The EU as an Actor in Global Politics and Conflict Resolution

Course Room, date, time

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Course Description

A quarter century after the official introduction of Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP), the EU still grapples with an autonomous global role. Between dominating world powers and the desire of its member states to retain one of the last domains of their national sovereignty, there is not much room for what has come to be called European foreign policy. This course looks at how the EU has developed its tools to become a more serious actor in global politics and how it has deployed them in one concrete case of conflict resolution, i.e. the Iran nuclear negotiations between 2003 and 2015.

Learning Outcomes and Purposes

The EU’s approach to Iran has emerged as one of its few foreign policy successes. Yet its role in the international negotiations as well as its broader approach to Iran are generally poorly appreciated by policy-makers in Europe and around the world. This course introduces students to the field of European foreign policy by using the Iran nuclear file as a case study.

Building on theoretical approaches to international relations, it sets out a framework to analyse the EU’s actorness in global affairs. It examines both the complexity of EU policy-making and Europe’s (aspired) place in the international order. Students will discuss not only the importance of transatlantic relations but also that of multilateral bodies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the UN Security Council as important backdrops to the year-long negotiations that led to the conclusion of the Iran Nuclear Agreement (formally known as Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, or JCPOA) in 2015.

Finally, the course offers insights on current affairs, as a policy shift in the United States as well as an increasingly conflict-ridden Middle East have left the agreement vulnerable. After helping to craft the deal, the Europeans are now asked to preserve it against all odds.

At the end of the course, students should:

- Know about basic analytical perspectives on foreign policy decision making as well as the actors, instruments, and processes of European foreign and security policy;
- Possess a thorough understanding of the evolution of EU-Iran relations, including Iran’s nuclear program and its impact on the transatlantic alliance;
• Recognise the parameters of the international non-proliferation regime and how multilateral negotiations are conducted;
• Demonstrate critical thinking and rigorous analysis by testing assumptions, evaluating evidence, and challenging contentions;
• Continuously improve their writing and oral communications skills, which will serve them well beyond the classroom.

**Workload / Credits**
Upon successful completion of the course, students are awarded three credit points (ECTS). According to the examination rules Art.12 (1), students must register for the course within the first four weeks of classes to be eligible to earn these credits.

**Class size and participation**
This seminar relies on everyone’s active participation both before, during, and after the class. Students are expected to have read the respective assignments, ready to engage in thoughtful and informed commentary of presentations by the instructor as well as a fellow student or in a group discussion. To ensure the required level of classroom interaction, the course is therefore limited to ten participants.

In the spirit of professional and collegial behaviour, students and the instructor alike shall provide meaningful critique of an argument (not the person), contribute positively to the discussions in class, and be courteous on all formalities (respecting deadlines, turning in work free of grammatical and spelling errors, using proper citations etc.). The use of Internet, email, texting, or cell phones during class is positively not allowed.

**Grading**
Students will be graded based on the following assignments in accordance to the examinations rules Art.11 (5): Oral examination (30 %) in connection with written examination (70 %).

**Assessment Guidelines**
All course requirements must be completed in order to receive a final grade. The main assignment for the course is a written exam at the end of the class. Students should also be ready to orally present an argument (ca. 5-7 minutes) in at least one session, in which they will make their case in favour of, or against, a particular statement related to the session’s topic.

Grades will be determined by the following scale:
- Argumentative Presentation and Individual Participation: 30%
- Written exam: 70%

The written exam will take place on February 7, 2019, from 9-11hrs in room WBS/0114.

In the event that a student takes the examination(s) and fails the course, the form and date of the re-examination will be decided upon by the lecturer.

**Attendance**
Class attendance is essential, as each session builds on the previous ones. If you have to miss a class, please send an e-mail stating the reason for your absence to both the instructor and publicpolicy@uni-erfurt.de prior to the session in question. Class absence without prior approval from the instructor will impact the final course grade.

**Academic Conduct**
Plagiarism is using others’ ideas and words without clearly acknowledging the source of that information. This includes citing written words as well as graphs and statistics without giving proper credit. Plagiarism is a form of academic dishonesty and will therefore not be tolerated. According to the examination rules Act 17(3) and the Code of Conduct which students signed at the start of their studies, plagiarism will result in the student failing (5.0) the course.
Disability Services
The Brandt School also provides support for students with disabilities. If this situation applies to you, please contact your lecturer as soon as possible so that s/he can make the necessary arrangements for you.

Literature
Reading Resources

As this is a course that looks at contemporary global issues, students are encouraged to read a major international newspaper daily and another weekly paper. Some recommended online resources are:
- Financial Times (www.ft.com) and Washington Post (www.washingtonpost.com): Very good daily coverage on EU developments as well as US Iran policy.

Schedule and Session Overview

Part I: Course Introduction and European Foreign Policy
8 November 2018

Session 1 – Introduction to the Course

Session 2 – The EU’s role in the world and international actorness: Actors, processes, and analytical perspectives

Required readings:
- Course Book, “Theoretical background: actorness and effective multilateralism” (Chapter 2)

Part II: The EU and Iran in the international context
6 December 2018

Session 3 – The historical context of EU-Iran relations

Required readings:
- Course Book, “Europe’s distinct approach” (Chapter 4)

For further exploration:
- Quille, Gerrard, and Rory Keane, “The EU and Iran: towards a new political and security dialogue”, in Kile (ed.), Europe and Iran, pp. 97-121.

Session 4 – Transatlantic Relations and Iran

Required readings:
- Course Book, “The transatlantic tandem and Iran” (Chapter 6)
- Hadley, Stephen J., “Eight Ways to Deal with Iran”, Foreign Policy, 2012.

For further exploration:
- Feldman, Shai, Shlomo Brom and Shimon Stein, “What to do about Nuclearizing Iran? The Israeli Debate”, Brandeis University Middle East Brief, February 2012/No. 59.

Session 5 – The multilateral context: The non-proliferation regime, the IAEA and the UN
Required readings:
- Course Book, “The multilateral context: The non-proliferation regime, the IAEA and the UN” (Chapter 8)

For further exploration:

Part III: The EU’s effective multilateralism as a policy approach
7 December 2018

Session 6 – The Iranian nuclear program – origins and rationale

Required readings:
- Course Book, “The Iranian nuclear program – origins and rationale” (Chapter 7)

For further exploration:
- Perthes, Volker, “Ambition and Fear: Iran’s Foreign Policy and Nuclear Programme,” Survival 52 (June–July 2010).

Session 7 – The three phases of (non-)negotiations with Iran

Required readings:
- Course Book, “The three phases of (non-)negotiations with Iran” (Chapter 9)
For further exploration:

- Meier, Oliver, “European efforts to solve the conflict over Iran’s nuclear programme: how has the European Union performed?”, London: EU Non-Proliferation Consortium, 2013.
- Harnisch, Sebastian, “Minilateralism, formal institutions and transatlantic cooperation: the EU-3 initiative vis-à-vis Iran’s nuclear program”, in: Peter Schmidt (ed.), A hybrid relationship: transatlantic security cooperation beyond NATO. Frankfurt am Main: Lang, 2008 [i.e. 2007], pp. 89-109.

Session 8 – EU and US sanctions: A policy or an ersatz for one?

Required readings:

- Course Book, “Sanctions against Iran: from policy ersatz to powerful instrument” (Chapter 5)

For further exploration:

- Kroenig, Matthew, “Time to Attack Iran: Why a Strike Is the Least Bad Option”, Foreign Affairs January/February 2012.
- “Tough talk, no strategy: Europe needs to do more than respond to every problem with fresh sanctions,” The Economist, March 3, 2012

Session 9 – Assessing the status of implementation of the agreement

Required readings:

- Course Book, “Assessing the deal in the light of European interests and transatlantic partnership” (Chapter 10)

For further exploration:

Part IV: Iran – a country and a challenge for the international community
17 January 2019

Session 10 – Iranian foreign policy

Required readings:
- Course Book, “Iran’s political system and foreign policy” (Chapter 3)

For further exploration:

Session 11 – The changing regional context: From Afghanistan to the so-called Islamic State

Required readings:

For further exploration:

Session 12 – The regime as a challenge, and challenges for the regime

Required readings:


For further exploration:


Part V: The state of play in 2019 and Conclusion
18 January 2019

Sessions 13 and 14 – Beyond (or after?) the Nuclear Deal

Required readings:

- Course Book, “Expanding the deal: regional issues and nonproliferation” (Chapter 11)
- Course Book, “Europe’s multilateralism – is it effective after all?” (Chapter 12)

Further reading to be distributed prior to, or during, class

Session 15 – Class Review and Feedback