

PS306: Contemporary Issues

Institutions and Policies of European Integration

Summer European Academy Faculty-Led Study Abroad Program Germany, France, Belgium and Luxembourg

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Course Credit: 3 Hrs.

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This is a beginning course introduction to the core institutions, political culture, policies and governance relationships and process within the European Union. It is designed to complement and supplement the 2-week intensive joint seminar and cross-cultural learning modules included in the Summer European Academy. It surveys the basic workings of the EU in more detail than its partner 306 course in the SEA and through various interactive modules. Specifically, this class explores in some detail and depth the political, economic and security issues which have shaped the political evolution of Europe, from a destroyed continent dependent upon the US for its prosperity and security, to a unique trans-national power replete with its own reserve currency, a massive political-economic market, and a growing will to global power. Our goal is to understand how and why these changes matter not only to Europe, but to the US, as well, and to place into proper historical perspective the significance of Europe's evolution as a major political-economic actor on the global scene. It provides the context and backgrounds within which to better understand and appreciate the politics and institutions of the European Union.

Each module is designed to explore a particular core topic of the EU governance process and institutional structure. Students from Texas A&M work with students from the University of Science and Technology of the Saarland to jointly explore this topic, and present a joint oral presentation on their findings. Each module is built around a European guest lecturer and a subsequent intense Q&A period. The Texas A&M instructor works with his German counterpart to coordinate and guide students in the completion of their group presentation. Each group consists of Texas A&M University students and students from the University of Science and Technology of the Saarland.

Learning outcomes in POLS306 and the Summer European Academy relevant to Social and Behavior Sciences per Texas A&M University Guidelines:

Students can expect to learn the following by the end of this course:

- (1) to define, understand, and use concepts and terms relevant to the study of the European Union and its major member states;
- (2) to apply a body of factual knowledge directly relevant to understanding the role of the major policy institutions of the European union, and the primary treaty obligations of member states within the EU;
- (3) To understand and critically evaluate how and why different recent (post-WWII) historical, social,

political, economic, cultural, and global forces have shaped political institutions and policy formation of the European Union and its member nation-states.

Learning outcomes relevant to International and Cultural Diversity:

- (1) to analyze alternative explanations for differences among governmental institutions in major democratic political systems within the European Union
- (2) to apply alternative explanations for different types and levels of political participation and policy formation in the European Union and the major member states of the EU.
- (3) to compare and contrast alternative political cultures found within the major member nation-states of the European Union
- (4) to compare and contrast the different historical, cultural and political experiences and the shared political and economic priorities among major member nation-states of the European Union

Module 1: Culture, Identity and Nationalism

Guest Lecture: Prof. Dr. Frank Baasner, Franco-German Institute, Ludwigsburg.
“Integration and Identity: From European integration to a Common European identity?”

Readings: CD Program Literature JOINT SEMINAR EAO – CULTURE, IDENTITY AND NATIONALISM

GROUP PRESENTATION: Nationalism and EU Identity

Module 2: Institutions of the EU

Guest Lecture: Prof. Dr. Joachim Schild, Department of Political Science, Trier University.
“The Political Structure and Institutional Functions of the EU: The European Integration from an Institutional Perspective”

Readings: CD Program Literature JOINT SEMINAR EAO – EU Institutions

GROUP PRESENTATION: Comparison of the political systems of the EU and Germany

Module 3: European Union Law and Courts

Guest Lecture: Prof. Dr. Holger Buck, HTW, Saarbrücken. “Legal Aspects of the EU”

Readings: CD Program Literature JOINT SEMINAR EAO – INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

GROUP PRESENTATION: Rights in the EU

Module 4: International Relations and the EU

Guest Lecture: Prof. Dr. Hanns W. Maull, Department of Political Science, Trier University
“A Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) of the EU and the Transatlantic Relations“

Readings: CD Program Literature JOINT SEMINAR EAO – COURTS AND LAW

GROUP PRESENTATION: The CFSP and the Future of Transatlantic Relations

Module 5: Regional and Cross-Border Political and Economic Issues of European Integration

Guest Lecture: Dr. Claude Gengler, Forum Europa Luxembourg, Luxembourg
“Cross Border Cooperation as Threat and Opportunity in the EU. A case Study of Luxembourg as an Example of A Small Member State of the European Union and Cross Border Cooperation within the “Greater Region – Area”

Readings: CD Program literature JOINT SEMINAR EAO – CROSS BORDER ANALYSIS

GROUP PRESENTATION: Open Borders and National Sovereignty in EU

Module 6: The EU Economy

Guest Lecture: Prof. Dr. Leonhard Firlus, HTW, Saarbrücken. “Budgetary and Economic Aspects of the Union”

Readings: CD Program Literature JOINT SEMINAR EAO – ECONOMY

GROUP PRESENTATION: The Single Currency: Blessing or Curse?

Module 7: EU –US Trade and the Transatlantic Relationship

Guest Lecture: Prof. Dr. Werner Meng, Europa-Institut, Saarland University. “Comparative Analysis of Legal Cultures Shaping International Trade Policy in US and EU”

Readings: CD Program Literature JOINT SEMINAR EAO – TRADE LAW.

GROUP PRESENTATION: The Domestic Politics of Protectionism in EU and US

Requirements: Discussion Participation (25%), Group Presentation, (25%), Quizzes on materials (25%), essay exam covering guest lectures (25%)