



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Autumn Semester 2021

7,382: Consultancy Project: Finding Feasible Energy and Climate Solutions

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (20%)

Examination time: term time

Decentral - Presentation (in groups - all given the same grades) (30%)

Examination time: term time

Decentral - examination paper written at home (in groups - all given the same grades) (30%)

Examination time: term time

Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (20%)

Examination time: term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[7,382,1.00 Consultancy Project: Finding Feasible Energy and Climate Solutions](#) -- Englisch -- [Thaler Philipp](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

Application process

Please send a short application (pdf, overall length: max. 1 page) until September 5 to philipp.thaler@unisg.ch, which should include a statement of motivation (max. half page), academic background (including GPA), practical experience (if applicable), and language skills (only those with research proficiency). Please highlight specifically any experience in the disciplines/sectors outlined above. Those recruited for this project will not have to bid for a consultancy project. For further questions on the project, please do not hesitate to contact the lecturer philipp.thaler@unisg.ch directly.

This course is open to all students with an interest in business, geopolitics and public policy, cross-border cooperation, and the energy sector. Students should also enjoy problem-solving, thinking outside the box, and have an eye for the detail. An academic background or practical experience in at least one of the following disciplines/sectors is an advantage: economics, law, business, management, engineering, consultancy, or the energy sector.

Furthermore, it is recommended that students complete the MIA Morning course prior to taking this consultancy project course. The knowledge and skillsets acquired in the MIA Morning workshops will be relevant and applicable in obtaining a successful outcome in this course.

For this consultancy project, students will have to sign a confidentiality agreement with the client.

A very good level of English is expected. Other language skills, notably German, are an advantage.

Learning objectives

During this consultancy project, students

- demonstrate ability to evaluate and classify a problem and source a solution from its onset to its conclusion;
- acquire and foster skills in the application of theoretical concepts to real-life situations;
- gain experience with actual issues in the practitioner's world that arise in the course of the consultancy project;
- foster their creativity and various skills, including teamwork, project management, communication, research, writing, presentation.



Students who participate in this course will, afterwards, be able to:

- understand and assess the geopolitical implications of the energy transition
- analyze benefits and challenges of cross-border energy cooperation and develop policy solutions with regard to the latter
- reflect upon key aspects of European energy and climate governance as well as Swiss-EU relations.

Course content

Since the 1950s, Switzerland has been at the forefront of building a European electricity grid through cross-border interconnectors. Transnational network integration promises more efficient markets, leading to lower energy prices and higher energy security of supply. The European electricity grid now stretches across the entire continent. Yet, while the early days of network integration were organized among private actors, more recently the European Commission (EC) has assumed a central role. Today, EU rules govern the European electricity grid and markets, implemented through membership in the EU, the European Economic Area (EEA), or the Energy Community. Switzerland, not being a member of either of these agreements, has been negotiating an electricity agreement with the EC since 2007 to close regulatory gaps. Since 2012, the EC has made the overarching framework agreement a precondition for the electricity agreement. In the meantime, Switzerland has been excluded from important processes mandatory in the EU that govern the system and market operation. The Swiss Bundesrat's recent decision to terminate negotiations on this framework agreement with the EU ('SWEXIT') led the EC to discontinue negotiations on the electricity agreement. As a result, Switzerland is now permanently excluded from key processes of European electricity governance. Due to regulatory developments in the EU and delays in grid expansion and renewable generation capacities, Switzerland faces severe challenges in its grid security and supply with electricity in the next years.

The client of this consultancy project is a major private actor from the Swiss electricity sector. Its core business involves cross-border operations and close relations with European partners. The failure of the electricity agreement challenge this approach: regulatory gaps ensuing from SWEXIT impair cross-border operations, Swiss energy security, and ultimately also the achievement of Swiss energy and climate objectives. Under close supervision of the course coordinator Dr. Philipp Thaler and two of the client's senior electricity sector experts, teams of MIA students will investigate core questions related to CH-EU energy relations, broader geopolitical questions, and the European and Swiss energy transition to draw conclusions for the feasibility of alternative options for cross-border electricity cooperation.

Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

The project will start with a kick-off session held in the first week of the semester during which students will be assigned to their respective groups and receive an introduction to Swiss-EU energy relations and current challenges therein. It follows an on-site visit (subject to Covid re-strictions) at the client to learn about the implications of SWEXIT for the Swiss electricity sector and the client's business. Supervised by the course coordinator Philipp Thaler and two electricity sector experts, student teams will then conduct independent research on Swiss-EU relations, cross-border energy governance, Swiss energy policy and regulation, and EFTA/WTO rules to map best practices for future electricity cooperation. Research tasks will be adapted to student skills and the composition of the consultancy teams. Progress will be discussed and preliminary results presented in a mid-term meeting; project results including practical recommendations will be presented to the company during a final conference and submitted in a written report.

Course literature

The course coordinator will provide recommended references, including academic journal articles, on relevant topics in the first session. Further, student teams receive specific information and data from the client. Throughout the project, student teams are expected to independently collect and analyze additional data and literature.

Additional course information

This course will be taught by Dr. Philipp Thaler. He is a Senior Research Fellow and Project Director for Energy Governance at the Institute for Political Science at the University of St. Gallen. 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.

In case parts or the entire course have to be held online, the main course components (independent research, supervision, presentation of results, written report, 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 Fall 2021, 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 on StudyNet
- The lecturer informs students via StudyNet and/or e-mail in the eventuality of any changes
- Meetings with the coordinator and the electricity sector experts, the presentation of preliminary results, and the final conference presentation will be held online.

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) (20%)

Examination time: term time

Remark

Presentation of progress and preliminary results

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) (30%)

Examination time: term time

Remark

Presentation of project results at final conferenc

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 - examination paper written at home (in groups - all given the same grades) (30%)

Examination time: term time

Remark

Final report

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

4. Examination sub part (4/4)

Examination time and form

Decentral - examination paper written at home (individual) (20%)

Examination time: term time

Remark

Individual reflection paper

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).

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Supplementary aids

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Examination languages

Question language: English

Answer language: English

Examination content

Students are expected to participate fully in all aspects of the course including group work and presentations.

Midterm Presentation (20%, 15min.): Student groups present their approach in solving the problem, brief on their progress, including any roadblocks or difficulties that may have been encountered. All group members will be given the same grade.

Final Presentation (30%, 20 min.): Student groups present an in-depth analysis of the problem and their recommendations to the client at the final conference. All group members will be given the same grade.

Final Report (30%, max. 5'000 words, excluding references): Structured as a policy brief targeted at the client, reports typically give summaries of relevant research, suggest possible policy options, and propose particular courses of action. Next to an explanation of the problem and the results of the research undertaken, it outlines the methods used and the theories applied to analyze the problem. The brief might include graphs, charts, or other visual aids that make it easier to digest the most important information. All group members will be given the same grade.

Reflection Paper (20%, max. 1'000 words, excluding references): Targeted at Dr. Philipp Thaler, this paper invites students to reflect on their groups' individual journey, from defining the problem to coming up with a solution. It allows them to consider the challenge to apply what they have learned in a classroom setting to contemporary problems in a real-world setting. The reflection paper should be submitted individually and will be graded on an individual basis.

Examination relevant literature

A reading list with recommended readings will be distributed at the kick-off session. Groups will identify additional literature relevant to the class, receive further input and data from the client and the course coordinator throughout the course, identify own data sources and collect relevant data (e.g., from expert interviews and publicly available databases).



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 (CW51) at the latest. In the case of centrally organised mid-term examinations, the documents and materials up to CW 42 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 34 (Thursday, 26 August 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 42 (Monday, 18 October 2021);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 42 (Monday, 18 October 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 45 (Monday, 8 November 2021).