

## **Master European Public Affairs**

### **Mastering Academic Research Skills and Methods**

#### **Full course description**

Mastering Academic Research Skills and Methods spans from September to January (period 1 - 3), and provides advanced training on various professional and research skills related to academic communication (verbal and written), research design skills (formulation of research questions, basic design of an academic study, choice of methods), as well as working with (academic) sources. The course is designed to train students in the most important skills required to accomplish research projects in European Public Affairs, as well as to prepare them for the drafting of the MA EPA final work - the internship thesis. In particular, the course has the following components: (1) Academic writing skills: the writing of academic essays and of research papers, working with academic sources in a literature review assignment (referencing and presentation) (during MA EPA Module 1). (2) Research design skills: introduction to the research process, designing research projects, choice of theory and operationalization (during MA EPA Module 2). (3) Advanced research methods workshops: a series of small-group workshops focusing on document/content analysis and policy frame analysis, case studies and process tracing, and interviewing. Every student will choose which of these workshops to follow, depending on her/his MA thesis focus (during MA EPA Module 3). The main deliverable in the course, which is assessed by the MA thesis supervisor, is a thesis research proposal due at the end of January.

Assessment method: **Extended thesis proposal**

#### **Course objectives**

The main goal of the course is to equip the students with practical research design and research methodology skills indispensable for the contemporary European Studies graduate, such as preparing a literature review, setting up a coherent research design, conducting a case study, a semi-structured elite interview, and/or content analysis of appropriate EU documents. In addition, the course prepares the students for designing and drafting their graduation project - the internship thesis.

#### **Prerequisites**

None

## **Recommended reading**

Blaikie, N. (2007). *Approaches to Social Enquiry: Advancing Knowledge*. 2nd ed., Cambridge: Polity.

Greetham, B. (2008). *How to Write Better Essays*. 2nd ed., Palgrave Study Skills, New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Kvale, S. and Brinkmann, S. (2009). *Interviews: Learning the Craft of Qualitative Research Interviewing*. 2nd ed., Thousand Oaks: SAGE Publications.

Moses, J. and Knutsen, T. (2007). *Ways of Knowing: Competing Methodologies in Social and Political Research*. Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

Toshkov, D. (2016). *Research Design in Political Science*, Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.

EPA4510

Period 1

4 Sep 2023

2 Feb 2024

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

3.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [E.J. Radulova](#)

Teaching methods:

Lecture(s), Paper(s), Presentation(s), Research, Skills, Work in subgroups

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## **Perspectives on European Governance**

### **Full course description**

This 8-week module lays the foundation for further study during the course of the EPA Masters Programme. In order to be able to understand today's problems that can occur in a complex, globalized, international environment, one needs to have a solid understanding of the diverging economic, legal and administrative traditions of the countries cooperating in the European Union. This module concentrates on the political and legal organization of European countries as well as on differences in economics. The module starts with the context in which European integration takes place and concentrates on key theories relevant for understanding integration.

As such this course is the foundation for the courses offered in the Masters Programme at a later point in the curriculum: EPA4001 Lobbying in the EU, EPA4003 Implementation and Evaluation of EU Policy. The course provides an introduction to the key EU and national institutions, actors and stages in the decision-making process. With tools from policy analysis, agenda setting and key theories of European integration, the course provides an introduction to the complex decision-making process in Europe.

Within the thesis-writing trajectory, the course provides an introduction to the following elements

## Master European Public Affairs

that are covered in more detail in the Integrated Skills Track: (1) Formulating a feasible and insightful research question, (2) based on the overarching research question to be answered, choosing an appropriate research design and data strategy, (3) employing empirical methods competently and communicating the research findings clearly and in a compelling manner. While the course primarily provides an introduction to the political, legal and economic dimension of European integration as well as policy analysis and integration theory, it nevertheless also touches on the effort to teach students evidence-based argumentation which will be relevant both in academic as well as professional settings.

### Course objectives

Looking beyond the Masters Programme, the course helps you to prepare for a professional career in public affairs. With the course, you will have a firm foundation from which you will find it easier to navigate and understand the complex decision-making processes of the EU, present your analysis orally and in writing for different audiences and to begin to operate competently in the job market.

EPA4004

Period 1

4 Sep 2023

27 Oct 2023

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

10.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinators:

- [C.U. Arnold](#)
- [P.Y. Petrov](#)

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Lobbying in the EU

### Full course description

The second module of the Master in European Public Affairs deals with the phenomenon of lobbying in the system of European governance. In the theoretical part, students explore on a conceptual level the relationship between EU institutions and lobbying organizations, and learn to identify the main venues for lobby influence in the system. Who wins lobby battles and why? What standards do we use to judge the democratic legitimacy of lobbying? All these questions and more will be explored at length in the course. Students set-up their own small research project and report their results in a short academic paper.

The practical part of the module deals with some of the most important skills, tools and methods needed to perform on the Brussels lobbying scene. The course features some of Brussels' most renowned public affairs professionals. Under their guidance, students explore policy papers and policy briefs as tools to communicate policy-relevant information and thus to influence decision making; get introduced to the basics of online communications, and particularly social media, in the practice of public affairs in the EU. Finally, students take up the role of a public affairs consultancy

Master European Public Affairs

firm themselves and design a lobbying strategy for an ongoing legislative file.

## Prerequisites

Only accessible for selected EPA students

## Recommended reading

Culpepper, P. D. (2010). Quiet politics and business power: Corporate control in Europe and Japan. Cambridge University Press.

De Bruycker, I., & McLoughlin, A. The public affairs plan: Seven steps to success rooted in science and practice. Journal of Public Affairs, e2567

Klüver, H. (2013). Lobbying in the European Union: interest groups, lobbying coalitions, and policy change. Oxford University Press.

EPA4001

Period 2

30 Oct 2023

22 Dec 2023

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

10.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [A. Nastase](#)

Teaching methods:

Assignment(s), Skills, Training(s), Work in subgroups, Lecture(s)

Assessment methods:

Presentation, Assignment, Final paper

Keywords:

Lobbying, pitch, policy process

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Implementation and Evaluation of EU policy

### Full course description

The central question in this last module is: what happens to European policies in practice and how do they perform? In other words, what happens at “street level” with all policies coming from the EU? The first part of the module concentrates on the implementation stage of the policy cycle. In making its legislation work, the EU is strongly dependent on the member states, as they are the ones responsible for policy delivery. National authorities may not always be willing or able to comply with new legislation coming from ‘Brussels’, as evidenced by the Dieselgate scandal, which identified national authorities as unwilling to enforce European emission standards. We analyze how Member States differently deal with the challenges of ‘doing’ EU policy. The second part of the

## Master European Public Affairs

module looks at European public policy by exploring how EU policies, programs and legislation are evaluated. Professional policy evaluation takes place in the context of highly politicized processes of judgment and reckoning: What is a success and what is a failure? This seemingly simple question often proves difficult to answer, for both policy makers and evaluators. The course examines regulatory impact assessment and better regulation. It considers how we might theorise evaluation, its purpose and value, and whether lessons from evaluation do or don't influence future policy and brings about improvement. In addition, we consider the role of audit, and the culture and politics of evaluation in the EU. The course takes a practical perspective and engages students in the analysis of real-life cases.

### Course objectives

The last module of the EPA Master aims to analyze the issue of evaluation and implementation of EU policy from both a theoretical and practical perspective, and aims to train students in solving implementation problems, and critically analyzing EU policy evaluations.

### Prerequisites

Only accessible for selected EPA students

### Recommended reading

The EPA Master in principle works with selected academic journal articles.

EPA4003

Period 4

5 Feb 2024

28 Mar 2024

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

10.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [P.J. Stephenson](#)

Teaching methods:

Assignment(s), Skills, Training(s), Work in subgroups, Lecture(s)

Assessment methods:

Presentation, Final paper, Assignment

Keywords:

Implementation, evaluation, policy process, writing skills

## Master EPA Internship

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## Researching and Writing the MA EPA Thesis

### Full course description

The EPA thesis starts at the beginning of the academic year with the course 'Mastering Academic Research Skills and Methods' (MARSAM), which runs from periods 1 to 3, with the whole of period 3 (January) devoted entirely to writing an extended thesis proposal. Completion of the MARSAM course is worth 3 ECTS. In periods 4-6 (February to June) students follow the course 'Research and Writing the EPA Thesis'. Students work with a thesis supervisor mentor who meets with them on a regular basis to guide them in the research process, providing valuable feedback. The thesis should consist of about 9,000 words (excluding bibliography and annex; annexes are discouraged) and should contain a review of relevant academic literature; the use of relevant and appropriate concepts and theories; the application of appropriate analytical methods; a critical selection and processing of data; and the balanced and critical interpretation of results in comparison to existing knowledge. Furthermore, the thesis should be structured as an academic research project and contain a clear research question and analytical framework, which is then answered in a coherent and compelling manner through evidence-based argument and the collection and analysis of empirical data from primary sources. Students are encouraged to work on issues related to contemporary policy-making and legislative activity in the European Union, identifying the clear European public affairs and public policy relevance.

EPA4891

Period 4

5 Feb 2024

21 Jun 2024

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

12.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [E.J. Radulova](#)

Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences

## Internship Work and Report

### Full course description

The internship is a crucial part of the EPA program. Students can take up their internships from 1 April once Module 3 has ended. Students must complete an internship related to European public affairs of at least 12-weeks duration, though some end up with longer internships up to six months. Students might find their own internship. They choose an internship based on their own interests – some will be seeking a career in one of the EU institutions, others opting for the world of public affairs and consultancy, while others may be keen to focus on national governmental organizations or think tanks. Whatever the destination, the aim of the last part of the EPA Master is to put the lessons learned during the taught modules into practice. There is no better way to practice this, than by doing the job for real. The internship thus forms a crucial opportunity to gain hands-on experience in the field of European public affairs, and often provides the opportunity to smoothly

## Master European Public Affairs

enter the job market in Brussels or elsewhere. At the end of the internship students are required to complete a short internship report of 2,000 words that reflects on the objectives of the internships, the tasks performed, and how their professional insights link back to the theory and concepts introduced in the taught courses. The report also includes an evaluation from the internship supervisor or line manager in the host organization.

EPA4995

Period 5

8 Apr 2024

21 Jun 2024

[Print course description](#)

ECTS credits:

15.0

Instruction language:

English

Coordinator:

- [P.J. Stephenson](#)