Course syllabus	Syllabus - NGOs, Think Tanks, Nonprofit Organizations, Lobby Groups - The Impact from the grassroots.

A. Information on the placement of the course in the study programme											
A.1	*Academic year/semester*		2026/2027	1 semester							
A.2	*Language of instruction*		english								
A.3	*Field of study*		International Relations								
A.4	*Profile*		General academic								
A.5	*Level of study*		Second-cycle studies								
A.6	*Number of contact hours per semester assigned to individual class types*		W	Ćw	K	Ćw-T	Lab	PR	PL	PK	Kons.
		Full-time	30								
		Part-time									
W – lecture; Ćw – practical classes; K – seminar; Ćw-T – field classes; Lab – laboratory classes; PR – projects; PL – plein-air classes; PK – internships; Kons – consultations											
A.7	*Form of assessment* E – examination; ZO – graded pass; ZAL – pass		E	ZAL	.	.	.	.	.	.	.

Student workload required to achieve the course learning outcomes				
A.8	*ECTS credits*	3		
A.9	*Total student workload required to achieve the course learning outcomes*	60		
A.10	*Breakdown of student workload related to achieving the course learning outcomes*		*Hours FT*	*Hours PT*
		Contact hours with the instructor	30	
		Independent student work	30	

B. General course description (prerequisites, course objectives, learning outcomes and methods of their assessment, alignment with the field-specific learning outcomes, course content)		
B.1	*Prerequisites*	The student should demonstrate motivation to participate actively in classes, take part in exercises—including brainstorming sessions—and actively seek solutions to the problems presented. The student demonstrates basic knowledge regarding: • international relations and international security, • organizational management and decision-making processes, • economics and the functioning of international organizations, • information analysis and the fundamentals of social research methodology (an additional bonus).
B.2	*Course objectives*	Think tanks, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), nonprofit organizations, foundations, and advocacy groups play an important role in shaping public policy at local, national, regional, and international levels. Through research, policy analysis, public campaigning, lobbying, community mobilization, and financial support, these organizations influence political debates, inform decisionmakers, and seek to advance particular social, economic, and political objectives. Although these organizations often share similar goals and practices, they differ in their institutional structures, funding arrangements, ideological orientations, engagement methods, and relationships with governments and other political actors. Think tanks produce policy-oriented research and expertise; NGOs and community-based



organizations address social needs, defend rights, and mobilize citizens; advocacy and lobbying groups seek to influence public decisions; and foundations provide financial or organizational support for initiatives intended to serve public or private philanthropic purposes.

This course examines the historical development, organizational structures, funding models, research practices, and policy-influence strategies of selected think tanks, NGOs, nonprofits, foundations, and advocacy organizations. Through comparative case studies from the United States, Europe, Russia, India, Latin America, and Africa, students will explore how these institutions operate within different political and institutional environments.

Particular attention will be given to the relationship between research and political decision-making, the role of ideology and financial interests, the transparency and accountability of non-governmental actors, and the opportunities and limitations of civil-society participation in policymaking. The course also investigates how these organizations contribute to, or sometimes complicate, the pursuit of democratic governance, human rights, political accountability, and effective public policy.

By comparing institutions across different countries and regions, students will develop the analytical tools necessary to assess how non-state actors shape political agendas, influence public policy, and participate in contemporary national and global governance.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

The use of artificial intelligence tools is permitted exclusively as a supporting resource for preparing supplementary materials, such as maps, tables, charts, and graphics, and for language and stylistic proofreading of submitted work.

All assessed assignments must be original and reflect the student's independent analysis, critical thinking, and individual contribution. Students must comply with applicable academic integrity standards and any additional requirements established by the instructor.

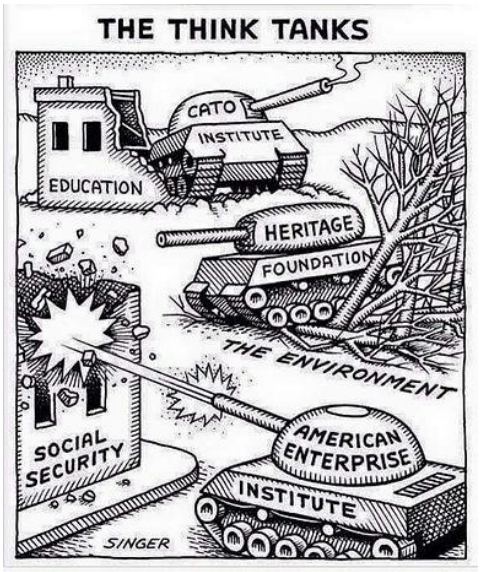
The use of artificial intelligence tools to generate the substantive content of assessed assignments, formulate the student's analysis, or replace independent academic work is not permitted.

B.3 Learning outcomes and methods of their assessment, alignment with the field-specific learning outcomes

	Course learning outcomes	*Assessment Methods*	*Alignment with the field-specific learning outcomes*
KNOWLEDGE			
W1	Understand the roles and functions of think tanks, NGOs, and advocacy organizations.		

W2	Analyze how non-state actors influence public policy at national and international levels.	Methods of verification: observation of group work, project, case study analysis, discussion, case study review.	
W3	Compare organizational strategies, funding models, and policy outcomes across different political systems.		
SKILLS			
U1	Identify the main types, structures, and functions of think tanks, NGOs, and nonprofit organizations.	Methods of verification: observation of group work, project, case study analysis, discussion, case study review.	
U2	Analyze and compare organizational strategies and their influence on public policy using evidence and case studies.		
U3	The student cooperates effectively within a team, takes responsibility for assigned tasks, and actively participates in preparing humanitarian and development projects. The student is able to make decisions in a dynamic international environment while considering ethical, legal, and cultural factors.		
SOCIAL COMPETENCES			
K1	Engage in informed discussions, critically evaluate different perspectives, and communicate findings responsibly.	Methods of verification: observation of group work, project, case study analysis, discussion, case study review.	
K2	Upon completion of the course, the student is prepared to act responsibly in support of individuals and communities affected by humanitarian crises, while respecting human dignity and human rights.		
K3	The student demonstrates openness to cooperation with representatives of public administration, international organizations, non-governmental organizations, and the private sector. The student actively participates in discussions, demonstrates initiative in developing solutions to humanitarian and development challenges, and respects diverse cultural and social perspectives.		

B.4	Course content (separately for each class type specified in Section A.6)	During our classes, we will study the following institutions: 1. The Center for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS): Strategic analysis, international security, and foreign-policy research. 2. The Brookings Institution and the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: Research traditions, policy expertise, and international influence. 3. Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch: Human-rights research, advocacy, and international accountability. 4. Think Tanks and Nonprofit Organizations in the United Kingdom: Institutional development, policy research, and advocacy in the British political system. 5. Think Tanks and Nonprofit Organizations in Poland: The Polish Institute of International Affairs (PISM) and the Institute of New Europe. 6. Think Tanks and Nonprofit Organizations in Bulgaria: The Center for the Study of Democracy and In Statu Nascendi. 7. Think Tanks and Nonprofit Organizations in India: Policy research, civil society, and institutional relationships.



		8. Think Tanks in Latin America: Regional policy debates, political change, and institutional development. 9. Think Tanks and Nonprofit Organizations in Africa: Policy research, development, governance, and civil-society engagement. 10. The Emergence and Proliferation of Think Tanks and Nonprofit Organizations in Russia during the Yeltsin Era: The emergence of policy expertise, relationships between research institutes and political elites, foreign funding, post-Soviet institutional transformation, and the role of expert networks in economic reform. 11. Think Tanks and Nonprofit Organizations in Europe: Comparative perspectives on institutional models, political influence, funding, and policymaking across European countries. 12. The Cato Institute: Individual liberty, limited government, free markets, and peaceful international relations as foundations of libertarian policy research and advocacy. For more information please visit: https://www.instatunascendi.com/ngo
B.5	*Conditions for admission to the course assessment /examination*	No preconditions
B.6	*Conditions for course completion*	**Conditions for Course Completion and Grading** To obtain a passing grade (3.0) or a good grade (4), students must prepare a presentation on selected non-profit /for profit research organizations Students aiming for a very good grade (5.0), as well as those who prefer working individually or are unable to actively participate in scheduled brainstorming sessions and other group exercises, may choose an alternative assessment method. This involves writing an essay (up to 3,000 words) or a book review addressing similar topics. The final course grade is determined based on performance in exercises, written assignments, and class participation. Students have the option to improve their final grade by preparing additional written assignments or reviews of academic publications related to the course subject matter, subject to the deadlines and conditions specified by the instructor. **For those who prefer to take a written exam – we can organize a test**
C. Course reading list		
C.1	*Compulsory readings*	In order to prepare for the classes please research Documents, Statutes and Websites produced by organizations of listed in B4 section
C.2	*Supplementary readings*	Seek professional literature comparing those organizations
C.3	*Other materials*	Will be provided before, during and after the classes
D. Information on the programme director/dean, course coordinator, academic teacher(s), and date of syllabus preparation		
D.1	*Programme Director/Dean*	dr Aleksandra Chyc
D.2	*Course Coordinator*	
D.3	*Academic Teacher(s)*	dr Piotr Pietrzak
D.4	*Date of syllabus preparation*	10/10/2026