

Institutions and Challenges of the European Union

Samuel B.H. Faure

Associate Professor of Political Science

Sciences Po Saint-Germain

Autumn 2022, 2nd year, Seminar, Room D25

Contact

Email address samuel.faure@sciencespo-saintgermain.fr
Website <http://samuelbhfaure.com/>
Twitter @samuelbhfaure

Aim and approach

Institutions and challenges have always been intertwined in the building of the European Union (EU). On the one hand, challenges shaped institutions: WWII, financial crisis, migration, global warming, etc. On the other hand, institutions generated challenges: growing powers of the European Parliament, cooperation within the European Council, citizens and the so called 'democratic deficit', etc. The aim of this seminar is to provide an overview of these issues, be they in the EU's past, present or future.

The seminar will require oral participation; it is therefore compulsory for students to read the documents provided, and to further prepare each class with additional research. The goal is for students to significantly improve their ability express themselves in English.

Assessment

The knowledge and skills developed during the seminar are assessed through three mandatory exercises, two collective exercises (review of a current event and scientific debate), and one individual exercise (paper).

Each session will be organised around these three exercises to improve your methodological skills, in addition to your knowledge of the European Union. Each student must complete each exercise once during the semester. Please note there is no possibility of catching up with an extra assignment, except in the case of health problems.

Please follow these presentation standards:

- Times New Roman, 12-point font, single-spaced, justified text, default margins
- Each note must be followed by a bibliography
- Footnotes and bibliography must comply with the rules of use (for this purpose, see note: [How to reference a research paper? Footnotes and bibliography](#))
- The first and last names of students must appear at the top left-hand side of the page
- The document must be paginated at the bottom right-hand side of the page

1) Review of a current event (30%)

For this exercise, four groups of three to five students should be formed.

Each session will begin with a review of a current event by one group of students:

- Russia and War in Ukraine (session 2)
- Climate Change and Energy Policy (session 3)
- Citizens and Democracy (session 4)
- Enterprises, Industry Policy, Digital Issues (session 5)

Each group of students will have:

- to choose an angle of analysis from this topic and justify the interest of this angle, this subject (introduction)
- to present the updated position of the four main EU institutions (in the following order: European Council, Commission, Parliament, Council)
- to highlight three issues encountered before opening the debate with an opening question to the other students

This review should follow the following format (9' in total):

- Introduction (1')
- Part 1
 - o Position of the European Council (1')
 - o Position of the Commission (1')
 - o Position of the Parliament (1')
 - o Position of the Council (1')
- Part 2
 - o Issue 1 (1')
 - o Issue 2 (1')
 - o Issue 3 (1')
 - o Opening question (1')

Each group must send an email to Dr Faure 24 hours before their presentation, with:

- a Powerpoint presentation
- a one-page Word document summarising their research work

The Word document must include the following elements

- First names and surnames of students
- Title of the presentation/paper
- Introduction with the specific topic chosen, the interest of studying this topic and the formulation of a problematic
- Main information to be retained for each EU institution's position
- Key information for each issue
- Opening question
- Bibliographical references



The interest of this exercise is threefold:

- to analyse a broad political issue from a specific problematic/analytical angle
- to understand the divergent or convergent positions between the EU institutions
- to give a clear and precise account of what is at stake politically in Brussels

Three evaluation criteria are used to assign the weekly group grade:

- interest of the subject (why does this current event matter?)
- time management and clarity of the analysis (what do you want us to keep in mind from your presentation?)
- responsiveness to questions posed to the group (did you respond accurately to questions posed by other students or the professor?)

2) Scientific debate (30%)

The second part of the seminar will consist of one debate that will focus on one major question concerning the institutions and challenges of the European Union:

- **Covid-19** – What are the effects of the Covid crisis on the European Union: *statu quo* or shift? (session 1)

Compulsory reading Didier GEORGAKAKIS. Le Covid-19, un tournant pour l'Union européenne?. *AOC média*, 10 April 2020 [<https://aoc.media/analyse/2020/04/09/le-covid-19-un-tournant-pour-lunion-europeenne/>]

- **Governance** – Executive powers: Who governs, the Commission or the member states? (session 2)

Compulsory reading Frédéric MÉRAND, Julien WEISBEIN. *Introduction à l'Union européenne*. Bruxelles : De Boeck, 2011, p. 41-66.

- **Lobbies** – Do lobbyists affect the decision-making process: in a decisive way or in a marginal way? (session 3)

Compulsory reading Guillaume COURTY, Hélène MICHEL. Groupes d'intérêt et lobbyistes dans l'espace politique européen: des permanents de l'eurocratie. In Didier GEORGAKAKIS (ed.). *Le champ de l'Eurocratie. Une sociologie politique du personnel de l'UE*. Paris: Economica, (Études politiques), 2012, p. 213-239.

- **War in Ukraine** – Why is the European Union powerful or powerless to act in Ukraine in the context of the war against Russia? (session 4)

Compulsory reading Samuel B.H. FAURE. « La relance de la défense européenne : par les États, pour les États » dans Fernandez Julian, Jeangène Vilmer Jean-Baptiste, Massie Justin (dir.), *Le réveil européen et transatlantique*, Paris : Éditions des Équateurs. 13-28. [<https://lerubicon.org/publication/la-relance-de-la-defense-europeenne-par-les-etats-pour-les-etats/>]



- **Brexit** – Has Brexit reinforced the disintegration of the EU or its integration? (session 5)

Compulsory reading Thierry CHOPIN, Christian LEQUESNE. Reverse to disintegration: The cohesive effect of Brexit on the EU27. *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*. 2019.

For each question, there will be two possible answers corresponding to the two 'theses'/answers. Each group will have to defend one of the two theses by finding the best arguments to convince the class. For this exercise, eight groups of two to three students should be formed.

For example, in session 2, one of the two debates is about 'Executive powers: who governs, the Commission or the Member States?' One group will have to defend the answer 'The Commission' and the other group the alternative 'The Member States'. Each group will have to focus its argumentation exclusively on one thesis/answer.

If the compulsory reading is to be used during the presentation, students are advised to mobilize other scientific references to defend their thesis. This is an essential feature of this exercise: it is a scientific debate. Therefore, it is essential to use social science references and not journalistic or official sources from EU institutions.

The debate will take place in three parts: the first group will present its arguments to answer the question posed for 6 minutes (not four, not five!) with answer/thesis *a*; the second group will argue for the opposite answer/thesis *b* for 6 minutes (not four, not five!). Finally, there will be a Q/A session for 5 minutes.

Each group must send an email to Dr Faure 24 hours before their presentation, with:

- a Powerpoint presentation
- a one-page Word document summarising their research work

For this exercise, eight groups of two to three students should be formed.

The point of this exercise is to work on building the strongest, most convincing argument in a rigorous way (with data, scientific references, theoretical arguments, etc.), even if your personal opinion goes against it.

Each group's oral presentation will be evaluated by three criteria:

- Time management and clarity of presentation (and of your paper)
- the strength of the argument through the choice of data and references
- the quality of the answers during the Q/A session

For this exercise, eight groups of two to three students should be formed.



3) Final Paper (40%)

Each student must write a paper in English or French not to exceed 1000 words (two pages), without footnotes and bibliography (plus or minus 10%). This note should be sent before Saturday, November 5 at 11 am. Each hour of delay will result in a penalty of one point.

It consists of :

- formulating a puzzle on topic/case study of your choice linked to EU institutions and challenges (see list below). Reminder: in social sciences, a problematic begins with a 'how' (when we are interested in political processes) or with a 'why' (when we are looking for explanatory variables). The book plan completes the definition of the puzzle in a synthetic introduction (one paragraph)

Topics / Case studies	
The crisis of the empty chair	Estonia
Populist movements	Emmanuel Macron
Strategic autonomy	The EU and the regions
Marine Le Pen	The EU and the world
France and the EU	The French Presidency of the Council
European sovereignty	The Common Agricultural Policy
The transfer of sovereignty	Geopolitical Europe
Opt-out	The democratic deficit
The European Council	The EU and Africa
The parliamentarization of the EU	European diplomacy
Brexit	The European defense policy
Migration	The Community method
The politicization of the European	Charles Michel
The crisis of the Covid-19	The creation of the single market
Differentiated integration	The European Central Bank
The crisis of the euro zone	The intergovernmental method
The Commissioners	Interest groups
Commission	European disintegration
Enlargements	Angela Merkel
Political regime	European governance
Crises and European integration	Future of the EU

- responding by presenting two competing theoretical arguments that shed complementary light on the problematic previously formulated (see the list below). The bibliographic reference in French preferred for this exercise is the manual of theories of European integration available at the library and on Cairn: <https://www.cairn.info/theories-et-concepts-de-l-integration-europeenne--9782724626353.htm>



Theories / Approaches	
Constructivist	Multi-level governance
Discursive institutionalist	Political theory
Europeanization	Rational choice institutionalist
Historical institutionalist	Sociology of elites
Liberal Intergovernmentalist	Sociological institutionalism
Neo-functionalist	Sociology of international relations
New Intergovernmentalist	Sociology of public action

- briefly concluding by underlining the main insights of your paper (one paragraph)

Grading takes into account three main criteria:

- the quality of the formulation of the problematic based on a case study/subject
- the clarity and relevance of the theoretical choices to develop the demonstration
- the quality of the writing

Programme

The seminar is organised into five two-hour sessions. Students are advised to arrive on time and activate the 'silent' mode of their phone.

Class attendance is compulsory. Any absence must be duly justified to both the professor and to Franck Hurel. If possible, the professor shall be informed in advance.

To sum up:

Sessions	Current events	Scientific debates
Session 1 (13 Sep)	Introduction	Covid-19
Session 2 (27 Sep)	Russia and War in Ukraine	Governance
Session 3 (11 Oct)	Climate Change and Energy Policy	Lobbies
Session 4 (25 Oct)	Citizens and Democracy	War in Ukraine
Session 5 (8 Nov)	Enterprises and Industry Policy	Brexit



References

Multilingual glossary

<https://iate.europa.eu/home>

Handbooks

In English

- Bache, Ian, Bulmer, Simon, George, Stephen, Parker, Owen. *Politics in the European Union*. 4th edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.
- Bickerton, Chris. *The European Union: A Citizen's Guide*. London: Pelican, 2016.
- Bulmer, Simon, Lequesne, Christian. *The Member States of the European Union*. 3rd edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.
- Cini, Michelle, Pérez-Solorzano Borrigan, Nieves. *European Union Politics*. 6th edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019.
- Costa, Olivier, Brack, Nathalie. *How the EU really works*. 2nd edition. London: Routledge, 2018.
- Hix, Simon, Hoyland, Bjorn. *The Political System of the European Union*. 3th edition. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2011.
- Magone, José M. (ed.). *Routledge Handbook of European Politics*. Londres: Routledge, 2015.
- Nugent, Neill. *The government and politics of the European Union*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.
- Jones, Erik, Menon, Anand, Weatherill, Stephen (eds.). *The Oxford Handbook of the European Union*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Lelieveldt, Herman, Princen, Sebastiaan. *The politics of the European Union*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
- Wallace, Helen, Pollack, Mark A., Young, Alasdair (eds.). *Policy-Making in the European Union*. 7th edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015.

In French

- Costa, Olivier, Brack, Nathalie. *Le fonctionnement de l'Union européenne*. 2th edition. Bruxelles: Editions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 2017.
- Costa, Olivier, Mérand, Frédéric (dir.). *Études européennes*. Bruxelles: Bruylant (Traité de science politique), 2017.
- Magnette, Paul. *Le régime politique de l'Union européenne*. 4th edition. Paris: Presses de Sciences Po (Références Gouvernances), 2017.
- Cohen, Antonin. *Le régime politique de l'Union européenne*. Paris: La Découverte (Repères), 2014.
- Courty, Guillaume, Devin, Guillaume, *La construction européenne*. 4th edition. Paris: La découverte (Repères sciences politiques - droit), 2018.
- Dehousse, Renaud (dir.). *L'Union européenne*. 4th edition. Paris: La documentation française, 2014.
- Dehousse, Renaud (dir.). *Politiques européennes*. Paris: Presses de Sciences Po, 2009.
- Doutriaux, Yves, Lequesne, Christian. *Les institutions de l'Union européenne après la crise de l'euro*. 9th edition. Paris: La documentation française, 2013.
- Mérand, Frédéric, Weisbein, Julien. *Introduction à l'Union européenne*. Bruxelles : De Boeck (Ouvertures politiques), 2011.



MOOC

« Géopolitique de l'Europe » (Sciences Po) par Sylvain Kahn, Philippe Perchoc, Thomas Raineau :

<https://www.coursera.org/learn/geopolitique>

Scientific Journals

European Journal of Political Research (Wiley)

European Union Politics (Sage)

Journal of Common Market Studies (Wiley)

Journal of European Public Policy (Routledge)

Politique européenne (L'Harmattan)

West European Politics (Routledge)

CAIRN (<http://www.cairn.info/>)

JSTOR (<http://www.jstor.org/>)

Specialized information sources

Brussels Blog	https://www.ft.com/brussels-briefing	Blog of FT correspondents in Brussels
Bruxelles 2	https://www.bruxelles2.eu/	Blog on military issues
Le Grand Continent	https://legrandcontinent.eu/fr/	Specialized journal
Contexte	https://www.contexte.com/	Specialized journal
Coulisses de Bruxelles	http://bruxelles.blogs.liberation.fr/	Blog of the Libération correspondent in Brussels
Décrypter la communication européenne	http://www.lacomeuropeenne.fr/	Blog of an expert of the political communication
EU Observer	https://euobserver.com/	Specialized journal
Euractiv.fr	http://www.euractiv.fr/	Specialized journal
Fondation Robert Schuman	http://www.robert-schuman.eu/fr/	Think Tank
Notre Europe Institut Jacques Delors	http://www.institutdelors.eu/	Think Tank
Toute l'Europe	http://www.touteurope.eu/	Information website funded by the French government and the EU
VoxEurop	http://www.voxeurop.eu/en	Specialized journal

