



UNIVERSITÀ  
CATTOLICA  
del Sacro Cuore



**Ramon Llull University, IQS School of Management - Barcelona  
Catholic University of the Sacred Heart - Milan  
Franklin University Switzerland - Lugano  
Forum-Nexus Program  
Undergraduate Division**

### Course Syllabus

**BUS 375-01  
Understanding Europe and the European Union:  
Multidisciplinary perspectives  
with an emphasis on business issues**

#### Introduction

Comprising 28 countries with a combined population of almost 500 million people, the European Union generates about one third of the world's economic output. The EU today constitutes a highly complex supra-governmental organization, with its own institutions and a complex policy-making system. Facing tremendous challenges brought about by the integration of a large number of new members, capitalizing on opportunities stemming from economic integration, and being an emerging force in international politics, the European Union is a uniquely important topic for students of all majors.

#### Course Description

This course provides an overview of the history, evolution, and current challenges facing the European Union, with an emphasis on business and management issues. It focuses on the economic and political rationale for closer integration, on the difficulties of reconciling sharply different cultural, legal, and political traditions, on the stresses caused by immigration and enlargement, and on the recent challenges presented by the global economic and financial crisis.

#### Course Objectives

Upon the completion of this course, students will be able to:

1. Understand the lessons of European history leading to the creation of the European Union following the fall of Nazi Germany.
2. Be familiar with the changing political and economic factors dominating the public policy environment at each of the various stages of EU enlargement since 1956
3. Identify the main characteristics of each of the unofficial "blocs" within the EU: Northern countries, Southern countries, Eastern countries, "Core Countries", Peripheral Countries", Non-Euro adopting countries, etc.
4. Understand the structure and role of the important political and governance institutions of the EU, as well as the functions of several other related supervisory and advisory bodies.
5. Reflect on the current challenges facing the EU: further physical and economic enlargement, immigration from the Middle East and Africa, foreign policy challenges, youth unemployment, economic stagnation, Brexit, and a fragile banking system

6. Develop an understanding of the importance of the Euro and the role of the European Central Bank in coordinating economic policy in the EU
7. Be familiar with the impact of the historical rivalries and alliances among France, Germany and Britain and others sovereign states in determining the direction and pace of the European integration process
8. Understand the spectrum of prevailing attitudes towards the EU in England, France, the Netherlands, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, and Greece

### **Course Requirements**

The course requires active student participation. Students are expected to read the assigned textbook chapters and articles before every class. Punctual attendance is required. There will be oral student presentations, a midterm exam, a final exam, and a team project. Each student is required to participate in a minimum of three professional visits and three cultural visits.

### **Teaching Procedures and Methodology**

Teaching methods used in this course include lectures, discussions, team assignments, and professional visits. Learning in this course requires the student's constructive participation and active involvement in both class discussions and small group discussions. Small group discussions in particular are a key mechanism for facilitating learning from other team members. Thus, it is essential to attend all group activities inside and outside classes. The professional visits will expose the participants to different aspects of the class and will highlight the practical relevance of the concepts learned. The visits will be accompanied by individual or group assignments. Cultural visits enhance the students' understanding of the history and culture of each country.

### **Required Textbook**

#### **Understanding the European Union**

by John McCormick  
Palgrave, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed., 2017

### **Additional Readings**

Additional articles from a number of sources covering current European issues will be distributed by the instructor throughout the course.

### **Team Project**

Teams will consist of 3-4 students and will be formed early on in the term. The project report should be between 8 and 10 pages long (Font: Arial, 12; Line Spacing: 1.5).

Students will work in designated teams to analyze different aspects of the expansion of the EU along any one of several critical dimensions, such as:

(a) Geographic expansion: Geographically, the EU has grown from 6 original "Western" members in the 1950's to 28 members today, along with additional "candidate" countries, and reaching to several Russian border lands.

(b) Economic expansion: Economically, the EU has expanded from its industrial and tariff control roots founded upon the consolidation of the coal and steel industries, moved on to bigger goals of a "single market" and free movement of goods, services, capital and people, and now includes a monetary policy union for 18 of its members, plus a few non-member countries using the Euro currency.

(c) Political expansion: Politically, the EU has shifted over time away from purely inter-governmental negotiations, and has begun to take on various attributes of a supra-national (or even federal) state, but with growing controversy over the exact Spillover and Subsidiarity boundaries of such political centralization.

Controversy: As the EU has expanded, there has also been a growing controversy regarding how much expansion is appropriate. Analysis: To analyze the conundrum of expansion, each team of students should propose a specific “thesis” concerning the causes & consequences of prior or anticipated “expansion moves” within the EU. Then in conjunction with the professor, the team will develop a report which considers the success (or lack of success) of EU policy in the context of a specific geographic or economic or political or social policy questions. Process: Teams will meet regularly with the professor to formulate a topic, select data and reference sources, prepare a draft, submit a final report, and present an oral presentation to the class at the end of the course.

### **Components of Final Grade**

Midterm exam	25%
Final exam	30%
Team project	25%
Presentations	10%
Assignments and class participation	10%

### **Grading Scale**

93-100 %	A
90-92.9 %	A-
87-89.9 %	B+
83-86.9 %	B
80-82.9 %	B-
77-79.9 %	C+
73-76.9 %	C
70-72.9%	C-
67-69.9 %	D+
63-66.9 %	D
60-62.9 %	D-
Below 60 %	F

### **Course Outline**

#### **Module 1: Introduction to the EU**

- The lessons of European history: achieving peace through unity and integration
- The evolution of European integration
- Founding members of the EU
- Compare and define “Europe”, “EU”, and “Eurozone” and discuss the confusion and difficulty in defining exactly “where is Europe?” and the future of EU expansion.
- Comparison of US vs EU: size, population, density, trade issues, monetary issues
- Introduction to regions within the EU
- EU as a “peace project”: the impact of WWI and WWII on European politics and integration

#### **Module 2: Germany within the context of the EU**

- Economic, political, and social conditions in Germany
- German attitudes towards the EU
- Angela Merkel and the past, present, and future role of Germany as EU’s leading country

#### **Module 3: Budgets and Austerity issues in the EU**

- The impact of the global economic crisis on the EU
- Introduction to the fiscal deficit crisis in Europe
- Austerity measures in Europe to address the budget problems (a comparison of measures taken by various countries)
- Impact of unemployment and budget cuts on the middle class
- Understanding protests: Introduction to the European social welfare state and the potential collapse as result of fiscal deficits

#### **Module 4: Immigration issues in the EU**

- Immigration in the European Union and the recent rise of right-wing political parties across Europe. What is changing? Why? What is the threat?
- Globalization and the threats to the European social-welfare state
- Logistics and impact of high-speed trains and budget airlines on competition, business and immigration
- The “four freedoms” concept in the EU context
- Labor movement and immigration in the EU
- The changing pattern of immigration over the years
- The Schengen Agreement; comparing UK and new members
- Moslem minorities in the EU: Assimilation and marginalization

#### **Module 5: Institutions and Treaties of the EU**

- Inter-governmental vs Supranational - What is the difference? Which countries favored which method of organizing Europe? Why? Which institutions are more “supranational”? Which are more “inter-governmental”?
- Creating and enforcing laws in the EU: Policy Process overview - How the institutions work together
- The European Commission
- The Council of Ministers
- The European Parliament
- The European Court of Justice
- High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
- The Treaty of Rome
- The Maastricht treaty
- The Constitutional treaty
- Lisbon Treaty
- New potential reforms as result of ongoing fiscal crisis

#### **Module 6: Single market and economic policy within the EU**

- The costs and benefits of European integration
- Characteristics and impact of the Single Market Program
- European protectionism and the Common Agricultural Policy
- Competition and industrial policies
- Cross border Mergers and Acquisitions
- Four Freedoms: movement of people, goods, services, and capital

#### **Module 7: France within the context of the EU**

- Economic, political and social conditions in France
- French attitudes towards the EU
- Immigration issues in France
- French attitudes and policies regarding religion, Islam, the burqa
- French role in foreign policy, NATO, and North Africa (Libya, Algeria, Egypt)
- French agriculture, CAP and the EU
- French role in the founding of the EU, and its relations with Germany and the UK

### **Module 8: Geographical expansion of the EU**

- The changing membership of the EU
- The growing importance of Eastern Europe
- Copenhagen Criteria for EU application / admission
- “Wider” vs “Deeper” integration debate
- Applicant countries: which countries are applying? What is their likelihood of admission?
- The debate over Turkey’s admission to the EU
- Russia and the Ukraine question
- The EU and the World Trade Organization
- Brexit: causes and consequences

### **Module 9: Monetary integration within the EU and the ongoing Euro crisis**

- An introduction to the Euro and the long road to monetary union
- The European Central Bank
- The future of the Euro
- Euro crisis: an introduction to the ongoing crisis in the Eurozone
- Will the Euro survive this crisis? From a countries’ perspective, does Eurozone membership make the problem worse? (why is the Euro often blamed for the severity of the crisis?)
- How can a country like Greece regain competitive edge? Why doesn’t Greece drop out of Euro? What is the risk of leaving? What are the other options for a country like Greece (or Spain, Portugal, etc) to get out of the crisis?

### **Module 10: EU Foreign Policy**

- EU foreign policy
- EU enlargement as successful foreign policy – expanding democracy and capitalism to former communist bloc countries
- The role of NATO
- The future of EU enlargement and limits of “expansion as foreign policy tool”
- EU foreign aid
- EU relations with the US
- EU relations with Latin America and former colonies in Africa
- EU relations with Mediterranean countries; the Mediterranean policy – a look at EU policy, the Middle East and North Africa
- EU relations with Russia
- EU relations with China and the rest of Asia

### **Module 11: Switzerland and relations with the EU**

- Why is Switzerland NOT a member of the EU? (but is a member of the Schengen agreement for immigration)
- Economic, political, and social conditions in Switzerland
- Swiss attitudes towards the EU
- Immigration issues in Switzerland
- Swiss history of independence and impact on economic development
- Role of geography in economic development and security
- Introduction to Swiss banking industry and impact on the EU and the Eurozone
- What is the impact on the Eurozone of having two major banking centers (Switzerland and the UK) outside the Eurozone?

### **Module 12: Italy within the context of the EU**

- Economic, political, and social conditions in Italy
- A look at Italian history, politics, and culture
- Italian attitudes towards the EU
- Regional differences in Italy (north v south) and economic development

- Immigration issues in Italy (particular attention to immigration from North Africa as a result of recent upheavals). What is the impact / responsibility of the EU?
- Italian role in foreign policy, NATO, and North Africa (Libya, Algeria, Egypt)

### **Module 13: Greece within the context of the EU**

- Economic, political, and social conditions in Greece
- Fiscal and debt crisis ongoing in Greece
- EU and IMF bailouts
- Austerity measures and protests in Greece and the impact on the economy
- A look at Greek history, politics, and culture
- Greek attitudes towards the EU
- Regional issues and economic development
- Immigration issues in Greece (issues of border controls with Turkey)
- Cyprus, Greece, and Turkey

### **Module 14: Regions, integration, and economic development**

- Understanding regional and cultural differences within the EU
- The Lisbon strategy for development in the EU
- Cohesion policy – fiscal transfers
- Single market as development tool
- Four Freedoms: movement of people, goods, services, and capital
- Comparison of EU vs NAFTA (discussion about immigration and development)
- A look at Ireland: economic development after joining the EU (and the recent banking crisis)

### **Module 15: Culture and EU identity**

- Languages in the EU
- Regional identities
- Impact of Europeanization and Globalization on local culture
- Resistance and reaction (protests)

### **Module 16: Other topics**

- Environmental policies
- Economic, political and social conditions in the UK – with a focus on austerity measures, budget cuts, protests, changing social policies, and relations with the EU
- Economic crisis in Ireland, Portugal

## **Schedule of Classes and Visits**

The detailed schedule of classes, professional visits, and suggested cultural visits for each session will be available online at [www.forum-nexus.com/schedules](http://www.forum-nexus.com/schedules).

## **Academic Integrity**

Ramon Llull University, Franklin University Switzerland, and the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart place a high value on the integrity, good conduct, and academic honesty of all students. Students are expected to maintain high standards of academic integrity at all times. Any instance of academic dishonesty, including plagiarism, will result in a grade of F for the course.