

# EXACT Report on Prof. Wessels Course

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Authors: Dana Depo



The course “Theories, strategies and polity of European integration” was lectured by Prof. Dr. Wolfgang Wessels. The lectures aimed at providing a structured and comparative overview of the most established theoretical readings of the European evolution, their impact and future relevance with a special focus on EU external relations. The objectives of the lecturer were to encourage students, firstly, to appreciate the role of theories and strategies in European integration and political science more generally, secondly, to help the students to understand the deeper origins and wider context in which political processes are embedded, and, thirdly, to link theoretical approaches with empirical findings and develop more sophisticated tools for academic analysis and work.

The class content started with the classical theories of European integration such as (neo)-realism, (neo)-functionalism, (neo)-federalism and ending with fusion theory. Professor Wessels gave the EXACT fellows an extended explanation of different approaches and concepts, such as Europeanization, constructivism, normativism and some others. The theories in EU studies were analysed with the help of the analytical framework called ALISE scheme (A-analysis, L-logics, I-Institution, S-Strategy, E-external dimension component). As one of the EXACT fellows later noted: *“The course was very relevant since a PhD thesis is supposed to be guided by a theoretical framework. It was good to have an overview of the different approaches and to be able to reflect on approach that best fits to our topics.”*

Major parts of the course were:

Block 1: Introduction to the relevance, substance and methods of the work: explanation of the categories and schemes

Block 2: European Council: (neo-) realism (ALIS-schema); intergovernmentalism; liberal intergovernmentalism (ALIS-schema)

Block 3: European Commission: (neo-) functionalism (ALIS-schema); supranationalism

Block 4: European Parliament: (neo-) federalism (ALIS-schema)

Block 5: Current approaches (neo-institutionalism, social constructivism, fusion, feminist perspective, etc.) and their strategic implications

The course was of high relevance for the EXACT Marie Curie Fellows working on the PhD papers on EU external actions. The lecturer challenged the young scholars to apply classical theories in explaining European integration through its theoretical foundations. The course was accompanied with the Teaching Companion (‘Theories and Strategies of European Integration – A Teaching Companion’ developed by Wolfgang Wessels, Andreas Hofmann

and Thomas Traguth). It allowed the students to follow the class and compliment their knowledge by following the professors suggestions on recommended literature.

The lecturer has built the working space in interactive manner bringing to classroom fruitful discussions, challenging debates, and thought-provoking question. The classical theories were presented by the EXACT fellows and afterwards completed by the comments and additional information from the Professor and/or by other fellows. It allowed the fellows to feel the ownership of the process and gave an opportunity to deliver their own findings on the topic. A minute-taker was assigned every class. He/she would take notes and after deliver short summary of the class to the professor and fellows. This system has favoured the course and thought-flow to remain consistent and structured. Another fellow gave the following comment on the course: *“I think the course materials were very concise, but highly informative and substantive. I like that the professor did not repeat what was written in the reading materials, but actually guided discussion around key issues - skillfully and with a clear focus. This then helped us to connect different dots and get the big picture.”*

Session	Topic of the Session	Note taker
1	Introduction to the theories and strategies	Dana Depo
2	What is ALISE?	Nicole Koenig
3	Realism ( <i>presentation by Andrew Byrne</i> )	Marlene Gottwald
4	Liberal Intergovernmentalism ( <i>presentation by Simon Stross</i> )	Miguel Haubrich Seco
5	Federalism ( <i>presentation by Vanessa Boas</i> )	Tatjana Petrovic Rava
6	Neofunctionalism ( <i>presentation by James Nyomakwa-Obimpeh</i> )	Simon Stroß
7	Fusion thesis ( <i>presentation by Nicole Koenig</i> )	Niklas Helwig

The lecturer and fellows have managed to attain the aim and objectives of the course. The success of the course is to a great part an outcome of Prof. Wessels’ willingness to support the fellows in their learning process, to answer the puzzling questions, and to help them in developing critical thinking as to the topics concerned. Therefore, one of the students told that *“the course gave a comprehensive overview on European integration theories and in terms of planning Prof. Wessels was quite responsive to us.”* At the same time, the students contributed to the course with presentations and comments, which made the course lively and interesting.

**Intensive Seminar in the framework of the course “Theories, strategies and polity of European integration” led by Prof. Wessels**

Date	Time	Presenter	Topic
<b>13 December</b>	<b>9:00-12:00</b>		
		Nicole Koenig	Presentation of the draft of the updated teaching companion
		Miguel Haubrich Seco	
		Marlene Gottwald	
<b>13 December</b>	<b>13:00-17:00</b>		

	<b>Trio Wisudhanto</b>	<b>“Enlargement Issues: Politicization of European Constitution. The Turkish accession to the EU as a case study” - Neofunctionalist approach</b>
	<b>Dana Depo</b>	<b>“Eastern Partnership: explaining its emergence from the theoretical point, namely neo-functionalism”</b>
	<b>Leonhard den Hertog</b>	<b>“Immigration policy after the Lisbon Treaty: functionalism in action?”</b>
	<b>Marco Sidi</b>	<b>“Which theoretical framework best explains EU-Russia relations after the Lisbon treaty? Analysis of a realist and of a social constructivist approach”</b>
<b>14 December 9:00-12:00</b>		
	<b>Tatjana Petrovic Rava</b>	<b>“CSDP in The Lisbon Treaty - towards a common security culture?” – Constructivism</b>
	<b>James Nyomakwa-Obimpeh</b>	<b>“Neo-functionalism remains the ‘best’ grand theory to explain the Lisbon Treaty and its changes in external action”</b>
	<b>Vanessa Boas</b>	<b>“The Lisbon Treaty has proved that realists won - especially - concerning the external action”</b>
<b>14 December 14:30-18:00</b>		
	<b>Andrew Byrne</b>	<b>“The impact of the Lisbon Treaty on the democratic character of the Union” – democratic theories</b>
	<b>Anne Litzbarski</b>	<b>“Europeanisation of Energy Policy”</b>
	<b>Niklas Helwig &amp; Simon Stroß</b>	<b>“The set-up of the European External Action Service. Inexplicable by grand theories of European integration?”</b>