

Political Ideas and Public Policies

Study programme	YUFE Joint Bachelor in Urban Sustainability Studies
Academic year	2026/2027
Curriculum component	Minor: Urban Inequality
Year and semester	Second year, first semester (third semester overall)
Course type	compulsory
ECTS credits	3
Contact hours (L+S+E)	20 + 10 + 0
Language of instruction	English

Contact

Course coordinator

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Course coordinator

doc. dr. sc. Ivan Cerovac

Prerequisites

No requirements.

Course objectives

This course equips students with conceptual and analytical tools to understand how political ideas shape the definition of public problems, party competition, and policy choices. It introduces and compares major political traditions—including liberalism, conservatism and Christian democracy, socialism and social democracy, nationalism, populism and the radical right, and green politics—and examines how these ideas are translated into public policy. Through contemporary European cases and applied exercises, students learn to identify ideological assumptions, analyse competing problem framings and causal stories, and develop, defend, and revise an evidence-informed policy proposal.

Learning outcomes

- Identify and explain the central concepts, values and assumptions of the major political traditions examined in the course.
- Compare how different political traditions define public problems and justify different policy responses. Critically analyse ideological language, causal stories and policy paradigms in contemporary political texts and public-policy
- debates. Apply the course concepts to contemporary European cases and evaluate the environmental, social, economic and political trade- offs of alternative policy choices.
- Develop, communicate, defend and revise an evidence-informed policy proposal in response to feedback and critique.

Course content

- Political ideas in the wild: ideology and contested concepts. 2. Liberalism: liberty, rights and markets. 3. Conservatism and Christian democracy: tradition, order and change. 4. Socialism and social democracy: equality, solidarity and welfare. 5. Nationalism, populism and the radical right. 6. Green politics: ecologism, extractivism and sustainability transitions. 7. Ideas into policy: framing, causal stories, paradigms and power. 8. Policy design laboratory: options, trade-offs, pitch, critique and revision.

Teaching and learning methods

lectures and seminars and workshops.

Assessment and grading

Mid-term analytical assignment (1,200–1,500 words): 30 points. Attendance and active participation: 20 points. Revised policy brief: 50 points, comprising the written brief (40 points), policy pitch (5 points), and response to critique and revision (5 points). All components are compulsory. The final grade is based on the total number of points achieved.

Grading scale

Grade	Percentage
5 (A)	90-100%
4 (B)	75-89.9%
3 (C)	60-74.9%
2 (D)	50-59.9%
1 (F)	0-49.9%