

Institutions and markets. Regional Processes of Economic Integration

Professor: Joan Pere Plaza i Font

Office hours: By appointment

Course Type: Compulsory

Credits: 3ECTS

Term: 1st

1. COURSE PRESENTATION

Course description

Contemporary globalisation results from a discernible expansion of global political and economic relationships. This expansion has led to an increased number of global actors and interconnections among them.

Although the nature and network position of these many actors has changed over the years, remains plausible to argue that nation-states continue to be the primary units for understanding global political and economic dynamics. However, these states can no longer be viewed as self-contained entities. Instead, they now engage with each other in more complex ways, way less predictable than in the aftermath of WWII.

In this vein, regional processes, in their various forms, are significant in shaping the current world order. Their widespread geographical presence (with only a few exceptions) highlights their enduring relevance. Nonetheless, differing interpretations of regionalism's meaning and purpose raise questions about their specific role, their present and their future.

This course will adopt a comprehensive approach to regionalism, including case studies from the Americas, Asia, and Africa. European regionalism, particularly within the European Union, will be a foundational point for empirical and theoretical analysis of other regional processes.

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The aim is to provide a broad understanding and mitigate potential biases.

Following the above, this course is organised as follows:

- Unit 1. Introduction
- Unit 2. The European Union
- Unit 3. Regionalism in the Americas
- Unit 4. Regionalism in Asia
- Unit 5. Regionalism in Africa
- Unit 6. Regionalism in the MENA

2. OBJECTIVES

This course is designed to provide tools for the external diagnosis of the institutional context –political and economic- in which business plans operate. The aim is thus to provide Students with those conceptual and analytical tools to understand the role played by regional integration processes in the dynamics of globalisation and the current World order.

More specifically, this course aims at reaching the goals below:

- To understand the emergence and role of the different regional integration processes since WWII and its impact on global trade governance
- To know in-depth the essential functions worldwide (EU, Mercosur, USMCA, ASEAN, AU, ...) in a comparative perspective
- To develop a critical judgement towards regionalism and its impact on Globalization and World Affairs
- To assess to what extent ongoing regional processes enhance/constrain potential economic operation in specific markets (supranational, national, and subnational).

This course is included in the subject **Business environment analysis**, whose learning outcomes are:

The student will be able to recognise the most advanced knowledge and core competences in the organisation and management of the activities of a foreign trade department.

RA2. Mat.1.1 Interpret the current and future situation of the international economic, legal, social and political environment.

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The student will be able to decide the optimal way for the company to enter international markets by participating in international negotiation processes in the professional context.

RA4. Mat.1.2 Analyse the sector, competition, market, consumer and distribution of each pre-selected country.

RA4. Mat.1.3 Resolve the legal-administrative formalities and procedures required in the internationalisation process.

The student will be able to identify business opportunities in foreign markets in order to analyse the viability of business activities at an international level.

RA1. Mat.1.4 Relate historical and current economic, social and political events to knowledge of international economics and law.

The student will be able to use the information technologies available at the time and the most appropriate communication techniques in the academic and professional fields applied to the internationalisation of business during the master's degree.

RA6. Mat.1.5 Implement the main sources of information and documentation at international level.

The student will be able to develop the ability to assess gender and sex inequalities in order to design solutions in the different executions during the master's degree applied to international business management.

RA9. Mat. 1.6 Identify the main features of different cultures and civilisations, including sex and gender inequalities, in order to understand current problems in the world and what causes and consequences they have had or may have on international business management.

The student will be able to recognise the most advanced knowledge and core competences in the organisation and management of the activities of a foreign trade department.

RA2. Mat.1.7 Identify the main concepts, institutions and rules related to intergovernmental cooperation and regional economic integration

Related SDGs

SDG 8: Decent work and economic growth

SDG 16: Peace, Justice and strong institutions

SDG 17: Partnerships for the goals

3. COURSE LEARNING PLAN

Methodology

Each session will consist of a lecture (90 min ca.) and a seminar-like activity (90 min ca.). Ideally, the content of both parts will complement each other.

Plenary sessions will introduce and contextualise the corresponding regional integration processes and develop their most important specificities. A strong emphasis will be put in the comparative perspective so that the course tends to approach regionalism as a complex phenomenon with many different varieties rather than as a collection of unique and isolated processes.

The seminar-like activities will include different types of programmed activities: review of the international press, case studies analysis, oral presentations, debates, etc.

Consequently, a series of materials for each Seminar session will be provided in advance. Both compulsory readings and additional material to prepare each session (as well as any further material that could be of interest to Students) will be uploaded to the e-campus.

The preparation of discussion topics and readings can be resolved individually or by informal groupings. Students will be expected to participate and steer the discussions and debates actively.

Shall any Student aim to look deeper into one specific topic, further readings might always be provided to her.

The competencies, the learning outcomes, the assessment elements and the quality of the learning process included in this Teaching Plan will not be affected if, during the academic trimester, the teaching model has to switch either to a hybrid model (combination of face-to-face and on-line sessions) or to a complete on-line model.

Evaluation criteria

Regular Assessment

Students will pass “Markets and Institutions” by completing the below-mentioned requirements. No overall grade under 50 % (i.e., 5,0 points out of 10,0) will pass.

The Assessment of Institutions and Markets is two-folded:

1. A final exam (synthesis)

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2. In-class activities and seminars (continuous assessment)

The partial requirements for each of those elements will consist on the following criteria:

Final exam

It will be 50% of the final grade. The format of the final exam will be explained in advance. Potential content will be restricted to the topics considered during the plenary sessions and the content of the seminar sessions. Students must obtain a **minimum of 4,0 (out of 10,0) in the final exam** to pass the course. Students who do not receive a minimum of 4,0 in the exam will also receive this very same grade as the subject's final grade.

Readings, debates and other activities related to the seminar sessions.

It will be 50% of the final grade and based on the student's performance at planned activities related to the Seminar sessions. The simple (and completely passive) session attendance will not be considered. Active listening and high involvement in in-class activities are a must.

Students will know in advance the format and content of each Seminar. This will relate to the ongoing debates presented during the plenary sessions.

Retake conditions

Students who fail the course evaluation will have a retake exam opportunity. It will be scheduled following the MScIB academic calendar. If a student has to retake the exam, her **maximum grade for the course will be 5,0 (out of 10,0).**

General Issues

Students are required **to attend 80% of classes**. Failing to do so without justified reason will imply a Zero grade in the participation/attendance evaluation item and may lead to suspension from the program.

Students who fail the course during the regular evaluation are allowed ONE re-take of the evaluation, in the conditions specified above. If the course is again failed after the retake, the student will have to register again for the course the following year.

In case of a justified no-show to an exam, the student must inform the lecturer as soon as possible and, desirably, always before the exam. Along with the MScIB Director, the possibility of rescheduling the exam will be studied (one option being during the "Retake" period). In the

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meantime, the student will get an “incomplete”, which will be replaced by the actual grade after the final exam is taken. The “incomplete” will not be reflected on the student’s Academic Transcript.

Plagiarism is to use another’s work and present it as one’s own without acknowledging the sources correctly. All essays, reports or projects handed in by a student must be original work completed by the student. By enrolling at ESCI UPF BSM Master of Science and signing the “Honor Code,” students acknowledge that they understand the schools’ policy on plagiarism and certify that all course assignments will be their work, except where indicated, by correct referencing. Failing to do so may result in automatic expulsion from the program.”

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4. CONTENT AND LEARNING ACTIVITIES

Session	Date	Contents
#1	Friday, Sep 27th	Course delivery and general introduction
#2	Friday, Oct 04th	Regionalism in Europe: the EU
#3	Friday, Oct 11th	Regionalism in Europe: the EU
#4	Friday, Oct 18th	Regionalism in Europe: the EU
#5	Friday, Oct 25th	Regionalism in the Americas: the Mercosur
#6	Friday, Nov 08th	Regionalism in the Americas: the NAFTA
#7	Friday, Nov 15th	Regionalism in MENA: the GCC
#8	Friday, Nov 22th	Regionalism in Africa: the AU
#9	Friday, Nov 29th	Regionalism in Asia: the ASEAN
#10	Friday, Dec 04th	Round-Up and concluding remarks
Final exam Announced in due time		

Total student workload (including self-study) 75 hours

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5. SHORT BIO

I have been a full-time lecturer at ESCI-UPF since 2017. Before this position, I served as a post-doctoral researcher at the *Universidad Carlos III* (Madrid), and conducted my doctoral research project, splitting my time between Barcelona and Brussels. I have also visited other universities and research centres, such as the *École Normale Supérieure de Lyon* (France) and the *Centro de Estudios Avanzados de la Universidad Nacional de Córdoba* (Argentina). Moreover, this academic year 2023-2024 I have been invited to teach on EU-related topics at *Toulouse Business School* and the *MCI Innsbruck* (Austria).

My academic interests focus on the institutional framework of the European Integration process (and compared regionalism), with special attention to the EU Trade Policy. I have also worked on the Methodology in Social Sciences, with close attention to applying Chaos Theory to this field. Life brought to other topics and fields of research, but I am always excited to read about these themes. Some of the results of my scientific works have been published in *Springer Verlag* and the *Journal of European Public Policy*. Sometimes alone, and many times co-authoring the papers with colleagues from different institutions,

I am deeply concerned with pedagogical innovation. I am a Scientific Advisor at *Simlearn*, a Belgium-based spin-off that creates innovative online story-telling tools to unpack the functioning of the EU's political system.

In my spare time, I bake all sorts of bread and grow tomatoes and spinach in my urban vegetable garden.

6. BIBLIOGRAPHY/RESOURCES/ READING MATERIALS

- Cooper, A., C. Hughes, and P.D. Lombaerde (Eds) (2008). *Regionalisation and global governance. The taming of globalisation*. London: Routledge.
- Kühnhardt, L. (2010). *Region-building. The Global Proliferation of Regional Integration*. New York (NY) and Oxford (UK): Berghahn Books.
- Telò, M. (Ed.) (2007) *European Union and the New Regionalism: Regional Actors and Global Governance in post-hegemonic era*. Aldershot (UK): Ashgate.