



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

SOC 375-01

Understanding Europe and the European Union: Multidisciplinary perspectives with an emphasis on social and cultural 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 social and cultural 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. Demonstrate an understanding of the European Union and how and why it was formed
2. Identify countries that are members of the European Union, their geographical location, their capital city, and their impact on the EU as a whole
3. Be familiar with key historical events and important leaders in Europe's history
4. Understand the political, social, economic, and cultural environments and characteristics of England, France, the Netherlands, Germany, Italy, Switzerland, and Greece
5. Recognize prominent international organizations and the role they play in Europe
6. Demonstrate familiarity with current events affecting Europe, especially those related to social and cultural issues

Course Requirements

The course requires active student participation. Students are expected to read the required materials before every class. Punctual attendance is required. There will be a midterm exam, a final exam, a team project, and a final presentation. Each student is required to participate in professional visits and cultural visits, as well as the International IQ Seminar.

Teaching Procedures and Methodology

Teaching methods used in this course include lectures, discussions, assignments, and professional and cultural visits. Learning in this course requires the student's constructive participation and active involvement in both class discussions and small group discussions. The professional visits will expose the participants to different aspects of the class and will highlight the practical relevance of the concepts learned. Cultural visits enhance the students' understanding of the history and culture of each country.

Attendance Policy

Students are permitted to miss class only once, due to illness, injury, or another appropriate reason. Missing more than once may result in a letter grade deduction for every additional absence.

Participation in "Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar"

All students also attend **Europe Today: An International IQ Seminar**, a daily session conducted by the Program Director, Dr. Hugo Hervitz. In this seminar, students learn about the culture of each country, gain an understanding of essential European geography and current events, discuss their experiences and cross-cultural interactions, get language tips, and identify ways to have an even more immersive study abroad experience. The material covered in the seminar complements the syllabus for this course, and there will be some exam questions based on the seminar. Participation in the International IQ Seminar is factored into the grade for this course.

Required Textbook

Understanding the European Union

by John McCormick

Palgrave, 7th Ed., 2017

(eTextbook or Kindle version recommended)

Additional Readings

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

Assignments

Team Project

Working in teams, students will select a topic related to a social or cultural issue in the European Union. The selected topic must be approved by the instructor. The team project will consist of an in-depth review of the selected topic, recorded in a final project paper.

Students will form teams at the beginning of the course. They will provide progress reports periodically throughout the course as they learn about their selected topic each country. Students must identify at least 2 additional sources for each country in addition to the required text.

The final paper should include the following components/sections:

1. Introduction of the social or cultural issue as it pertains to the European Union (1-2 pages)
2. Review of the issue in the context of England (2-4 pages)
3. Review of the issue in the context of France (2-4 pages)
4. Review of the issue in the context of Germany (2-4 pages)
5. Review of the issue in the context of Italy (2-4 pages)
6. Conclusions and future outlook (1-2 pages)

The paper should be 10-20 pages in length, double-spaced, size 12 font, and include a list of references used.

It is recommended for the project to include a **field work** component. Group members may seek opportunities to chat with or interview local residents that you interact with during your time in Europe, such as hotel personnel, taxi drivers, restaurant staff, students, etc. In a diplomatic and non-adversarial way, try to gauge their opinions on the main issues related to your chosen topic.

PowerPoint Presentation

Each team will also present their project in a visual format (PowerPoint or other). In your presentation, include slides about each section, explaining your selected topic and its context in each of the countries. Plan for your presentation to last 10-15 minutes.

Components of Final Grade

Midterm exam	20%
Final exam	20%
Team project	30%
Presentations	10%
Class participation	10%
International IQ Seminar	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 Europe and the European Union

- Essentials of European geography
- Essentials of European history
- What is the European Union?
- European Union members and prominent non-members
- Compare and define “Europe”, “EU”, and “Eurozone”

Module 2: Introduction to England and England within the context of the EU

- Historical overview of England and the United Kingdom
- Art and architecture in England
- The social and cultural environment in England
- The political environment in England
- The economic environment in England
- Business environments in England
- Brexit

Module 3: Evolution of the European Union

- Postwar Europe
- First steps toward integration (1948-55)
- The European Economic Community (1955-86)
- Focus on the single market (1986-92)
- From Community to Union (1992-2003)
- The era of crisis (2003-)

Module 4: Introduction to France and France within the context of the EU

- Historical overview of France
- Art and architecture in France
- The social and cultural environment in France
- The political environment in France

- The economic environment in France
- Business environments in France

Module 5: Introduction to the Netherlands and The Netherlands within the context of the EU

- Historical overview of the Netherlands
- Art and architecture in the Netherlands
- The social and cultural environment in the Netherlands
- The political environment in the Netherlands
- The economic environment in the Netherlands
- Business environments in the Netherlands

Module 6: The European Institutions

- A constitution for Europe
- The European Council
- The European Commission
- The Council of the EU
- The European Parliament
- The European Court of Justice

Module 7: Introduction to Germany and Germany within the context of the EU

- Historical overview of Germany
- Art and architecture in Germany
- The social and cultural environment in Germany
- The political environment in Germany
- The economic environment in Germany
- Business environments in Germany

Module 8: Switzerland and relations with the EU

- Historical overview of Switzerland
- Why is Switzerland NOT a member of the EU? (but is a member of the Schengen agreement for immigration)

Module 9: Introduction to Italy and Italy within the context of the EU

- Historical overview of Italy
- Art and architecture in Italy
- The social and cultural environment in Italy
- The political environment in Italy
- The economic environment in Italy
- Business environments in Italy

Module 10: Current Issues in the EU

- Financial issues: The Euro-crisis
- Social issues: Immigration
- Political issues: Foreign Policy
- Business issues: Trade and Globalization

Module 11: Introduction to Greece and Greece within the context of the EU

- Historical overview of Greece
- Art and architecture in Greece
- The social and cultural environment in Greece
- The political environment in Greece
- The economic environment in Greece
- Business environments in Greece

Module 12: The Future of the European Union

- Social and cultural outlook
- Political outlook
- Economic outlook
- Business outlook

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.

Please note that this course will be offered as a Section 01 class.

Students who participate in a program session other than A1 will supplement their class lectures with some projects completed through supervised independent study segments.

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.