

The EU in World Politics

Theme/Topic:	The EU in International Politics
Expert:	Dr. Robert Kissack , Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals (IBEI)
Character:	optional
ECTS-Credits:	3 Credit-points
Teaching methods:	lecture, seminar and discussion at the presence workshop
Assessment methods:	final exam at the end of the term, assignments, active participation in workshop and forum discussion
Language:	English

Professor Biography:

Robert Kissack is a Junior Professor at the Institut Barcelona d'Estudis Internacionals (IBEI), teaching the core course on International Relations Theory and an elective course on International Organisations. He has taught at the EU Online Academy since 2009.

He is author of 'Pursuing Effective Multilateralism: The European Union, International Organisations and the Politics of Decision Making' (Palgrave 2010) and has been published in Millennium: Journal of International Studies, Global Polity, Global Society, Journal of European Social Policy, and Studia Diplomatica.

His areas of expertise are European Union foreign policy (especially in relation to multilateral organisations), the United Nations system (in particular the International Labour Organization, where he worked prior to starting his PhD), and international relations theory. He recently won a grant from the Spanish Ministry of Education and Science to participate in a European Science Foundation project on the performance of the EU in international institutions.

Objective and course content:

This course is intended to provide a thorough understanding of European foreign policy; its historical evolution, its current structure, and the key objectives it promotes. More specifically, the course is based in the social science discipline of International Relations, which focuses on the behaviour of states (and, of course, *sui generis* actors like the EU) in international politics. The web content provides the student with an overview of what IR is about and how it approaches the study of the world, and goes on to focus on foreign policy analysis, which was the traditional approach to the study of the EU. It then moves on to cover more recent developments of specific theories of EU foreign policy, as well as the institutional design

and the role of the major EU actors in shaping EU foreign policy. Finally, the course explores EU relations with three major powers in the world: the US, China and Russia.

The course is taught in three parts. The first is an interactive session in January, where the students are encouraged to discuss and explore the central themes of the course, as well as getting to know their colleagues. The session also contains a couple of small inputs from Dr Kissack, but the main purpose is the pedagogic preparation of students for the method of assessment, which is critical thought and logical argumentation in response to set questions. In this respect, the course follows UK university norms of expecting postgraduate-level students to be able to critically assess the merits of various ideas and positions, and draw their own opinion reflecting the arguments used in the literature. The second part of the course is the substantive web-based material, amounting to around 18,000 words, which the students read over the three months. The third part consists of academic articles posted weekly on the discussion forum with a commentary by Dr Kissack, designed to raise points of discussion. The articles follow the stages of the web material, and provide students an entry point into the literature of the discipline. They also provide useful resources in answering the essay question coursework.

(Optional purchase) Key books:

Christopher Hill and Michael Smith, *International Relations and the European Union* (Oxford University Press, 2005);

Karen E. Smith, *European Union Foreign Policy in a Changing World* (Polity, 2003).