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13.08.2026/JS
PG-1

Topic:

Spring Academy 2027: Transatlantic Relations in an Age of Uncertainty

Date:

March 05 – March 13, 2027

Cooperation Partner



Organisation and pedagogical responsibility:

Dr. Jana Stehlíková, Europäische Akademie Otzenhausen (EAO)

Seminar leader:

Dr. Jana Stehlíková, Europäische Akademie Otzenhausen (EAO)

Co-leader:

Dr. Peter Loedel, WCU
Dr. Travis Blemings, WCU

Seminar assistant:

Beke Bagusche, Jena (tbc)

Language:

English

Interpreters:

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Participants:

Students from the USA and the EU

Beginning:

Friday, March 5, 2027

End:

Saturday, March 13, 2027

Venue:

Europäische Akademie Otzenhausen gGmbH (EAO)
Europahausstraße 35
66620 Nonnweiler
Germany
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08.03.-09.03. Hotel in Brussels

Ibis Brussels Off Grand Place, Rue du Marché aux Herbes 100, 1000 Bruxelles

Target audience

Students from the West Chester University interested in IR and transatlantic affairs together with the students from various universities from the EU countries

Aims

This one-week intensive seminar is designed for undergraduate and graduate students from the United States and the European Union with an interest in contemporary security policy and transatlantic relations. The course examines key developments, challenges, and future perspectives shaping cooperation between Europe and USA in an evolving global security environment.

By combining academic instruction with experiential learning, the seminar offers participants the opportunity to engage directly with European policymaking through study excursions to Brussels and Luxembourg, including on-site visits to major EU institutions.

The seminar follows an interactive and practice-oriented methodology that includes expert lectures, moderated discussions, and hands-on workshops with practitioners from relevant fields. These formats are intended to encourage critical reflection and active participation. The primary learning objectives are to foster exchange among students from different academic and cultural backgrounds and to deepen their understanding of current security-related challenges and transatlantic policy dynamics. Through dialogue and collaborative learning, participants will enhance both their subject-matter expertise and their intercultural perspectives.

P R O G R A M

Friday March 5, 2027	Arrival
Until 13:00	Arrival at airport Frankfurt am Main
13:00 – 13:30	Transfer to the ECB Preparation on the Excursion on bus <i>Dr. Jana Stehlíková, EAO</i>
13:30 – 15:30	European Central Bank Expert presentation of the institution
15:30 – 16:00	Excursion reflection on the bus <i>Dr. Jana Stehlíková, EAO</i>
15:30 – 18:00	Transfer to the European Academy of Otzenhausen (EAO)
18:00 – 18:30	Check in
18:30 – 19:00	Welcome Address at the EAO, a short Campus Tour <i>Dr. Jana Stehlíková, EAO</i>
19:00	<i>Welcome Dinner</i>
Saturday March 6, 2027	European integration
08:00 – 09:00	Breakfast
09:00 – 12:00 Inclusive 15 Minutes coffee break at 10:30	Getting to know each other Interculture Communication Workshop <i>Dr. Jana Stehlíková, EAO</i>
12:00 – 13:30	Lunch
13:30 – 15:00	From Foes to Friends: Why is there no federation of European states? History of European integration and the role of European institutions Introductory lecture and discussion <i>Dr. Jana Stehlíková, EAO</i>
15:00 – 15:30	<i>Coffee Break</i>
15:30 – 17:00	Global Crises, Global Challenges – where are we now and what about it? <i>Lecturer: Jun. Prof. Dr. Florian Böller, Heidelberg Center for American Studies (tbc)</i> Lecture and discussion
17:00 – 19:00	<i>Free time</i>
19:00	Dinner
20:00	Nine Pin Championship
Sunday March 7, 2027	Foreign and Security Policy Excursion to Trier
08:00 – 09:00	Breakfast
09:00 – 12:30 Inclusive 15 Minutes coffee break at 10:30	US foreign policy under Trump 2.0 and the current US-EU relations <i>Dr. Peter Loedel, WCU // Dr. Travis Blemings, WCU</i> <i>(alternatively Sarah Wagner)</i> Lecture and discussion
12:30 – 13:00	Preparation for the excursion
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 15:00	Bus transfer to Trier
15:00 – 17:00	Guided tour in the city center City Tourism Guide
17:00 – 19:00	<i>Free time</i>
19:00	Dinner at Kartoffelkiste Restaurant
21:00 – 22:00	Transfer to the EAO

	Reflection of the excursion on the bus
Monday March 8, 2027	Excursion to Brussels
06:00 – 06:30	Breakfast
06:30 – 11:00	Trip to Brussels
10:30 – 11:00	Preparation for the Excursion on Bus <i>Dr. Jana Stehlíková, EAO</i>
11:00 – 13:00	Regional Office of Saarland in Brussels: How is the low-level politics transferred to the high-level one Presentation and Discussion
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch at the Regional Office of Saarland
14:00 – 14:30	Transfer to the European External Action Service (EEAS) <i>Rdpt Robert Schuman 9, 1046 Bruxelles</i>
14:30 – 16:30	Spotlight on the current security challenges and the transatlantic issues from the EU perspective Site visit and discussion with the EEAS Experts
16:30 – 17:30	Guided walk in the European District <i>Dr. Jana Stehlíková, EAO</i>
17:30 – 18:00	Reflection of the Excursion Day 1 <i>Dr. Jana Stehlíková, EAO</i>
afterwards	Bus transfer to the hotel, check-in Dinner individually (<i>Dinner packages provided by the EAO</i>) <i>Ibis Brussels Off Grand Place Rue du Marché aux Herbes 100, 1000 Bruxelles</i>
Tuesday March 9, 2027	Excursion to Brussels
Until 08:00	Breakfast, Check-out
08:00 – 09:00	Transfer to NATO or European Commission HQ
08:30 – 09:00	Preparation for the Excursion on Bus <i>Dr. Jana Stehlíková, EAO</i>
09:00 – 12:30	European Commission Site visit and discussion with the Experts
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch break; Bus transfer
14:00 – 15:30	House of European History Site Visit with Audio-Guides
15:30 – 17:00	Free time in Brussels
17:00	Departure to Otzenhausen
17:00 – 17:30	Reflection of the Excursion Day 2 on the bus <i>Dr. Jana Stehlíková, EAO</i>
21:00	Dinner at the EAO
Wednesday March 10, 2027	New Technologies: Opportunity or Threat?
08:00 – 09:00	Breakfast
09:00 – 12:30 Inclusive 15 Minutes coffee break at 10:45	Societal Computing: non-traditional way how to look on data and how can it help us to get ready for new challenges? <i>Prof. Dr. Ingmar Weber, Saarland University (tbc)</i> Presentation and Discussion
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch
14:00 – 17:00 Incl. 30 Minutes coffee break at 16:00	Misinformation and Foreign Influence Campaigns: Threats to democratic processes OR

	Cyber Threats and the Transatlantic Response <i>Dr. Travis Blemings</i> Lecture and workshop
17:00 – 17:30	Reflection of the day: where do we stand, where do we want to go <i>Dr. Peter Loedel, WCU</i> <i>Dr. Jana Stehlíková, EAO</i>
17:30 – 19:00	<i>Free time</i>
19:00	Dinner
Thursday March 11, 2027	Excursion: Luxembourg
07:30 – 08:30	Breakfast <i>packed sandwiches provided for the day</i>
08:30 – 10:00	Transfer to Luxembourg
09:30 – 10:00	Preparation for the Excursion <i>Jana Stehlíková, EAO</i>
10:00 – 13:00	European Parliament 10:00 – 10:30 Welcome Address, <i>Visitor Center EP</i> 10:30 – 13:00 Simulation (see role play game)
13:00 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 16:00	European Court of Auditors or European Court of Justice Cite visit, expert presentation Alternatively
16:00 – 18:00	Free time in the city centre
18:00 – 19:30	Transfer to Otzenhausen
18:00 – 18:30	Reflection of the Excursion Day 1 <i>Dr. Jana Stehlíková, EAO</i>
19:00	Dinner
Friday March 12, 2027	Populism and Securitization Future Lab
08:00 – 09:00	Breakfast
09:00 – 12:30	The Populist Challenge to Democracy: The rise of right-wing parties – why and who takes the lead nowadays? <i>Frank Burgdörfer, polyspektiv (tbc)</i> Presentation and Discussion
12:30 – 14:00	Lunch break
14:00 – 16:30	“Envision our future”: Group work Future Lab / Workshop Moderation: Dr. Jana Stehlíková, EAO
16:30 – 17:00	Final Wrap-Up and Evaluation Seminar team
17:00 – 19:00	<i>Free time</i>
19:00	Farewell Dinner
Saturday March 13, 2027	Departure
ca. 01:30	Departure of the US Student to the Frankfurt Airport (breakfast package provided) - possibility to take the bus for all participants
08:00 – 09:00	Breakfast and Check-out
09:00	Departure – individually The non-US participants can take a bus R20 from Otzenhausen to Türkismühle (the nearest train station)

