



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2021

8,371: The Political Economy of the Car

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (50%)

Examination time: term time

Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (50%)

Examination time: term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,371,1.00 The Political Economy of the Car](#) -- Englisch -- [Rinscheid Adrian](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

There are no formal requirements. An interest in political economy, public policy and the current transformation of the automotive sector is important, though.

Learning objectives

In this course students will:

- - Comprehend the nexus between automobility, economic growth, and the state.
- - Understand the relationship between climate change and the transformation of the automotive industry.
- - Analyze the role of public policies in steering technological innovation.
- - Understand the role of various stakeholders in shaping the future of the automotive sector.
- - Investigate and present to the class a specific perspective or problem related to the political economy of the car.

Course content

The course deals with the political economy of the car - that is, the interaction between policy, politics, and economic choices and outcomes, focusing on the automotive industry. The course draws mainly from Political Economy, Political Science and International Relations, but it goes beyond these fields by integrating perspectives from Behavioral Science and the interdisciplinary field of Sustainability Transitions.

The first part of the course introduces general perspectives on the (International) Political Economy of the car. In an effort to understand why the automobile has become such a dominant feature of today's culture and economy, the relationships between automobility, economic growth and the state are analyzed. Moreover, to enable a productive reflection on current trends in the automotive sector, the course deals with the development of global value chains in the car industry, structural dependencies, and regional structures of production including the role of developing countries in global production and consumption.

The second part of the course deals with the current transformation of the automotive sector. As transportation accounts for a quarter of energy-related CO₂-emissions worldwide, decarbonizing this sector is a key component in global climate change action plans. At the same time, the transportation sector is characterized by deep path dependencies that constrain change.



While the transformation of the automotive sector is underway, there is considerable heterogeneity in actors' preferences (both within and across jurisdictions), policy approaches, and corporate as well as economy-wide outcomes. To gain a solid understanding of the political economy of the car in times of transformation, we will discuss and learn about the following topics in depth:

- - The role of the state in driving technological change (investigating the cases of battery-electric vehicles and fuel-cell vehicles).
- - The political economy of innovation in leading markets (including China, Japan, Norway, Germany).
- - Preferences and the influence of organized interests and the public in the transformation of the automotive industry.
- - Firm-centered perspectives, including firm-level innovation management and corporate product innovation.
- - The role of customers and market dynamics in the transformation of the automotive industry.
- - Global value chain implications of battery-electric vehicles.
- - The governance of autonomous vehicles.

About the lecturer. Dr. Adrian Rinscheid is an International Postdoctoral Fellow at the Institute for Economy and the Environment (University of St.Gallen). In his current research project entitled 'The politics of overcoming carbon lock-in: Managing decline and transition in the automotive industry', he investigates the political dynamics surrounding the transformation of the car industry in various countries. Dr. Rinscheid was trained in Political Science and Public Administration and obtained his PhD in International Affairs and Political Economy at the University of St.Gallen. His research on topics of energy and climate policy and politics has been published in leading international journals such as *Nature Energy*, *Regulation & Governance*, and *Climate Policy*.

Course structure

The course is organized as a weekly seminar. The first part (sessions 1 to 3) will be based on input by the lecturer and small group assignments. The aim of the first part is to provide a solid conceptual foundation. In session 2, presentation topics will be distributed to (max.) 12 student teams. The second part (sessions 4 to 11) will be devoted to gaining a thorough understanding of major trends and challenges relevant for the automotive sector as well as more specific debates (see course content). This will be based primarily on the required readings, students' presentations and interactive discussions in class. In addition, one or two guest lecturers will provide hands-on insights about specific topics. Criteria for grading of presentations include originality, coherence of the argument, analytical precision, and presentation quality. Students can share the outline of the presentation with the lecturer for feedback one week before the presentation date. For all sessions, active student participation is essential. Each student is expected to have completed the required readings in order to contribute actively to class discussions.

Course literature

At the beginning of the semester, required readings (typically 2 readings per session) will be made available on Canvas. Students are expected to carefully read the required readings before coming to class. The lecturer will provide additional readings.

Additional course information

In the case of the President's Board having to implement new directives due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic in SpS2021, the course information listed above will be changed as follows:

- - The course is conducted online via the platform Zoom;
- - The recordings of the course will be available for 30 days;
- - The lecturer informs via canvas/StudyNet about the changed implementation modalities of the course;
- - No course contents will be cancelled.

The examination information listed below would be changed as follows:

- The presentations are conducted online and are being recorded.



Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/2)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (50%)

Examination time: term time

Remark

Presentation (20 min) of a course topic

Examination-aid rule

Presentations

In presentations, aids for visual presentation can be used. These aids can be specified or restricted by the lecturers.

Supplementary aids

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Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

2. Examination sub part (2/2)

Examination time and form

Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (50%)

Examination time: term time

Remark

Students can choose between 2 tracks (see below).

Examination-aid rule

Term papers

Term papers must be written without anyone else's help and in accordance with the known quotation standards, and they must contain a declaration of authorship which is a published template in StudentWeb.

The documentation of sources (quotations, bibliography) has to be done throughout and consistently in accordance with the chosen citation standard such as APA or MLA.

For papers in law, the legal standard is recommended (by way of example, cf. FORSTMOSER, P., OGOREK R. et SCHINDLER B., Juristisches Arbeiten: Eine Anleitung für Studierende, newest edition respectively, or according to the recommendations of the Law School).

The indications of the sources of information taken over verbatim or in paraphrase (quotations) must be integrated into texts in accordance with the precepts of the applicable quotation standard, while informative and bibliographical notes must be added as footnotes (recommendations and standards can be found, for example, in METZGER, C., Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien, newest edition respectively).

For any work written at the HSG, the indication of the page numbers is mandatory independent of the chosen citation standard. Where there are no page numbers in sources, precise references must be provided in a different way: titles of chapters or sections, section numbers, acts, scenes, verses, etc.

Supplementary aids

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Examination languages



Question language: English

Answer language: English

Examination content

Part I (presentation in groups): presentation topics will be defined by the lecturer (based on the contents of the course). From session 4 to 11, there will be 12 group presentations (max).

Part II (examination paper): Students can select one of the following tracks:

Track A: Research paper. The student develops a research question and writes a conceptual or empirical paper addressing this question (3,500 words +/- 10%, excluding list of references). The research question needs to be directly related to one or several topics covered in this course. The paper may eventually become the nucleus of a MA thesis.

Track B: Literature Review. The student conducts a review of the scholarly literature dealing with one of the topics covered in this course (3,000 words +/- 10%, excluding list of references). The aim is to provide a structured summary of the pertinent literature and to identify research gaps that future studies should address.

Examination relevant literature

A general reading list will be published in the StudyNet course room at the beginning of the semester. The specific literature relevant for the term papers depends on the specific topic.

Please note

Please note that only this fact sheet and the examination schedule published at the time of bidding are binding and takes precedence over other information, such as information on StudyNet (Canvas), on lecturers' websites and information in lectures etc.

Any references and links to third-party content within the fact sheet are only of a supplementary, informative nature and lie outside the area of responsibility of the University of St.Gallen.

Documents and materials are only relevant for central examinations if they are available by the end of the lecture period (CW21) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 12 are relevant for testing.

Binding nature of the fact sheets:

- Course information as well as examination date (organised centrally/decentrally) and form of examination: from bidding start in CW 04 (Thursday, 28 January 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 22 March 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 22 March 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before the end of the registration period in CW 14 (Thursday, 8 April 2021).