European Politics and Society

ISSN: 2374-5118 (Print) 2374-5126 (Online) Journal homepage: www.tandfonline.com/journals/rpep21

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To cite this article: Kamil Zwolski (18 May 2025): Teaching European power: the case for an integrated approach, European Politics and Society, DOI: 10.1080/23745118.2025.2500580

To link to this article: https://doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2025.2500580

Published online: 18 May 2025.

EUROPEAN POLITICS AND SOCIETY
https://doi.org/10.1080/23745118.2025.2500580

Routledge
Taylor & Francis Group

Teaching European power: the case for an integrated approach

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ABSTRACT

This paper advocates the integrated approach to higher education pedagogy, especially in EU Studies. The integrated approach is defined across two dimensions: the integration of space, which includes in-person and online sessions, as well as the integration of delivery method, which includes traditional lecture/seminar format and the more innovative, high-impact pedagogies such as simulations or technology-enhanced teaching. The paper illustrates this argument with the experience of delivering an undergraduate module on European power at a UK university. The integrated approach works well with EU Studies because of the timely and policy-oriented nature of the subject, with the history and structure of the EU encouraging simulation games and other innovative, high impact pedagogies,in order to get students more engaged. Conversely, the paper cautions against hastily moving towards either side of the spectrum, noting that, for example, eliminating lectures and organising a module entirely around student-led sessions can be ineffective if the wider institutional practice and culture does not follow a similar pathway. This paper is primarily aimed at advanced PhD students and early-career academic teachers. It intends to reassure them that one can have a systematic and well-grounded approach to teaching without becoming unnecessarily restrictive about what's 'innovative' or 'student-centric'.

KEYWORDS

Teaching; european security; lectures; hybrid; online teaching

Introduction

There is an ongoing debate in the higher education pedagogy literature about the advantages and disadvantages of different curriculum designs, including modes of delivery, teaching approaches and methods (e.g. Hoskins & Mitchell, 2015). Sometimes the initiative for change comes from the students or university managers, who insist that the traditional lecture/seminar format has become outdated and new, so-called 'student-centred' and 'active learning' approaches must be adopted (Evans et al., 2015). Among the extrinsic factors prompting change there can even be governments imposing pandemic-related restrictions, which *de facto* force universities to adopt non-standard

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curriculum delivery systems (Bashir et al., 2021). The change, however, can also come from within – from the academic teachers, who strive to improve the learning, engagement and satisfaction of their students, or simply are tempted to try a new approach. All ofthese factors, in different combinations and across different periods of time, have influenced my practice of delivering EU Studies modules at my home university, and specifically the delivery of my flagship module on European power and security (thereafter 'European Power'). One additional and fundamental influence for me to introduce novelty to the delivery of that module is the fact that this module has been supported by the European Union's Erasmus + Jean Monnet programmes – first in the form of Chair and later as Jean Monnet Module.

The argument that I develop in this paper is based on my pedagogical expertise supported by my National Teaching Fellowship in combination with many years of running this module along with another, more generic European integration module. The insights here also bring together different strands of the thriving pedagogical scholarship, especially the literature on hybrid (blended) teaching and high-impact pedagogies. At the most fundamental level, the argument here is that there is a good reason to adopt anintegrated approach to higher education pedagogy in Social Sciences in general, and in EU Studies in particular, across both the space where the learning takes place and the methods of delivery. More specifically, I argue that in-person teaching can be constructively combined with on-line teaching elements, even if the main emphasis is put on the former.

Similarly, there are no convincing reasons to entirely dismiss the traditional lecture/seminar format and instead it can be helpful to constructively combine it with more innovative, high-impact pedagogies, including the technology-enhanced approach combining traditional lectures and in-class video presentations and follow-up discussion. While the argument presented here does not purport to be groundbreaking, its purpose is to systematise this comprehensive approach as a coherent framework and inspire/reassure academic teachers about the choices they make. In my pedagogical practice I have tried all four scenarios: teaching 100% on-line and 100% on campus, as well delivering entirely through the lecture/seminar format and eliminating lectures altogether to focus exclusively on student-run activities. None of these approaches is optimal, each has its strengths and benefits. The key to a successful delivery is to balance the these out, paying particular attention to the institutional culture and student expectations.

Case module: European power and the geopolitics of Europe and Asia

The argument introduced in this paper is illustrated with the example of a module called European Power. It is an optional module available to students of Politics and International Relations in years 2 and 3, and it lasts for 12 weeks. The module was re-developed as part of the EU's Erasmus + Jean Monnet Module application in 2023, with the intention to challenge the dominant format of teaching EU global policy at universities through shifting away from the bureaucracy – oriented, compartmentalised approach and towards a problem-oriented, whole-of-the-EU perspective on European power in the context of the current geopolitical developments in Eastern Europe, Indo-Pacific and Central Asia. The idea was for the module to expose students to the actual strategies and approaches adopted by the EU in recent years, which redefine the nature of the EU as an actor in global geopolitics. It takes a comprehensive stock of the impact of

the Russian invasion of Ukraine on European power and reflects on the ways in which the war has revolutionised strategic thinking across EU member states and institutions. The module also evaluates the most important strategies adopted by the EU in recent years, including in Eastern Europe, Central Asia and Indo-Pacific and evaluates Europe's accelerating role in those regions. In all of this, the module aims to account for the unprecedented role of the European Commission and other central institutions in driving the European power agenda forward.

The module is divided up into three sections:

1. The first section, *History, Theory, Concepts*, covers the history and theory of European foreign and security integration, as well as traditional and recent theoretical approaches to international security and geopolitics.
2. The second section, *Institutions and Agendas*, covers the key security institutions involved in European security. These include NATO, the UN and the EU.
3. The third section, *Problems*, covers the most important geopolitical challenges on the contemporary European security agenda, which include the aggressive Russia and the rising China.

The module is delivered through the combination of technology-enhanced sessions with research-based elements and the involvement of external guest speakers. At the core of module delivery are weekly, 2-hour technology-enhanced sessions. These are divided up into three parts. The first part (45-50 minutes) involves an interactive lecture, with questions being raised at regular points. The second part (20-30 minutes) involves watching a YouTube video documentary, an interview or a talk show related to the topic of the lecture. The third part (15-20 min) involves the discussion with the students on the contents of the lecture and the video. One question, which may arise here is why watching the video in class, rather than asking students to watch it on their own. This approach would resemble what is called a flipped learning in higher education pedagogy, with students engaging with the material before scheduled sessions, allowing more time for discussions and analysis (Bredow et al., 2021). There are two reasons why I believe it is more beneficial for student learning to watch these videos in class. First, it is likely that at least some students would not have watched the videos prior to the scheduled sessions. Second, and perhaps more important, the videos often illicit some emotional reactions, which subsequently translate into more lively discussions. This momentum would have been lost if the video was watched in advance, not to mention the fact that some of the content would likely have been forgotten by the students, further affecting the quality of participation. In addition to these two reasons, I also consider the physical experience of watching the videos together an important element in the process of collective learning.

Another thing worth noting is the fact that in the university system, these technology-enhanced sessions are scheduled as lectures. It is thus up to me to 're-invent' this time slot in line with the learning objectives and delivery preferences based on experience and pedagogical scholarship research. In addition to the weekly scheduled sessions, the module also involves bi-weekly seminar sessions, reflecting the traditional university division into lecturer-driven lectures, and student-driven seminar discussions. Rather than formally requesting a non-standard arrangement for the module, I opted for exploring the flexibility I have with regards to how I organise the time-slots available to me, and I

adapted them to the structure, which I envisaged at the time of preparing the Jean Monnet application. The seminars serve double purpose. Four out of six sessions resemble the standard approach where students are asked to read documents in advance to prepare for the discussion. Instead of peer-reviewed publications, however, students read think-tank reports and extended policy analyses, in line with the timeliness of the module content. The remaining two weeks are devoted to supporting students with assessment, giving them opportunity to obtain so-called feed-forward. The idea is that around 2 weeks before the deadline for each of the two assignments, students come to the seminar session with research questions, outlines and drafts, and we work individually and in groups to give feedback and further clarify the requirements.

This brings me to assessment, which is divided up into the standard academic essay worth 50% of the module mark, and a policy document worth another 50%. The essay is a mid-term assignment, with questions covering the contents of the first part of the module. The policy paper is the end-of-term assignment, and it involves studentswriting a policy report on a selected problem related to the contents of the module. With the report, students are asked to follow a fixed structure:

1. Executive summary (around 150 words)
2. Description of the problem (around 600 words)
3. Current and proposed policies (around 500 words)
4. Policy recommendations (around 400 words)

For this assignment, the audience can consist of national governments, EU institutions, or a community of policy experts. It is up to the students to choose the policy context of their paper. The specific topic students select should relate to the contents of the module and the students are offered topic examples, which include:

- Effective EU foreign policy
- Effective EU defence policy
- EU policy towards China or Russia
- China's foreign and security policy
- Ukraine's foreign and security policy

As for assessment criteria, policy reports are assessed based on how well they describe the problem, how well they demonstrate the understanding of the current and proposed policies, and how well thought-through the policy recommendations are. Considering the policy-oriented nature of the submissions, students are asked to avoid academic jargon as well as academic references. Students are also discouraged from engaging with academic theories, but they are encouraged to gather insights from theories to frame their discussion. Finally, for this assignment, students are expected to integrate insights from the Jean Monnet Roundtable in Week 11, and make references to what is being said during this event. The annual Jean Monnet Roundtable 'Debating European Security' is integrated into the structure of the module and organised in Week 11 or Week 12 during the normal 2-hour lecture slot. It involves the meeting with a number of external speakers, and allows students to ask questions. I have been organising these events online since 2020, but in 2025, for the first time, I was able to invite speakers to the campus.

The purpose of integrating the policy paper assignment with the Roundtable is twofold. First, at the instrumental level, the requirement to integrate insights from this live event incentivises students to attend. Considering that the Roundtable is organised around the Christmas break and towards the end of the module, this requirement ensures that there are enough student participants to make the event viable and the discussion interesting enough for everyone involved. Second, the requirement to integrate some insights from the Roundtable into the policy paper assignment incentivises students to pay attention to what is being said and to ask questions. It also helps students practice diversifying the range of sources they utilise for their assignment. The final requirement is for students to keep the academic jargon to the minimum – students are reminded to always be mindful of who their audience is.

Revisiting high-impact pedagogies in university teaching

When designing the European Power module, I drew inspiration from professional experience supported by the pedagogical scholarship on so-called high impact pedagogies in higher education. While it may be intuitive to identify high-impact pedagogies with innovative pedagogies, the former has a deeper meaning. Innovative pedagogy simply entails a departure from the established and dominant form of higher education delivery, which traditionally revolves around lectures and seminars. In contrast, high-impact pedagogy is about delivery methods offering the most effective learning results, as supported by research. Evans et al. (2015, p. 11) capture this depth in their conceptualisation:

> Characteristically, high-impact practices (HIPs) share several traits in that they require students to: spend considerable time and effort on purposeful tasks; interact with faculty and peers about substantive matters; experience diversity through contact with people who are different from themselves; see how what they are learning works in different settings, and receive frequent feedback about their performance.

As such, this definition, also adopted in this paper complements, but also goes beyond evaluating the impact of teaching methods on cognitive, affective, and/or regulative learning outcomes (Duchatelet et al., 2020). Popular examples of high-impact pedagogies include: (a) flipped learning (Bredow et al., 2021); (b) cooperative learning activities (Armstrong et al., 2007); (c) research-based learning (Hoskins & Mitchell, 2015); (d) simulations (Vlachopoulos & Makri, 1998); and (e) problem-based learning (PBL) (Barrett & Moore, 2011). All these approaches have been widely adopted and experimented with across the disciplines, but it is fair to say that EU studies is among the fields, which are relatively more conducive to attract high-impact pedagogies. This is for two reasons. First, the subject matter is contemporary, policy-relevant, it involves multiple actors across different levels, and it is full of empirical and normative problems. Second, there is now a long history of the European Union supporting the delivery of EU Studies modules across higher education institutions worldwide through its Erasmus + Jean Monnet Actions programme. Through this programme, the EU encourages academic teachers to be creative and develop learning designs with a high chance of making students engaged in, and enthusiastic about EU Studies.

Among the more substantive and systematic contributions to understanding and enhancing teaching EU Studies is a special issue edited by Lightfoot and Maurer (2014), with their introductory paper identifying three core characteristics underpinning the

collection of research they brought together, which include: (a) recognition that learning does not always have to take place in the classroom; (b) innovative (active) learning approaches can help motivate students and make them more engaged; but also (c) learning designs need clear purpose. The individual papers, in turn, offer the discussion of the wide range of high-impact pedagogies, including peer learning (Drake, 2014), social media-assisted active learning (Lieberman, 2014), Brussels field trips (Roder, 2014) and simulations (Usherwood, 2014). Around the same time as the Symposium, a book-length treatment of EU Studies pedagogy was also published, edited by Baroncelli et al. (2014). Of particular interest to us is the chapter mapping innovative teaching in EU Studies by Baroncelli et al. (2014), in which the authors also emphasise the significance of Jean Monnet Actions for driving innovation in EU Studies. Their primary contribution, however, is sharing the results of the survey they conducted between 2009 and 2010 among academic teachers who benefited from the EU programme, to develop a European map of EU Studies in higher education. The most popular teaching methods proved to be teamwork, student-led discovery, expert sessions, project-based learning and exchange programmes. Work-based learning, role playing, simulation and fieldwork are also on the list, but they do require a little more work on the part of the teacher. Peer-tutoring was last on the list – a method, which I have been adopting in my teaching practice for several years now.

Simulation remains among the most popular EU Studies teaching methods, which is only natural given the very nature of the EU as a multi-actor organisation. Simulations can be seen as a form of PBL, as noted by Kaunert (2009) when reflecting on his experience experimenting with this high-impact method. He considered his experience successful based primarily on student feedback, both formal and informal. Considering the notorious difficulty of comparing student learning outcomes across the range of teaching methodologies, student satisfaction is among the more accessible metrics, giving immediate indication as to how much students enjoyed a module. The problem of measuring student learning in the context of simulations was also addressed by Elias (2014), who developed his own approach promising to mitigate this challenge. Muno and Prinz (2015; see also Brunazzo & Settembri, 2015), similar toKaunert, relied on different kinds of surveys and student feedback to gauge the success of their own simulation exercise, but note that 'control-groups have to be included in assessments' to obtain a more systematic indication of student learning. Raymond and Usherwood (2013) thought the problem of learning in simulations was important enough that it deserved a separate treatment. In their paper, they specifically focused on assessment in simulations, arguing that assessment cannot be considered an addition to the module, but rather must be thought-through, and form the integral basis for any viable simulation exercise.

As noted, simulations represent a broader family of methods called PBL, which in Europe has become especially popular at the University of Maastricht in the Netherlands, where it has been adopted in a particular form and is known as the Maastricht Method (Maurer & Neuhold, 2012). This method does not disregard lectures altogether, but relatively more emphasis is placed on student-led work, both individual and within groups. Outside of Maastricht, PBL has been widely adopted across disciplines, including EU Studies. Notwithstanding its arguable successes, those who experiment with PBL note the challenges stemming from student expectations, who often prefer a relatively more

lecturer-led approach to learning (Bijsmans & Versluis, 2020; Tonra, 2020). In the context of PBL, it is also important to point to the question of costs, both financial and in terms of time it takes to design the appropriate learning experience. High-impact pedagogies, including the ones we already mentioned, are notorious for demanding higher costs as compared to the more traditional lecture/seminar format. Among them, field trips are especially costly, given their financial costs but also the time it takes to organise the trip and resolve different administrative hurdles. This point was noted by Roder (2014), who nonetheless offers advice in his paper on how to effectively integrate fieldtrips into curriculums.

One notable feature of the scholarship on EU Studies pedagogies, and the broader landscape of teaching and learning practice in EU Studies, is the binary character of delivery methods. What it means is that virtually all publications focus on an innovative, non-standard practice in contrast to the standard, and presumably inferior method of lectures and seminars, which do not tend to receive coverage in the literature. This absence is unsurprising, given that we see the standard lecture/seminar format as 'default', one we are all familiar with, and which we tend to practice already as teaching assistants before securing more permanent university positions. As university teachers, we are all meant to know how to deliver a lecture and conduct a seminar. Furthermore, if all these non-standard methods can be labelled as innovative and high-impact, the implication is that the lecture/seminar model is *de facto* non-innovative and low-impact. If understood in this way, we could hardly expect it to attract scholarly publications or to impress the European Union, when delivering Jean Monnet Actions-supported modules. There might be another dimension to this state of (pedagogical) affairs. Whereas the non-standard methods reviewed in this paper thus far are precisely 'methods', the implication is that any academic teacher may be able to adopt them, if only given the right guidelines. By contrast, it is more elusive to define the right lecture 'method', and in fact lectures can even be seen more appropriately as a form of art, lending themselves even less to a systematic scholarly discussion.

Integration of space: in-class and online

The European Power module is taught in classrooms, but it is designed in a way that can make it online and, in fact, it has been delivered partially online throughout the years, as the consequence of the changing norms resulting from the pandemic-driven lockdowns. The original idea for the module was to deliver it 100% on campus, and this included the annual Roundtable sessions with invited speakers as well as assessment preparatory sessions. During the COVID-19 pandemic, the entire delivery of the module was moved online – not because the module was designed in a way to make it flexible in this way, but because this was the requirement of the moment. When the restrictions were lifted, the module was moved back into classrooms, but then I faced a challenge that I did not anticipate. It became next to impossible to organise the annual Jean Monnet Roundtable on campus due to all potential external participants asking for the opportunity to join online. For this reason, between 2020 and 2024, all student-facing Roundtable discussions were organised online, which allowed me to preserve the original concept of the module, but in a format that I did not originally anticipate. In 2025, for the first time, I was able to invite external speakers on campus and have a live event with students.

The argument about the integration of space is partially inspired by the disruption caused by the restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic as well as the subsequent discussions, when these restrictions were lifted. On the one hand, the restrictions were considered a 'necessary evil' given that most higher-education institutions entered the pandemic as exclusively focused on on-campus delivery. The on-line mode of delivery was considered a temporary measure and when the restrictions were lifted, most universities returned to *status quo ante*, i.e. 100% on-campus delivery. The pandemic-related restrictions, however, produced long-term consequences, with the emergence of the literature on hybrid or blended teaching, as illustrated later in this section (e.g. Mineshima-Lowe et al., 2012). The argument here is thus not that the integration of space (i.e. the combination of physical and on-line delivery) is somehow innovative, but rather that it should be embraced and integrated into teaching practice in order to supplement and broaden learning opportunities.

On-campus and online delivery can be complementary, and both teachers and students can benefit from integrating the two approaches into their curriculum designs. The way to think about this is to imagine a mechanical switch or a control lever in a machine. Just as an operator adjusts a lever to shift emphasis between different modes of operation – prioritising speed over precision, or power over efficiency – university teachers can calibrate the balance between online and in-person teaching. Some years may require a stronger emphasis on digital instruction, while others may favour the immediacy of face-to-face engagement. The key lies in the teacher's ability to fine-tune this balance, optimising the learning experience based on pedagogical goals and external contextual needs. For example, integrating external speakers into the curriculum may require greater emphasis on online delivery. Similarly, assessment feedforward sessions can be scheduled online, e.g. through MS Teams, to maintain the focus of the in-class meetings on the subject matter.

In EU Studies, one example of an external constraint preventing fully in-person delivery is the availability of external guest speakers to travel to sometimes remote campus locations. This is particularly the casefor Brussels-based policy practitioners, but can be equally relevant for professionals working in other national capitals. Online participation, in such cases, can allow for an event to take place at all at the expense of the benefits of in-person-level of participation and engagement from the students. Another example concerns student assessment preparation. In our student surveys, students consistently tell us that they value pre-submission feedback (so-called feedforward) higher than the kind of feedback they received at the time of marking the assignment. This is unsurprising given that students want to do well with the assignment at hand, rather than one they will have to submit in the future. Also, feedforward opportunities may be particularly important for EU Studies modules involving innovative elements, as they may contain assessment designs falling outside of the standard academic essay and/or exam format.

Offering student's quality in-class feedforward sessions may be unfeasible, however, especially with larger cohorts, given how limited time educators have available to deliver the contents of the module and ensure student learning. For this reason, in my module, in previous years, I integrated the MS Teams platformto assist students with their assessment preparation, offering them opportunities for group discussions and feedback. Shifting feedforward opportunities online freed my in-class time and it also saved my time responding to individual emails when my responses on MS Teams were

public. More recently, I distilled and integrated these feedforward sessions into two of my allocated seminar slots, one for each 50%-worth assignment. The intention for this is to compare the two methods and see which one generates better results.

The point I am making here about the need for flexibility regarding the integration of space is further reinforced in the existing scholarship, both from the teacher and student perspective. Bashir et al. (2021, pp. 11–12) make a similar observation based on their experience of adapting their bioscience education delivery to the post-pandemic reality, noting that '[t]he pandemic has highlighted the adaptability of both academics and students in the higher education setting to continue with online learning and assessment, but also an increased need to be mindful of digital poverty and issues affecting student wellbeing'.Nikolopoulou (2022, p. 5) tackled this very same issue from the perspective of the students, concluding that students 'perceive the benefits of hybrid learning approaches as a combination of benefits/advantages of face-to-face and online education'. While students perceive in-class learning experience to offer them a more immediate access to the teacher, better socialisation and engagement opportunities and higher level of participation, they also value online learning for time and space flexibility. In another study, the findings reiterated the value of the balanced, online and in-person learning approach, but emphasised that 'the actions of the teacher during the course (epistemic design) and having the feeling that you are not alone (social design) are the most important for engendering engagement' (Raes, 2022, p. 155).

Based on available research and professional experience, effective integrated teaching should offer students regular opportunities for in-person learning and the direct contact with the teacher combined with integrated or additional opportunities for learning through flexible online methods, be it live synchronous sessions or collaborative platforms such as MS Teams. The in-person component should remain the default mode of learning, constituting the bulk of the student experience with a module. Enough research has been published since the pandemic-related experience to substantiate the claims about the quality of student engagement, the value of direct contact with the teacher, as well as the impact on student mental health provided by students regularly meeting in the same physical space as the teacher.

At the same time, the study of European integration, geopolitics and EU foreign and security policy can benefit greatly from additional high-impact pedagogies, such as external guest speakers or additional assessment feedforward support. For practical reasons, these supplementary curriculum elements might be difficult to organise in classrooms, and this is where online tools come in handy. External academic guest or Brussels-based policy officials may find it difficult to travel to my campus for a session with my students, but I never had a problem finding speakers who would join my students on MS Teams. Similarly,it may be impractical to organise student assessment support sessions during the allocated in-person teaching time slots, and platforms such as MS Teams may help facilitate student questions on assessment, sharing good examples, or even facilitating student peer-feedback.

Integration of delivery: traditional and innovative methods

I developed the first version of the module European Power back in 2013, and at the time I followed the standard structure of 2 hours of weekly lectures supplemented with a

fortnight seminar. For the seminars, students would be prescribed peer-reviewed journal articles to read in advance and then discuss them in the classroom. Since then, I developed a keen interest in higher education pedagogy and began learning about different teaching philosophies together with associated methods of delivery. I became fascinated with so-called high-impact pedagogies and particularly research-based teaching, which eventually I decided to implement into my own curriculum design. To this end, in 2019, I created a new module related to European integration, which I decided would be entirely research-based. For the purpose of this exercise, I adopted the definition proposed by Healey and Jenkins (2009), simply meaning that in contrast to research-led or research-oriented teaching, research-based teaching entails students actually undertaking research and enquiry. Consequently, in this new module I eliminated lectures altogether and instead scheduled weekly 'research sessions', in which students would work on their chosen topic, submitting literature review as their mid-term assignment and the final research paper at the end. As such, the structure of the module was similar to the undergraduate dissertation module, with the main difference being the weekly scheduled sessions.

After that first experimental year, students had their say in the module evaluation survey and relatively many expressed concerns that there was not enough subject-specific content in the module, and they did not learn about European integration as much as they had expected. Talking to students as well as sharing this experience with colleagues, I came to realisation that I moved from one 'extreme' of having the most standard form of curriculum delivery to the other 'extreme' of putting the lecture/seminar format on its head and *de facto* adopting theresearch-based teaching in a maximalist form, without regard for the institutional and cultural context I was operating in. This led me to adopt the integrated approach, which I ultimately found optimal for the purpose of balancing student learning, engagement and satisfaction. In this format, students get to hear from 'the expert' on the topic that they are interested in through the weekly interactive lectures. Following the lecture, they then get the chance to broaden their understanding of the topic by watching a video on a related topic, be it an interview with an expert, practitioner, or a documentary. This second session is concluded with the discussion covering the contents of the lecture and the video. Supplementing these technology-enhanced sessions are fortnightly seminars when students discuss the reading material, but instead of academic journal articles these are timely policy analyses.

Just like with the integration of space, also the integration of delivery method is supported by the nature of the subject such as European integration in general or European foreign and security policy in particular. At the more instrumental level, the integration of delivery is supported by the Erasmus + Jean Monnet funding framework, which encourages academic teacher applicants to put thought into the design of their modules. The EU rightly wants to fund high quality proposals, which promise to raise student curiosity and improve their understanding of European integration. At the subject-specific level, the integration of delivery is also supported by the very nature of the subject matter, with European integration being a relatively new phenomenon, and EU foreign and security policy being even more recent. The sheer number of policy actors involved, and the multitude of policy debate angles that are defining international politics in Europe today, make this subject especially conducive to non-standard delivery formats.

The argument here though is that the way in which a module is delivered must strike the balance between accounting for the institutional culture with associated student expectations as well as the innovative, high-impact pedagogical ideas that are promoted via the professional networks such as Advance HE in the UK. This point is further reinforced in the existing literature(e.g. Abbas et al., 2021). Still, the fast pace of technological innovation presents new potential opportunities, the most prominent being augmented reality and artificial intelligence (AI). In EU Studies, teachers can utilise the 'Be an MEP' app, which allows students simulate the experience of a member of the European Parliament with a virtual reality headset. Major et al. (2020) further emphasise the significance of balance, specifically pointing to the complementarity (but also tension) between newness, benefit and student outcomes. Admittedly, this last component is notoriously difficult to measure.

Integrated Approach Across Key Pedagogical Categories

Another way to think about the integration of delivery (and indeed, the integration of space) is to consider it in the context of the framework of so-called signature pedagogies, which Shulman (2005, p. 52) defines as 'types of teaching that organise the fundamental ways in which future practitioners are educated for their new professions'. The idea here is that the way we teach influences the way our graduates will think about problems in their future professions, and each discipline may have a different set of signature pedagogies. Inspired by this framework, Lock et al. (2018), drawing on their experience in the School of Education, combined PBL and case-based learning as well-established pedagogies within their own institution with the two examples of emerging signature pedagogies involving game-based learning and technology-enhanced learning. These are the same kinds of non-standard pedagogies which are popular within Social Science, and EU Studies in particular.

Indeed, this kind of signature pedagogy framework is especially relevant to EU Studies pedagogy for the reasons already outlined earlier in this paper. PBL in higher education is an approach that 'utilises a problem to initiate, focus, and motivate student learning' (Lock et al., 2018, p. 5). It is adopted at the institutional level by the University of Maastricht in the Netherlands – a university, which incidentally also has one of the most robust European Studies programmes (Maurer & Neuhold, 2012; van Til & van der Heijden, 1998). The integrated approach proposed in this paper recognises the value of PBL for student learning, especially given how actively students are engaged in solving problems, including finding relevant sources. At the same time, however, it is important to adapt and adjust the PBL teaching principles to the institutional context where it is applied, including student expectations. There are multiple ways to do this, including integrating PBL elements into the lecture sessions (asking students to solve mini-problems individually) or dedicating seminar sessions to solve specific problems (e.g. how to achieve a lasting peace in Ukraine) by dividing students into smaller groups.

Game-based learning, especially if expanded to also include simulation exercises, constitute the hallmark of EU Studies pedagogical innovation. Statecraft simulation platform is the most automated solution for the gamification of the student learning experience, and I have experience of utilising it in a module on Theories of International Relations. Although not specifically focused on EU Studies, it does have different streams, including

Model UN and International Security, which can supplement EU Studies, especially for modules with a strong International Relations/Security angle (Cox, 2021; Saiya, 2016, 2017). Simulations, as discussed earlier, are a perfect fit for EU Studies, as attested by their long-standing and broad use to allow students to simulate negotiations within various EU institutions. In terms of the integrated approach advocated in this paper, the same principle applies here as with the PBL: any gamification innovations must be context-specific. Specifically, the more non-standard the approach is, the more effort must be put into explaining the rationale and the mechanics associated with it, and extra focus must be put on the rules guiding assessment linked with the method. For examples, simulating the Council of the EU may be a valuable pedagogical experience for students, but if a reflective statement is to be included as part of assessment, time must be taken to explain it properly. A good way to experiment with gamification is to integrate its elements into existing curriculum delivery methods, if only to test how they are received by the students and what outcomes they produce.

Case-based learning can be ambitious and broad but also small-scale and contained into a single session. On a broader side of the spectrum, it can entail students working on a single problem throughout the length of the module – similar to what my students were doing in the original design for my research-based module. Students would select a topic early on, and then be presented with, and practicing tools (e.g. writing a literature review, asking a question, developing an argument, presenting findings, etc.) week by week, progressing with their case study. On the narrower side of the spectrum, and in line with the integrated approach advocated in this paper, students are working on content-related cases integrated into the lectures or seminars, individually or within small groups. There are three main sources for creating case studies for students. First, teachers can utilise their existing knowledge to manually prepare a separate case study for each session. Second, teachers can utilise existing cases as produced, for example, by Education section of the Council on Foreign Relations. Third, teachers can use generative AI, such as ChatGPT or DeepSeek, to generate case topic-tailored case studies. Here is an example prompt, which can be used for this purpose:

> I am a university teacher, and I teach an undergraduate module on European Power, which analyses the role of the European Union in European and Eurasian security. For the forthcoming session, my students will work in groups on a case study related to the impact of the war in Ukraine on European security. I want you to design a case study utilising the best practice in higher education pedagogy. It should present students with a specific problem and have them work within a group to work through it. Design the problem together with the associated instructions for students. It should take students no longer than 30 minutes to work on this case.

With this prompt, ChatGPT was able to produce a well-designed case study, but any information GenAI produces must naturally be checked for accuracy. Technology-enhanced learning is a common thread that runs through most pedagogical methods and approaches discussed in this paper. It can range from a simple PowerPoint presentation displayed on a white board, through online videos, collaborative platforms, online simulation games and tools like Vevox, all the way to generative AI and virtual reality experiences. The integratedlearning principle that applies here is striving for the balance between newness, benefit and student outcomes (Major et al., 2020). Whilst it might be tempting to reach for the latest technologies and impose them on unsuspecting

students, it is important to consider any innovations against (a) their constructive alignment with the module aims and objectives, (b) their benefit for student learning and expected outcomes, and (c) their compatibility with the existing institutional culture and student expectations. Anintegrated approach advocated in this paper is about balancing all three considerations.

In lieu of conclusion: future outlook

Rather than summarising the main points of the paper, which I believe I sufficiently did in the Introduction, I would rather reflect on the possible future trajectory of the integrated approach to teaching my European Power module. I will structure this by focusing on each of the two dimensions of the integration of space (in-person and online) and the integration of delivery (traditional and innovative). First, the in-person, on-campus delivery will remain the cornerstone of my teaching for both extrinsic and intrinsic reasons. Extrinsically, my university is not a distance-learning institution, and students come here with the expectation of physical participation in their learning sessions. This is a reasonable expectation. Intrinsically, sufficient evidence exists supporting the notion that in-person teaching offers benefits to student learning, which online teaching cannot fulfil. Furthermore, I am increasingly convinced that the benefits of in-person learning for student mental wellbeing will soon match, and perhaps even overcome the benefits for the effectiveness of learning. This is particularly the case in countries such as the UK, with the high degree of the atomisation of society and the immense challenge of mental health problems among young people.

Second, I will equally look for opportunities to include online learning elements into my module, especially when this can allow me to invite the kinds of speakers, which will work best for the scope and aims of the module. There is a value in students practicing their proficiency in using online tools to support their learning, and there are ways to support students in this without jeopardising the in-person learning experience. In addition to having access to a wider array of external speakers, assessment preparation (including feedforward) is a good area where platforms such as Blackboard and MS Teams can be utilised. Third, I remain convinced of the value of a traditional lecture, and I will continue with this component as the backbone of my teaching delivery. One of the key expectations among the students who come to my university is to learn from faculty members, who have been studying their subject long enough to become experts. While we may think that 'we are all students of the subject' and 'we learn from each other in equal measure', the reality is that we, as academic teachers, know way more about our topic than people, who are new to it. Students know this and they expect us to act accordingly. The arguments about the allegedly outdated and ineffective nature of traditional lectures are addressed elsewhere by Zwolski (2024).

Fourth, I will continue to experiment with innovative teaching delivery methods simply because new ideas in higher education pedagogy emerge regularly, and I need to keep myself challenged and keep questioning my own assumptions to feel that I continue growing as an academic teacher. At the same time, however, I do believe that any innovations require a close dialogue with the students to ensure that the benefits of any innovations outweigh potential drawbacks. In this context, over the next couple of years I will experiment with the virtual reality headset, which allows students to experience the work

of a member of a European Parliament. This will be a pilot project. Based on my preliminary discussions with the technology experts at my institution, if the pilot goes well, there is also a possibility for me to go to Brussels and record my own virtual reality tour of EU institutions, with my own commentary, quizzes, tasks, etc. This is something I may consider in the next 5 years. The emerging area of generative AI offers its own opportunities. Over the next 3–5 years, I will explore opportunities to integrate this newly-available technology into my teaching beyond what I have discussed earlier in this paper.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

Funding

This work was supported by European Commission.

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