



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Spring Semester 2022

8,361: Energy Transition and Foreign Policy

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (45%)

Examination time: term time

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (5%)

Examination time: term time

Decentral - Active participation (20%)

Examination time: term time

Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (30%)

Examination time: term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[8,361,1.00 Energy Transition and Foreign Policy](#) -- Englisch -- [Thaler Philipp](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

This course is open to all students with an interest in global energy studies and the geopolitics of renewable energy.

A good level of English is a prerequisite. Prior attendance of classes taught by the lecturer (or similar classes at other universities) is welcome. A basic understanding of international, energy and climate politics is an advantage.

Learning objectives

In this course, students will identify:

- the different ways in which renewable energy sources (RES) challenge existing structures of international energy affairs and International Relations (IR);
- examine varieties of domestic energy transitions and their international effect;
- evaluate the relationship between RES and political power;
- assess reasons for progress, resistance and backlash in the international energy transition;
- analyze the interests and interactions of policy-makers, stakeholders and incumbents;
- and apply key concepts and theories to make sense of the observed and anticipated developments.

By the end of this course students will have acquired a comprehensive and structured understanding of the transforming element RES bring to international energy affairs. They will be able to critically reflect upon opportunities and threats the global transition to renewables entails for individual states and the international system.

Course content

The energy transition is picking up speed. New technologies drive the switch from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources (RES) at unprecedented levels. Around the world, many countries have initiated ambitious energy and climate policies. Governance mechanisms develop at all levels of government - from municipal energy plans to the Paris Agreement - to ensure that the set targets will be met.

At the same time, the global energy transition challenges established patterns of foreign and security policy. For more than a



century, the geopolitics of oil and gas have characterized the international order. Ownership and access to fossil fuel resources have shaped regimes, defined international partnerships, and even caused wars. The surge of renewables is set to bring fundamental changes to the global energy economy and geopolitics.

New issues of concern arise that will re-shape the global order known from the 20th and early 21st century. They relate to the rise of RES in the global energy mix and include access to renewable energy sources and critical materials, protection of the energy system from cyberattacks, and technology transfer. Despite a growing body of scholarly contributions, the geopolitics of renewable energy have received surprisingly little political attention so far. How does the energy transition affect foreign policy, as we know it? And how will international energy governance evolve in a post-carbon world?

These are some of the questions that will be addressed in this seminar, taught by Philipp Thaler. He has been leading energy governance research at the Institute for Political Science at the University of St. Gallen since 2017. Besides his research in academia, he has worked on issues of energy governance and market regulation at energy and climate think tank E3G, the European Commission and as a consultant in the private sector.

Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

The course consists of two main parts. Sessions before the term break will review the existing structure of global energy relations with a view to current trends. Sessions after the term break will be concerned with challenges to the current system and the international energy order in a post-carbon world. In the first session, the lecturer will introduce his perspective on past and future aspects of global energy relations. The first session will also include an introduction to the course, where topics for group presentations will be assigned (see below).

For all other sessions, **active student participation** is essential. Each student is expected to have completed the required readings in order to contribute actively to class discussions.

Seven sessions are **case studies**: for each of these sessions, a student team will prepare a 20-minute **group presentation** (in case not enough students are enrolled in the course, presentations will have to be held individually). The teams are formed and the topic of the presentation is assigned in the introductory session to the course. Each presentation will address one of the seminar questions by using the required readings as well as a minimum of 10 additional references. Teams are encouraged to include a comparative or an international dimension as well as empirical data in their presentation. Other criteria for grading include originality, coherence of the argument, analytical precision, and presentation quality. Files are due three days prior to their presentation in class and must be shared with other participants by uploading electronic versions on the e-learning platform (tab modules). Before, outlines of the presentations can be shared with the lecturer for comments. The presentation will be **discussed by another student team** (max 5 minutes). Elements of a good group discussion will be presented to the students in the introductory session. The discussion should not entail visual elements. After these comments, remaining questions will be addressed in a discussion among all students of the course.

Two sessions are **joint sessions**: after a brief discussion of the literature (20 minutes), students work in small groups on specific topics and related policy questions (40 minutes). At the end of these sessions, groups present and discuss each other's work (30 minutes). Students' individual contributions to the group work and the discussions will be part of their grade for active participation.

At the end of the course, each student is required to write a short (1300 words, +/- 10%) **reflection paper**, which is to be submitted at the end of the last week of classes. This reflection paper will address how the research experience and seminar discussions altered the student's preliminary thinking on the course topic. Elements of a good reflection paper will be presented to the students in the introductory session.

In the final class, the lecturer will facilitate a debriefing session on lessons learned.

The presentation represents 45% of the grade, and each team member will receive the same grade. The comment following another group's presentation represents another 5% of the grade and is also a team grade. Active classroom participation, which includes the contribution to the group work throughout the four joint sessions represents 20% of the grade and is based on individual performance. The reflection paper represents 30% of the grade and is based on individual performance.

Preliminary seminar topics

- The geopolitics of renewables
- The old players: The US, Russia, and OPEC
- European external energy policy
- New major actors: China and India



- Multilateral and transnational action
- Industrial policy in times of the energy transition
- Cybersecurity and critical infrastructure

Course literature

Mandatory and additional literature will be listed for every session of this course. The four publications below provide a general overview over topics covered within this course.

- Scholten, Daniel (Ed.) (2018). The Geopolitics of Renewables. Springer International Publishing (available as e-book via the HSG library)
- Högselius, Per (2019). Energy and Geopolitics. Routledge (available as e-book via the HSG library)
- IEA World Energy Outlook 2021, Paris: IEA. (available via HSG institutional login)
- REN 21: Renewables 2021 Global Status Report, Paris: REN21/UNEP (free download)

Additional course information

In case parts or the entire course have to be held online, the main course components (including topics, readings, presentations, participation, and grading) will be unaffected by this change.

In the case of the President's Board having to implement new directives due to the SARS-CoV-2 pandemic in Spring Semester 2022, the course information listed above will be changed as follows:

- The course is conducted online via the platform zoom
- The course will be recorded and recordings will be available online
- The lecturer informs students via StudyNet and/or e-mail in the eventuality of any changes

The examination information listed below would be changed as follows:

- The presentations and discussions are conducted online and are being recorded
- The different examination parts as well as their weight to the overall grade remain unaffected. There are no changes necessary to the examination information.

Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/4)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (45%)

Examination time: term time

Remark

Group/individual presentation on seminar 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 (2/4)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (5%)

Examination time: term time

Remark

Discussion of other group presentation

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

3. Examination sub part (3/4)

Examination time and form

Decentral - Active participation (20%)

Examination time: term time

Remark

Active class participation

Examination-aid rule

Active classroom participation

In the "Active classroom participation" examination form, regular participation in class is assessed.

The assessment criteria can be as follows:

- Requests to speak enrich the discussion (productive) / requests to speak disturb the discussion (counterproductive);
- Requests to speak are correct/requests to speak are incorrect;
- Requests to speak are frequent/average/rare;
- No requests to speak, but students follow the lesson/no requests to speak and students do not noticeably follow the lessons.

Supplementary aids

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Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

4. Examination sub part (4/4)

Examination time and form

Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (30%)

Examination time: term time

Remark

Individual reflection paper on course content



Examination-aid rule

Term papers

Written work must be written without outside help according to the known citation standards, and a declaration of authorship must be attached, which is available as a template on the StudentWeb.

Documentation (quotations, bibliography, etc.) must be carried out universally and consistently according to the requirements of the chosen/specified citation standard such as e.g. APA or MLA.

The legal standard is recommended for legal work (cf. by way of example: FORSTMOSER, P., OGOREK R., SCHINDLER B., *Juristisches Arbeiten: Eine Anleitung für Studierende* (the latest edition in each case), or according to the recommendations of the Law School).

The reference sources of information (paraphrases, quotations, etc.) that has been taken over literally or in the sense of the original text must be integrated into the text in accordance with the requirements of the citation standard used. Informative and bibliographical notes must be included as footnotes (recommendations and standards e.g. in METZGER, C., *Lern- und Arbeitsstrategien* (latest edition)).

For all written work at the University of St.Gallen, the indication of page numbers is mandatory, regardless of the standard chosen. Where page numbers are missing in sources, the precise designation must be made differently: chapter or section title, section number, article, etc.

Supplementary aids

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Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Examination content

Content of faculty and student presentations; content of student discussions; practitioner debate; climate change; sustainable development; international and national energy policy; global energy governance; implications for policymakers and for businesses.

Examination relevant literature

All background and mandatory course literature (updated throughout the course) as well as lecture notes. Students are expected to find additional literature (at least 10 references) for their group presentations.



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, 27 January 2022);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 21 March 2022);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 21 March 2022);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before the end of the registration period in CW 15 (Monday, 11 April 2022).