Stockholm University

Course description for EU External Trade Relations Law and Policy (15hp/ECTS) SPRING 2025

General information about the course

Welcome to the advanced course in EU External Trade Relations Law and Policy! In this Syllabus you'll find information about the structure of the course, learning activities, and about assessment and grading. Check the schedule and information at the Athena website regularly as it is continuously updated. If you have questions please do not hesitate to contact us.

N.B! Acquire the course book already before the course starts: *EU External Relations Law, Texts, Cases and Materials*, eds. R. A. Wessel and J. Larik, Hart Publishing, 2nd edition, 2020.

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Important dates!

Thursday March 26	Introduction
Thursday May 7	Written exam
Friday May 29	Submission of essay
Friday June 5	Submission of peer-review

Friday June 9	Re-exam

The overall objective of the course is

The aim of the course is to provide the student with in-depth knowledge of the EU's common commercial policy and regulation of trade with third countries. The course deals in particular with the allocation of powers between the Union and its Member States, bilateral trade agreements, the Union's work in the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the

implementation of external actions in the Member States. The course covers EU constitutional law i.e., the basic EU treaties, the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and case law of the European Court of Justice, as well as bilateral, multilateral and mixed trade agreements and international law. Furthermore, negotiation processes, dispute resolution mechanisms and investment tribunals are studied. Interrelations with the Common Foreign and Security Policy and EU investments in developing countries are also addressed at some level. Substantive, institutional and procedural aspects of EU external trade relations, EU internal market law and public international law are studied. The course aims at deepened methodological awareness, improved critical thinking and understanding of scientific approaches. Hence, the student will acquire knowledge and skills to independently identify, analyze and solve problems regarding the interplay between EU external trade law, EU internal market law and public international law.

The course includes the following course elements:

The course consists of two basic learning activities; 1) lectures where the teacher provides the tools for studying an area of law, and 2) seminars where you take active part in presentations and discussions. Furthermore, the achievement of intended learning outcomes (ILO) are assessed through the mid-course written exam 4) the writing of an essay 5) and the peer-review. Also the attendance requirements form part of the examination as they must be met to pass the course

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to be able to:

Knowledge and understanding

- Exemplify, classify and explain the links between the EU's normative processes and the common commercial policy, as well as demonstrate insight into the regulation of trade with third countries,
- Exemplify, classify and explain both the application of international treaties in accordance with the Vienna Convention and the lexical, systematic and teleological method of European Union law,
- Analyze key issues in the common commercial policy and rules for international trade based on international law and the conceptual apparatus, systematics and objectives of EU law,
- Assess the need for regulation and the type of regulation needed to achieve identified goals,

- Create one’s own reasoning and draw independent conclusions regarding the regulation of EU Member States' common commercial policy and the regulation of trade with third countries.

Skills and abilities

- Critically apply the sources, terminology and methodology of international law and Union law in the area of the common commercial policy in order to argue for or against different regulatory strategies,
- Assessing the interrelation, validity and normative power of legal sources,
- Create one’s own sustainable arguments and convincing reasoning based on the sources, terminology and methodology of European Union Law,
- Present one’s own arguments and reasoning both verbally and in writing through an assignment,
- Critically assess both one’s own and others' arguments and reasoning based on the sources, terminology and methodology of European Union law.

Ability to evaluate and the undertaken approach

- Analyze the relationship between EU external trade law and other scientific disciplines,
- Understand the importance of EU external trade law for the Union's socio-economic development.

Pedagogical approach

This Course is based on active learning and interactions involving writing, presenting and peer-response. During the course, the student is trained in critical thinking and will need to develop consistent arguments based on existing normative frameworks as opposed to being opinionated. As international trade is interrelated with overall social development, including environmental protection, digitalization and geopolitics law, a contextual approach to law is required.

More about the course structure

There are two types of learning activities with different intended learning activities (ILO). In addition, examination through an essay and a peer-review are ways to learn (formative examination).

Lectures: Preferably, you read the text and material indicated in the reading instructions prior to the lecture. You are welcome to ask for clarifications and to raise additional questions at the lectures.

- ILOs: Acquisition of an overview of the topic, identification of core questions, and ability to use the information when reasoning on the topic in a broader EU law context.

Seminars: Assignments and materials will be issued at the Athena platform at least one week before the seminar. You are expected to prepare the assignment together with peers in your seminar group. The seminar groups will be formed during the first week of the course by the course management.

- ILOs: Acquisition of deeper knowledge in particular areas of law. Ability to connect the detailed information with the overarching objectives and principles of EU law. Ability to shape own arguments and a consistent line of reasoning. Ability to present the ideas in class. Ability to work in group and develop a common ground.

An attendance requirement must be met in order to obtain a final grade. You need to attend 80% of all lectures and seminars (not including the individual tutorials). Exemptions can be made only in exceptional cases, for instance for health reasons warranted by a medical certificate. If the requirement is not met it is graded Fx and you need to submit a complementary work.

International and comparative elements of the course

Obviously, the Course embraces international elements such as WTO law, foreign direct investments and exchanges of medical services within the scope of external dimensions of EU law. There are also comparative elements insofar as international trade law is based on the pursuit of minimum denominators of the legal systems concerned. Data protection is a case in point.

Interaction with the surrounding society

EU external trade law and policy is decisive for the overall socio-economic development in Europe. We cover direct investments, self-sufficiency, gene modified food and intellectual property just to mention some topical areas conditioned on the Union relation with the wider world. Hence, the legal studies at the Course are embedded in a broader socio-economic context.

How the course relates to other courses and to the law programme as a whole

This is an elective course at the Law Program in European Union (EU) law and international trade law. In addition, exchange students with basic knowledge of EU law are welcome at the Course.

Requirements regarding participation in the course

Registration

A **Swedish student** who intends to participate in the course must be registered by the second day of the course at the latest.

Exchange students register on the course through their university account in Ladok at the beginning of their exchange, the week before the semester starts.

Re-registration

Re-registration on the course is done by the course administrator.

De-registration

If for some reason, a student does not intend to take the course, they must de-register within three weeks after the start of the course (known as "early withdrawal period"). This is done through the student's university account in Ladok. This is of great importance to guarantee a place in a group the next time the student applies for the course. The early withdrawal period is calculated from the Monday of the week the course starts and three weeks ahead. The last day is always a Sunday.

Please note that de-registrations may have consequences for the right to receive student grants, including Erasmus grants. Please, contact CSN for more information if you are a Swedish student.

Groups

In order to enroll in a group, students must be registered on the course. Students who have never taken the course previously are given priority when choosing a group. The day/time of registration is indicated on the course website. The possibility for re-registered students to participate in a group is subject to availability and done on a "first come, first served" basis.

Study instructions

Books:

- Course book: *EU External Relations Law, Texts, Cases and Materials*, eds. R. A. Wessel and J. Larik, Hart Publishing, 2nd edition, 2020.
- Recommended additional reading: P. Eeckhout, OUP, *EU External Relations Law,*2nd edition 2012.

Miscellaneous:

- The Lisbon Treaty (Including consolidated Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union), e.g. Norstedts Juridik AB, 2010 (ed. N. Wahl).
- Writing guidelines (distributed at introduction)
- More articles, official texts, cases and other materials will be distributed during the Course.

Instruction

As always when studying law, reading is essential and the written word a main source of information. Try to read as much as you can in the course book already from the start of the course. The following instructions are but recommendations for how to structure the self-studies. Please note that you also need to prepare the seminars by reading the material found online. The seminar material should be published at the Athena site at least one week in advance.

Weeks 1 – 2: Lectures

- Read chapters 1-5 in the course book.

Weeks 2 – 3: Lectures

- Easter break April 1 – April 6.
- Read chapters 6-7 and 11-12 in the course book.

Weeks 4 – 5: Seminars

- Seminar material (See Athena site).

Weeks 6 – 7: Written exam

- April 27 Q&A.
- Self-studies (written exam).
- May 7: Written exam.

Weeks 8 – 9: Essay

- Self-studies (essay).
- May 11: First draft of the essay.
- May 12: How to write EU-law.
- May 18 - 19: Individual feed-back on the first draft.
- May 29: Submission of final essay.
- May 29: distribution of essays for peer review.

Week 10: Peer review

- Self-studies (peer-review).
- June 5: Submission of peer-review.

Examination

Assessment and grading

Mid-course written examination You are required to answer questions which might be divided into sub-questions. There are four kinds of questions; those focusing on conceptual knowledge; given problems; open ended questions inviting you to write a shorter essay; and those focusing on critical thinking. Each question may give 0-10 points.

The written examination is an open book exam. Since it is an open book exam you are allowed to use all materials included in the literature list, the materials distributed during the course, as well as your own notes from the lectures and seminars. You should also use relevant statutory law such as Treaties and secondary legislation, as well as case law. Remember to have a dictionary at hand! In case computers are used you may access documents stored in the RAM

and ROM, but no online activities such as browsing or communication with the peers are allowed.

The essay: You are expected to write an individual essay. The topic for the essay will be assigned to you during the first week of the course and it is not freely chosen. However, exemptions can be made upon approval of your supervisor. The supervisor will be indicated at the Athena site under "assignments". You are encouraged to contact the supervisor as soon as possible. It is important that you get started with the essay at the beginning of the Course. Your legal training changes gear from learning what others have said to research and development of an independent legal analysis. In the process, you will learn how to write law, i.e. legal methodology, the use of sources, and structuring. Your supervisor will provide feedback.

There will be a seminar on how to write EU law. A **first draft** of the essay shall be submitted in the Athena portal under "assignments" in accordance with the schedule. The supervisor will provide feed-back at an individual meeting (tutorial) at a time that will be specified during the day indicated in the schedule. In case the draft is not submitted on time you are not entitled to any feed-back. The **final essay** should be submitted in the Athena portal under "assignments" in accordance with a schedule. In case it is not submitted on time, one point will be detracted from the score for the essay each new hour until the requirement for E is no longer met. The paper should be written in font Times New Roman, size 12; with 1½ space; and 2,5 cm margins. The analysis shall be based on valid legal sources in EU law clearly stated in footnotes. As a formal requirement, the text with footnotes shall neither be shorter than 15 pages, nor exceed 20 pages. Moreover, the paper should have a front page indicating the name of the author, the title of the assignment, and the name of the supervisor. Finally, a separate bibliography where all legal sources used in the paper are clearly stated shall be added to the text. Neither the front page nor the bibliography is counted towards the page limit (15-20 pages). For further information, see writing guidelines and attend the seminar on how to write EU law.

- ILOs: Knowledge in the field of writing; understanding of the applied method; analytical skills; writing skills; skills to search for materials and to use sources of law; and skills to organise an independent work in terms of time frames and labour.

Peer review: From the day of submission of the essay, you will have about a week to read and comment on the essay written by a peer. The peer-review should be submitted in the Athena portal under "assignments" in accordance with the schedule**.** The comments should be written in font Times New Roman, size 12; with 1½ space; and 2,5 cm margins. The peer review shall neither be shorter than two pages, nor exceed five pages. Moreover, the comments should have a front page indicating the title of the commented essay, and the names of the author and of the commentator.

The peer review shall address five aspects of the written essay: 1) Knowledge in the field of writing; 2) understanding of the applied method; 3) analytical skills; 4) writing skills; and 5) formalities. When it comes to "1) knowledge in the field of writing", the commentator is welcome to criticise the analysis of the author and to question the conclusions drawn in the work.

The assessment and grading of the commenting on the peer's essay is based on the following criteria: Knowledge in the field concerned, relevance, accuracy, clarity, style, cogency, and consistency.

- ILOs: Critical thinking, deeper understanding of writing law, academic training,

Requirements

In order to obtain a final grade at the Course you need to pass all three grounds for assessment (A-E). In case the result on the written exam would be Fx or F it is necessary to make a re-exam. If the essay or the peer-review measures up to Fx you need to submit a complementary work. The complemented work is graded from A-F on basis of the same criteria as the first assessment. If the grade is F, a more comprehensive work or new work must be submitted to pass.

An essay that only meets the criteria for the grade Fx can be re-submitted no later than on Friday June 14. Please note that the additional time will be taken into consideration when assessing and grading the re-submitted essay. If an essay is not submitted or only meets the criteria for the grade F, an additional essay needs to be submitted. Both essays can be

submitted in August and the exact date will be communicated to the student. Again, the additional time will be taken into consideration when assessing and grading the submitted essays. Exemptions can be made only in exceptional cases e.g. when justified by a medical certificate.

- As to a peer-review that only meets the criteria for the grade F or Fx, see the clarifications regarding the essay above which apply *mutatis mutandis*.

Exam registration

Students must register for the exam no later than 10 calendar days before the date of the exam. Registration for the exam requires registration on the course. **Students who have not registered for the exam are not allowed to write the exam.**

Swedish students receive a grade on the learning outcome-based four-grade grading scale AB-U.

All students have the right to receive grades according to the grading scale A-F(x). Swedish students who wish to do so must report this to the course coordinator/teaching assistant at least five working days before the written exam.

Students with a documented disability who have been issued a certificate of extra pedagogical support from Stockholm University must report this to the course administrator/teaching assistant as soon as possible (see below, "studying with a disability").

Documents allowed at the exam

All students are required to show a valid ID on the day of exam. Driving licenses, passports and ID cards that are still in date are approved as identification. In case of stolen or lost ID, students may also prove their identity by providing a police report of no more than three months. Foreign ID documents are also accepted, preferably passports and ID cards.

Permitted aids and other exam regulations

Students must be in the examination room at least 15 minutes before the exam is set to start.

At the exam, different examination options can be applied. Information about the different examination options and the rules that apply can be found on the Department of Law's website. The presence of unauthorized exam aids, notes and the like, as well as violations of exam regulations may lead to a notification to the university Disciplinary Committee. The Disciplinary Committee, led by the university president, can decide on a warning or a suspension.

Grading criteria on the AB-U scale

See the grading criteria on the A-F(x) grading scale below.

AB = A result corresponding to grade A-B

Ba = A result corresponding to grade C-D

B = A result corresponding to grade E

U = A result corresponding to Fx or F.

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Grading criteria on the A-F(x) grading scale

The written Exam

The criteria are weighted but not absolute. Even if it is e.g. more important to show knowledge than to master the language, the text must be comprehensible for an initiated reader.

Grade	Criteria	Additional
A	In all, a set of very well-structured and exclusively relevant answers with a clear focus on the central aspects of the questions; extensive references to legal sources and correct use of all relevant facts; revealing great ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make an independent assessment of problems, including critical reflection.	45-50
B	In all, a set of well-structured and highly relevant answers with a clear focus on central aspects of the questions; convincing references to legal sources and correct use of relevant facts; revealing a high ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make an independent assessment of problems, including critical reflection.	40-44,5
C	In all, a set of well-structured and mainly relevant answers addressing most central aspects of the questions; convincing references to legal sources and correct use of relevant facts; revealing an ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make an independent and balanced assessment of problems.	35-39,5
D	In all, a set of structured and relevant answers addressing several central aspects of the questions; adequate reference to legal sources and correct use of relevant facts; revealing signs of ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make an independent assessment of problems.	30-34,5
E	In all, a set of transparent answers addressing some central aspects of the questions; some reference to legal sources and use of some relevant facts; revealing signs of ability to make an independent assessment of problems.	25-29,5
Fx	In all, a set of answers which observe some aspects of the questions; insufficient use of legal sources and relevant facts and/or revealing no signs of ability to make an independent assessment of problems.	12-24,5
F	Blank to a reproduction of disjointed facts with insufficient reasoning.	0-11,5

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The essay

The criteria are weighted but not absolute. Even if it is e.g. more important to show knowledge than to master the language, the text must be comprehensible for an initiated reader.

Grade	Criteria	Result
A	Great knowledge in the field of writing and clear focus on central aspects; Complete understanding of the applied method; Great ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make an independent assessment of problems; Excellent presentation in terms of structure, stringency, systematics, and language; Extensive references to legal sources and correct use of relevant facts; Keeps time frames and constructive use of feedback from supervisor.	27-30
B	Much knowledge in the field of writing and clear focus on central aspects; Comprehensive understanding of the applied method; Good ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make an independent assessment of problems; Good presentation in terms of structure, stringency, systematics, and language; Much reference to legal sources and correct use of relevant facts; Keeps time frames and uses most of the relevant feedback from supervisor.	24-26,5
C	Convincing knowledge in the field of writing and focus on central aspects; Convincing understanding of the applied method; Adequate ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make an independent assessment of problems; Good presentation in terms of structure, stringency, systematics, and language; Convincing references to legal sources and correct use of relevant facts; Keeps time frames and uses most of the relevant feedback from supervisor.	21-23.5
D	Adequate knowledge in the field of writing and focus on some central aspects; Signs of understanding of the applied method; Signs of ability to engage in abstract reasoning and to make an independent assessment of problems; Adequate presentation in terms of structure, stringency, systematics, and language; Adequate reference to legal sources and correct use of relevant facts; Keeps time frames and uses some relevant feedback from supervisor.	18-20,5
E	A transparent reasoning which observes some aspects that are relevant; Signs of understanding of the applied method; Some reference to legal sources and relevant facts; signs of ability to make an independent assessment of problems.	15-17,5
Fx	A reasoning which observes aspects that are relevant to the questions posed but insufficient reference to legal sources and relevant facts and/or no signs of ability to make an independent assessment of problems.	7-14,5
F	Nothing to a reproduction of disjointed facts with insufficient reasoning.	0-7

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The peer review

The criteria are weighted but not absolute. Moreover there is a minimum level of quality for each element of the examination. If e.g. the presentation is outstanding the overall grade may still be Fx or F in the absence of intelligible comments even if the attendance requirements are met.

Grade	Criteria	Result
A	Great knowledge in the field concerned; focus on all central aspects and an entirely accurate criticism or approval of the analysis on basis of very clear, cogent and consistent comments presented in an accessible and independent way without being rude.	18-20
B	Significant knowledge in the field concerned; focus on most central aspects and an accurate criticism or approval of the analysis on basis of very clear, cogent and consistent comments presented in an accessible and independent way without being rude.	16-17,5
C	Convincing knowledge in the field concerned; focus on most central aspects and a legitimate criticism or approval of the analysis on basis of clear, cogent and consistent comments presented in an accessible and independent way without being rude.	14-15,5
D	Adequate knowledge in the field concerned; focus on some central aspects and a mainly legitimate criticism or approval of the analysis on basis of fairly clear, cogent and consistent comments presented in an intelligible and independent way without being rude.	12-13,5
E	A transparent reasoning which observes some aspects that are relevant; criticism or approval of the analysis revealing signs of understanding of the analysis in the essay, by means of some fairly clear and cogent arguments which do not contradict one another, presented in an intelligible way in own words without being rude.	10-11,5
Fx	A reasoning which observes aspects that are relevant to the comments; significant gaps in the criticism or approval of the analysis; on basis of unclear or scattered comments presented in a way that does not reveal an ability to make an independent assessment.	5-9,5
F	Nothing to a reproduction of disjointed facts with insufficient reasoning.	0-4,5

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Final grade

Grade	Criteria	Result
A	Passes all grounds for assessment and grading with excellent praise.	90-100
B	Passes all grounds for assessment and grading with praise, or passes some grounds for assessment and grading with excellent praise.	80-89,5
C	Willingly accepted results not without praise at all examinations, or passes some grounds for assessment and grading with praise.	70-79,5
D	Willingly accepted results at all examinations, or willingly accepted results not without praise at some of the examinations.	60-69,5
E	Accepted results at all examinations, or willingly accepted results at some of the examinations.	50-59,5
Fx	Not accepted result at any or some of the examinations but meets nevertheless the requirements for Fx indicated in appendix 1-3 with respect to the relevant ground(s) for assessment and grading.	25-49,5
F	Not accepted result at any or some of the examinations and does not meet the requirements for Fx indicated in appendix 1-3 with respect to the relevant ground(s) for assessment and grading.	0-24,5

Request for grade review:

Requests for grade reviews are submitted on a special form to the course administrator/teaching assistant. The request must be carefully supported and a copy of the exam must be attached.

Studying with a disability

General

Stockholm University offers various forms of extra pedagogical support for people with permanent disabilities. The support offered depends on the individual's situation and is intended to facilitate studies. The goal is for all students to have an opportunity to study on equal terms.

To take advantage of the support offered, students must submit an application to the university's Disability Services (part of the Student Services). To do this, they must log into the system NAIS via a link found on Student Services's web page (Stockholm University > Education > Studying with a disability > how to apply for support) and fill in the online form. To complete the application, a certificate confirming the disability must be attached.

When the application is received, the student will be contacted by the Student Services to book a personal meeting.

Once the student is granted support, they will need to contact their department's contact person and submit the certificate issued by the Student Services. The contact person at the Department of law for Swedish students is Viktoria Pettersson, director of studies, Tel.: 08-16 13 04 or e-mail: viktoria.pettersson@juridicum.su.se.

Examination

Note that the course administrator/teaching assistant must be informed of a student's documented disability **no later than 3 weeks** before each examination in order for the extra pedagogical support to be in place in time. If the information is received later, the department cannot guarantee that the examination can be carried out as desired**. Please also note that**

registration for the exam must be done in the usual manner no later than 10 calendar days before the exam. Also note that in order to receive extra pedagogical support during the entire course (e.g. note-taking assistance) or special extra measures (e.g. dividing up the exam), the course administrator/teaching assistant must be contacted at the latest **by at the start of the course**.

Student influence and course development

All students are asked to complete an anonymous electronic course evaluation at the end of the course. The course evaluation is of great importance for the quality assurance of the course content and its pedagogical structure. The course is constantly changing and evolving, and the views and ideas expressed in the course evaluation are always carefully considered.