

## Master in Economics

### 4 Seminar of Contemporary economic issue

### Séminaire d'actualité

**LECON2446 : Séminaire d'actualité I – Energy transition and climate change (UCLouvain)**

**LECON2373 : Séminaire d'actualité II – Economics of Inequality (UCLouvain)**

**LECON2382 : Séminaire d'actualité III – European Economic Policy in Africa (UCLouvain)**

**LECON2820 : Séminaire d'actualité IV – Global Commodity Markets : Recent Developments  
and Policy Issues (UNamur)**

<https://uclouvain.be/prog-2020-econ2m-lecon207s>

LECON2446	Séminaire d'actualité I – Energy transition and climate change	Van Steenberghe V.	2	Monday	10:45
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**Description:**

The way we produce and consume energy faces nowadays important challenges, among which climate change. The Paris Agreement under the auspices of the United Nations lays the foundations for international cooperation in this area with ambitious targets such as the achievement of carbon neutrality before the end of this century. Energy security issues, volatile energy prices and other concerns such as the health impacts of air pollution are other motivations for decarbonising and thereby fundamentally revisiting current energy systems around the world. The transition towards carbon-free energy systems has thus become unavoidable and is underway in several countries.

The trajectories that such a transition is likely to follow are numerous. Technological innovation and deployment will undoubtedly be major success factors. Energy savings, understood in a broad sense, are another factor that can be decisive. In any case, the impacts of this transition will go far beyond the contours of the energy system itself. They will significantly affect our production and consumption patterns and could profoundly change the way we move, our relationship to the habitat, our eating habits or our social ties.

The objective of this seminar is to carry out targeted economic analyzes on the low carbon transition of our energy systems in order to develop a series of skills such as the understanding of a broad and long-term phenomenon, the development of a targeted research question, the ability to argue on the basis of identified sources and personal analyzes, the drafting of a brief note and the development of the ability to express oneself and debate.

The seminar is organized as follows. The teacher first discusses the main contours of the energy and low carbon transition from an institutional point of view and highlights the main economic concepts and tools that underpin its analysis. Students then choose a research topic, possibly from a list proposed by the teacher. Individually or in small groups (depending on the number of participants), students write a short note presenting their research question and analysis. This note is presented and discussed with the group. The note and the oral presentation are used as a basis for the evaluation with regard to the skills mentioned above.

**Language:** French/English

LECON2373	Séminaire d'actualité II - Economics of Inequality	Vandenberghe V.	2	Monday	14:00
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### Description

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This seminar is destined to students with a good level of economics, microeconomics and applied econometrics; and above all an interest in **gaining economic insight about (the rise of) inequalities**

The seminar combines a series of lectures by the instructor (or external speakers), and presentations by students based on readings and data analysis, covering the question of inequality and its various components. The list of topics covered comprises

- the measurement of inequality and its evolution between and within countries,
  - capital-labour inequality,
  - inequality of labour income,
  - instruments of redistribution,
  - and the particular situation of Belgium regarding these issues.
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Language: English

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**LECON2382 : Séminaire d'actualité III****Site :** UCL**Language :** English**Title :** European Economic Policy in Africa**Prof. A. PANIN**

LECON2382	Séminaire d'actualité III European Economic Policy in Africa	Panin A.	1	Monday	16:15		
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**Description:**

Africa and Europe are continental neighbours with significant flows between them in natural resources, ideas and people. This seminar will examine how European policies affect economic outcomes in different African countries. The course will examine tradeoffs between multilateral and bilateral interventions. How does EU policy towards Africa differ from interests of individual European countries? Topics covered will include migration, trade, and development finance. There will be a special focus on how the introduction of the Africa Continental Free Trade Area, and the experiences of COVID-19 may shape the future of cooperation between the two continents.

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**Language:** English

LECON2820	Séminaire d'actualité IV - Global Commodity Markets : Recent Developments and Policy Issues (UNamur)	Houssa R.	2	Monday	09:30 to 12:30	week 1 to 9
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**Description:**

Commodities play an important role in the daily decisions of households, firms and the government. As such, business, policy makers and analysts keep a close watch on the fluctuation in their prices. The prices of commodities are set on the world market based on the confrontation between demand and supply forces. Commodities traded on the world market include raw materials, intermediate or semi-processed goods that are used to manufacture other products. The most commonly traded commodities on the global market comprise crude oil, gold, copper, cotton, silver, natural gas, sugar, coffee, and cereals such as wheat, corn and rice.

The seminar aims to introducing students with recent developments and policy issues related to the markets of key commodities in both developing and advanced countries. Specific topics include: markets forces in determining global commodity prices; welfare impacts for household and business as well as public policies of support against adverse effects of commodity prices; international and regional agreements, volatility and implications for risk management strategies and the challenges for macroeconomic stability (monetary and fiscal policies); and globalization

Learning outcomes At the end of the seminar students will be able to demonstrate: Understanding of recent developments and policy issues related to the global markets of key commodities; ability to communicate clearly and persuasively in written and oral; ability to manage a project; ability to integrate and work within a team and also to exercise leadership

Teaching approach In this seminar, students will develop projects within a group. The size of groups will be three to four students and can vary depending on the numbers of students in class. At the beginning of the seminar, students will obtain a list of topics from which each group has to make a choice. Thereafter, each group will develop its project of which report will be submitted at a pre-defined time. Subsequently, each group will present the summary of the findings in class. For each presentation in class, there will be another group that will be assigned as discussant. After the presentation and discussions by the two groups there will be an open floor for general discussions on the topic.

Evaluation of learning outcomes The evaluation includes the following 5 elements:

1. Definition of the project: 10%
2. Presentation of the findings on the project: 20 %
3. Discussion on another project: 10%
4. Participation in general discussions: 20 %
5. Final report on the project: 40%

**Language: English**