



Course and Examination Fact Sheet: Autumn Semester 2024

5,312: Spring Project: Interest Groups and Lobbying

ECTS credits: 4

Overview examination/s

(binding regulations see below)

decentral - Written work, Digital, Group work group grade (60%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Presentation, Analog, Group work individual grade (15%)

Examination time: Term time

decentral - Written work, Digital, Group work group grade (25%)

Examination time: Term time

Attached courses

Timetable -- Language -- Lecturer

[5,312,1.00 Spring Project: Interest Groups and Lobbying](#) -- English -- [Gava Roy](#)

Course information

Course prerequisites

Students are required to have successfully completed at least one of the methods-related courses of the BIA programme (i.e., Quantitative and/or Qualitative Methods). It is recommended that a spring project course is taken before starting the Bachelor's thesis but after all compulsory BIA courses have been completed.

Learning objectives

In this course, students will:

- Engage with the empirical literature on interest groups, lobbying, and public affairs.
- Formulate and justify their own research questions.
- Develop and implement their own research designs.
- Present their own studies.
- Provide and use feedback from peers to improve their own work.

Course content

This spring project course is conceived as a hands-on workshop preparing students for the BIA thesis process. Working in small groups, students will design and execute their own research designs aimed at improving our collective knowledge about interest groups and lobbying.

Lobbying and advocacy refer to actions aimed at influencing policymakers' decisions. Interest groups are organizations that defend and promote the interests of small and large segments of society. Their members can be firms (e.g., business associations) or individuals (e.g., environmental NGOs). These groups employ diverse lobbying strategies and tactics to persuade policymakers (e.g., private meetings, participation in consultations, media campaigns, protests).

Four key topics of the empirical literature on interest groups will be covered:

- Population and types of interest groups (e.g., business vs. citizen groups)
- Arenas and access (e.g., administrative, parliamentary, media)
- Lobbying strategies and tactics (e.g., inside vs. outside lobbying)
- Advocacy success



Students will also gain familiarity with data sources used by academics and public affairs practitioners for the monitoring of legislative processes and stakeholder mapping.

The empirical studies and data sources presented in class will focus on Switzerland. However, students may rely on the concepts and methods covered to examine other national or supranational contexts.

Course structure and indications of the learning and teaching design

The course takes place as a weekly in-person seminar. The students will work in small groups formed during the first session.

The first part of the course is devoted to developing the research design (question, theory, method). The second part of the course deals with the empirical implementation of this design (collection and analysis of data, discussion of the results).

Students are expected to attend the weekly sessions and to participate actively. This includes reading the assigned literature, contributing in classroom discussions and exercises, informing regularly about milestones and obstacles, and providing feedback to other groups.

Course literature

The course literature will be made available on Canvas at the beginning of the semester.

Additional course information

The course instructor is [Roy Gava](#). He is Assistant Professor in Business and Politics at the School of Economics and Political Science (SEPS) of the University of St. Gallen. His interests include comparative public policy, financial regulation, lobbying, and text-as-data.

Examination information

Examination sub part/s

1. Examination sub part (1/3)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Written work
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Written work
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	Off Campus
Grading type	Group work group grade
Weighting	60%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English
Answer language: English

Remark

Final research paper

Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.



Supplementary aids

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2. Examination sub part (2/3)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Presentation
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Oral examination
Examination mode	Analog
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	On Campus
Grading type	Group work individual grade
Weighting	15%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English
Answer language: English

Remark

Two presentations

Examination-aid rule

Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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3. Examination sub part (3/3)

Examination modalities

Examination type	Written work
Responsible for organisation	decentral
Examination form	Written work
Examination mode	Digital
Time of examination	Term time
Examination execution	Asynchronous
Examination location	Off Campus
Grading type	Group work group grade
Weighting	25%
Duration	--

Examination languages

Question language: English
Answer language: English

Remark

Mid-term research design

Examination-aid rule



Free aids provision

Basically, students are free to choose aids. Any restrictions are defined by the faculty members in charge of the examination under supplementary aids.

Supplementary aids

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Examination content

- Mid-term research design (25%): a first paper with the research design to be implemented in the second half of the term.
- Final research paper (60%): a second paper with the empirical implementation of the revised research design.
- Presentations (15%): two presentations (mid-term research design and final research paper) to collect feedback before handing in the corresponding written assignments.

Examination relevant literature

The relevant literature will be provided on Canvas at the beginning of the semester.

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, 22nd August 2024);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for decentralised examinations: in CW 12 (Monday, 18 March 2024);
- Examination information (supplementary aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised mid-term examinations: in CW 42 (Monday, 14 October 2024);
- Examination information (regulations on aids, examination contents, examination literature) for centrally organised examinations: two weeks before ending with de-registration period in CW 45 (Monday, 04 November 2024).