POSC3621 European Politics

Mon 1-4 pm
SPRING 2016

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Office Hours: by appointment

Overview

This course focuses on the main features of contemporary political systems in Europe, with special emphasis on Western Europe. The course provides an introduction to European electoral and party politics, political behaviour, and the theoretical foundations of different types of government. Case studies will be used to highlight the functioning of different political systems across the continent such as the United Kingdom, the Netherlands, Scandinavia, Southern Europe and France.

Students are not expected to read everything on this list. However, they are expected to read at least one of the required readings for each topic and contribute, accordingly, to the class discussion and/or group activity that will take place at the end of each session (last hour). The reading list is not exhaustive, but provides the basis from which students can pursue further independent reading. Please contact me if you encounter any problems in accessing the required or additional readings.

Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand of the historical foundations of current issues in European politics
- Identify the main differences across political systems and its consequences for democratic functioning
- Ability to apply theoretical approaches to political ‘practice’
- Critical understanding of the literature
- Develop skills to conduct research and produce written scholarly material
Assessment & Key dates

• Participation 10%: students are expected to read the compulsory readings weekly and to contribute actively to class discussions / exercises.

• Midterm exam 25%, March 7th. Guidance / practical examples will be provided prior to the exam date.

The midterm and final exams will consist of multiple choice questions and short answer questions. The exams will cover the course material, including assigned readings, lectures, and classroom discussions. A make-up exam will be administered only in case of a medical emergency.

• Research paper 25%, April 4th: titles will be made available by the course supervisor. Research papers should be 2500 words long (10% above/below tolerance policy). Students are allowed to choose their own topic according to their research interests - prior discussion with the course supervisor.

Late Penalty: You are responsible for submitting a hard copy of the policy brief at the beginning of the class on April 4th as well as an electronic copy. A paper handed in after the class will be considered late. Any late assignment will receive a ten percent penalty per each day of lateness.

Academic Integrity: Failure to properly acknowledge the intellectual contribution of others constitutes plagiarism and is a very serious academic offence. Please consult the Fordham University Undergraduate Policy on Academic Integrity to get familiar with the standards of academic integrity.

• Final exam 40%, April 25th. Guidance / practical examples will be provided prior to the exam date.

Grading

Since the midterm and final exams consist of a multiple choice test and short answers, the student will get a score within the range 0-100 that will then be translated to the F - A grading scale (usual system at Fordham). Students will receive their final grades as usual F - A.

Note: this conversion will not negatively impact the students’ grades in any way. On the contrary, it improves their chances of getting a higher final grade. Please see conversion according to University guidelines as follows:
Outline

1 Jan 11th: The Study of Political Science

Required readings:


Additional readings:


2 Jan 18th: What is the European Union?

Required readings:


Additional readings:


3  Jan 25th: Public Opinion, Elections and Democratic Deficit in the European Union

Required readings:


Karp, Jeffrey A., Susan A. Banducci, and Shaun Bowler, ’To Know It is to Love It?’ Satisfaction With Democracy in the European Union’, *Comparative Political Studies* 36(3), 2003

Additional readings:


4  Feb 1st: The Westminster Model of Democracy

Required readings:


A. Gamble, ’Theories of British Politics’, *Political Studies* 38:3 (1990): 404-20

Additional readings:


*Note*: There will be no lecture on Oct 12th.

### 5 Feb 8th: Consociational Democracy

**Required readings:**


**Additional readings:**


6 Feb 15th: Social Cleavages, Parties and Electoral Systems in Europe

Required readings:

Neto, O.A. and Cox, GW. 'Electoral Institutions, Cleavage Structures, and the Number of Parties' American Journal of Political Science, 41(1) 1997

Additional readings:


7 Feb 22nd: Recap. Reviewing Exam topics / Midterm Exam Preparation

Note: there will be no lecture on Monday the 29th of February (Spring Break).

No compulsory readings this week.

8 March 7th: Comparative Welfare States in Europe

Note: Midterm exam will take place at the beginning of the lecture.

Required readings:


Additional readings:

Bornschier, V.P. Ziltener 'The Revitalization of Western Europe and the Politics of the 'Social Dimension’. In Thomas P. Boje et al. (eds.) European Societies: Fusion or Fission?’ 1999


Esping-Andersen, G et al. Why we Need a New Welfare State, 2002


9 March 14th: Southern European Democracies

Required readings:


Additional readings:


10 March 21st: Semi-presidentialism in Europe

Note: there will be no lecture on Monday the 28th of March (Easter Break).

Required readings:


Additional readings:


11 April 4th: Economic Crisis and European Integration

Note: deadline to submit research paper.

Required readings:

Chang, M. 'The birth of the euro and the Eurozone’ Ch. 3 in M. Chang, Monetary Integration in the European Union (Palgrave, 2009), pp. 45-70.

Additional readings:


12 April 11th: Social Movements and the Emergence of New Parties in Europe

Required readings:


Additional readings:


13 April 18th: Recap. Reviewing Exam topics. Final Exam Preparation.

No compulsory readings this week.