is able to critically reflect on a wide range of issues in transatlantic affairs, to develop well-informed and evidence-based points of view, and to communicate these effectively, both orally and in writing, when working independently or collaboratively.

2.3 Research design

The graduate can independently transform complex transatlantic issues into a clear and feasible research question, find and evaluate relevant sources in line with their (inter-) disciplinary focus, apply appropriate concepts and methods, and present research results in accordance with the ethical standards of the field.

2.4 Information processing, analysis, and problem-solving

The graduate is capable of rapidly processing large volumes of information, critically analysing (inter-)discipline-relevant sources, and proposing creative, feasible, and analytically grounded solutions to problems within the field of transatlantic affairs.

2.5 Professional autonomy, organisational skills, and intercultural competence

The graduate has the intellectual maturity and professional skills to function autonomously and responsibly in national or international professional environments—particularly in transatlantic contexts—by planning and organising work effectively, setting priorities, meeting deadlines, cooperating across cultural and disciplinary boundaries, and building professional networks.

3. COURSE CONTENTS

This course covers European energy and climate governance in a comprehensive manner and embedded in an international context. It will cover the following aspects:

1. Rockefeller reloaded: how we built a carbon world and became dependent on fossil fuels (the industrial revolution and the development of fossil fuel sectors (coal, oil, gas) will serve as an introduction to the energy and natural resource business and conflicts).
2. Natural gas – between the internal market and geopolitics (Europe's dependence on natural gas from a few dominant sources and pipelines has led to an increasingly open and interconnected



internal energy market but keeps fuelling controversies about pipelines, dependence and crises. The chapter will be concluded by a hydrogen outlook).

3. Electricity – the universal fuel? (green electricity takes center stage in the energy and climate transition. It is a highly complex system exposed to the challenge of managing volatile renewables, with the potential to couple (almost) the entire economy and on one fuel, and become the same resource for the energy system as data has become for the internet).
4. European energy policy – from coal management to coal phase-out (European integration history starts with the European Coal and Steel Community and currently is all about decarbonisation. We will explore the eventful history of European energy policy between market liberalisation and public intervention in this chapter).
5. From Paris to Brussels – the Governance of the Green Deal (the Paris Agreement and the Energy Union are two key elements of the new energy and climate governance. We will open and examine the regulatory toolbox of the Green Deal: from classic regulation to targets and plans to, emission trading and renewable energy subsidies, investment support and green financing).
6. Leave nobody behind- making it a just transition (Increasing prices, losers of the transformation on individual and collective level, a new green iron curtain – the Green Deal seems to have a dark side, and the spectre of the gilets jaunes looms heavily over the transformation. We will discuss the scope of the problem and potential ways to address it).
7. Energy and Climate Governance in a changing world (energy and climate policy become increasingly globalized. The Green Deal will also determine Europe's geopolitical relevance and strategic autonomy in the world. Trade policy, industrial policy and global security matters need to be taken into account).

4. TEACHING METHOD

The Course follows a multi-disciplinary approach and includes historical, technical, economic, political and legal aspects. It is based on academic research as much as on practical experience of the lecturer in designing and implementing European and international energy policy. Besides lectures, the Course will include case studies, debates and simulations as well as interventions by external experts and the students themselves within the "Governance Labs".

During the Governance Labs, the students are brought in contact, in small groups of 2-3, with a professional working in the sector (public authorities, companies, associations, consultancy and think-tanks). This professional will act as a 'coach' for the writing of the essay. Each group is allocated a topic, which is discussed between the coach and the students of that group. The students write their essay on the basis of own research (word limit: between 3000 and 5000 words per group). The last classes consist partly of student presentations (5-8 minutes max.), in presence of the coach.

5. COURSE MATERIAL*

Course PowerPoint and notes, readings.

6. EVALUATION

Oral examination (50 %)

Governance lab essay and presentation (40%) – The essay is written within the framework of the governance labs, in which students are assigned, in small groups, to a coach working in the field of energy policy (private, public sector, NGOs etc). The essay shall give a practical, operational input (e.g. policy recommendation, briefing, strategy etc.) to the coach on a topic determined by the coach. The essay should be between 3000 and 5000 words, excluding bibliography and including all other elements (e.g. title, introduction and footnotes). This mark also includes the presentation of the essay at the feedback session of the governance labs. The essay counts for 30% of the total mark, the



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presentation for 10%.

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Participation (10%) – This includes the performance of the students during the exercises, their attendance, punctuality and active participation to class and exercises.

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.

7. Assessment at second attempt

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