

PSCI 0225-A: West European Politics

*TuTh 9:30-10:45am, Le Chateau 110
Spring 2019*

Instructor: Katharine Aha

Office hours: Tuesdays 3:00-4:00pm; Wednesdays 2:00-4:00pm

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Course Description

This course aims to familiarize you with post-WWII European politics and is divided into two sections: European political systems, and the European Union.

The first section analyzes the political institutions of European countries through a comparative approach. We will focus on political parties, identity politics, electoral systems, and systems of government. The second section analyzes the history and institutions of the European Union, and discusses important issues and challenges, including enlargement, the eurocrisis, and Brexit.

Aims and Outcomes

The goal of this course is to develop tools to critically analyze contemporary issues in European politics, and to gain an understanding of the political systems of European countries and the European Union. By the end of the course, you are expected to have a strong understanding of the political systems and political history of European countries and the European Union; the ability to understand and discuss how political institutions affect policy outcomes and political representation; and the skills needed to analyze and discuss contemporary issues in European politics.

Readings

This course has two books that can be purchased through the Middlebury College Bookstore:

- Lijphart, Arend. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries, 2nd Edition*. Yale University Press. (also available as e-book through the library)
- Cini, Michelle and Nieves Perez-Solorzano Borragan. *European Union Politics, 5th Edition*. Oxford University Press.

All other readings can be found on Canvas.

Course Website (Canvas)

The course website is on Canvas. I will use the course website to post the syllabus, lecture slides, and other course information in an easily accessible location, and you will be expected to post assignments on Canvas throughout the semester. Please let me know immediately if you have any issues logging into the website.

Course Grade Components

15%: Participation grade

5%: Map quiz

20%: Midterm exam

20%: Final exam

10%: Paper 1

10%: Paper 2

20%: Simulation

Attendance & Participation

Our meetings will combine lecture and discussions. Attending class regularly will help you considerably on the exams, and allow you to participate in discussions. I will also take attendance before each class. You are allowed three unexcused absences before missing class starts to affect your grade. Every unexcused absence after that will automatically cause your participation grade to drop by half a letter grade (five points).

I expect you to come to class prepared by having read and thought about the readings and any homework, and ready to actively participate. Lectures are designed with the expectation that you have read the assigned material before class begins. You will not do well in this course unless you do the readings. We will have periodic reading checks at the beginning of class, which will be done to make sure that students are reading and understanding the material.

Do not expect an A in participation just for showing up – regular attendance denotes average performance, which equates to a grade of seventy-five percent. Raising this grade depends on demonstrating that you have both read and thought about the reading. The only way for you to do this is to actively participate. An easy way to do this is to come to class prepared with comments and/or questions relating to the week's readings, lectures, or how current event reflect what we are studying in class. I will give you ample opportunities to participate in class – please take advantage of this time!

One of the goals of this class is to give you a safe environment in which to speak so that you can practice analyzing political events and applying the theories we learn in class to real-world events. To this end, we will frequently engage in discussion. Guidelines we will follow to help foster meaningful discussion:

- Be respectful. Different opinions are healthy and welcome in the classroom. However, it is essential that we treat one another with respect. You do not have to agree with someone's view, but you do have to be respectful. Disrespectful students may be asked to leave the classroom. Please take a look at Middlebury's harassment policy if you have questions (<http://www.middlebury.edu/about/handbook/policies-for-all/non-discrim-policies/anti-harassment-discrimin>)
- Speaking in front of groups can be intimidating to some students; it is my goal to ensure that this class is a comfortable space where everyone can participate. Our discussions will be most successful when all voices are heard. If speaking in front of the class makes you nervous, come talk to me so that we can figure out some strategies to help you earn points towards your participation grade.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions! Everyone has different areas of expertise, and some concepts may be more confusing to you than others. I will be of limited help to you if you don't speak up when you need clarification, and the discussion portions of the class will not work unless you participate.

Map Quiz

Map quiz will be on February 21st. The quiz covers the 28 EU member states, in addition to important neighbors. You are expected to be able to identify these countries on a blank map.

Exams

The midterm will be held on April 2nd, and is meant to test comprehension of the readings and lecture material for the first half of the course. The final will be on Saturday, May 18th at 9am. This exam will primarily cover material from after the mid-term. The College sets the final exam schedule. Please consult the course policies below for information on rescheduling the final exam.

Papers

At the beginning of the course, you will select a country of the European Union that will be the focus of your papers, as well as the country that you will represent in the simulation at the end of the semester. Throughout the course of the semester, you will gain a deep understanding of the politics in this country. The 1st paper, due on March 21st, will focus on political parties in your country. The 2nd paper, due on May 2nd, will examine your country's relationship with the European Union. Each paper should be approximately 5 pages.

Simulation

We will have a simulation of the European Council on May 7th and 9th. During this simulation, you act as an executive of your chosen EU member state in order to present views on what course of action you believe the EU should take on a selected topic, and with other students, attempt to come to an agreement on specific steps for future EU policy. On the first day of the simulation, you will discuss issues in regional groups, and on the second day, the whole Council will meet to debate and finalize policy.

You will spend several weeks during the second half of the course preparing for the simulation. In order to do so, you will write a series of short blog posts on Canvas, in which you, in the character of your chosen EU executive, discuss the executive's opinions on different issues/current events. You must also, still in character, respond to other students' blog posts. At minimum, you must write one blog post and write two responses per week.

Course policies

Honor Code

It is expected that all work you do in this course will be original work not previously or simultaneously handed in for credit in another course, unless this is done with the prior permission of all instructors involved. All work for this course falls under the college's Honor Code; the student's signature on her/ his work confirms that the Code rules were respected. All work must be your own – plagiarism, cheating, and related violations will not be tolerated. For more information on academic honesty and the honor code, visit <http://www.middlebury.edu/about/handbook/ug-college-policies/ug-policies/academics/acad-honesty>.

Familiarize yourself with the concept and practice of plagiarism in order to make sure that you avoid it. Plagiarism is defined as deliberate or reckless representation of another's words, thoughts, or ideas as one's own without attribution in connection with submission of academic work, whether graded

or otherwise. Please visit this link for resources on how to avoid plagiarism:
<https://middlebury.libguides.com/c.php?g=431952&p=2946059>.

Questions

If you have questions about the course, please come see me after class or during office hours. Please email me if you absolutely cannot come to office hours. Some questions may not be easily resolved by email, but we can set up another time to meet if necessary. Please do communicate with me early if you have any challenges that impact your performance in this course; I will not be able to help you if you do not ask for help.

Rescheduling Exams

If you have to miss class on the day of an exam or wish to reschedule an exam, then you must write and explain beforehand in all but the most unusual circumstances. If you are going to miss an exam for an event you know about well in advance, please come speak to me early in the semester (ie in first week or two of class) so that we can make appropriate arrangements. Please note that final exams can only be rescheduled through your Commons dean, and cannot be rescheduled to accommodate student travel plans. Please see the Middlebury Handbook for additional information.

Student accessibility

Students who have Letters of Accommodation in this class are encouraged to contact me as early in the semester as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For those without Letters of Accommodation, assistance is available to eligible students through Student Accessibility Services. Please contact Jodi Litchfield or Michelle Audette, the ADA Coordinators, for more information: Michelle Audette can be reached at maudette@middlebury.edu or 802-443-2169 and Jodi Litchfield can be reached at litchfie@middlebury.edu or 802-443-5936. All discussions will remain confidential.

Conduct in Class + Additional Info

I would like you to bring your laptops to class in order to access electronic resources - however, I expect you to use them for activity related to this course. Playing on the Internet during class is highly disrespectful to people who are trying to pay attention. I may not call you out for being on another site during class, but I will notice, and it will affect your final grade. You may not have your laptops open during any sort of student presentation. If, during the course of the semester, I see that the laptops are acting as more of a distraction than a help, I reserve the right to restrict their usage.

Do not use your cell phone during class. I can tell when you're using it, and it will definitely impact your participation grade. Don't do it.

If you are going to spend class time playing on your computer or your phone, then please respect your classmates, use one of your unexcused absences, and do not come to class.

As a general rule, I will not email you your grades, nor will I discuss your grades with you within 24 hours of handing graded assignments back. That being said, if you have questions about my comments on your assignments, I am happy to talk to you. If you want me to regrade something, you will need to write a few (at least 3) paragraphs responding specifically to my written comments and explaining why you feel you deserve a higher grade.

Course Schedule

February 12: What is Europe?

February 14: Two Models of Democracy

Readings:

- Lijphart, *Patterns of Democracy*, Chapters 1, 2, & 3

February 19: Systems of Government I

Readings:

- Lijphart, Chapter 7 (pp: 105-116 & 127-129)

February 21: Systems of Government II (+ Map Quiz)

Readings:

- Lijphart, Chapters 10 & 11

February 26: Electoral Systems I

Readings:

- Lijphart, Chapter 8

February 28: Electoral Systems II

Readings:

- Helm, "A party at war: could Brexit split spell end of the Tories?", *The Guardian*
- "Brexit: Theresa May's deal is voted down in historic commons defeat," *BBC*

March 5: Party Systems

Readings:

- Lijphart, Chapter 5 (pp: 60-75)
- Gallagher, Laver, and Mair (GLM), *Representative Government in Modern Europe*, Chapter 7 (195-235)

March 7: Ideologies and Party Families I

Readings:

- "There's a word for that," *The Economist*
- GLM, Chapter 8 (pp: 238-252; 270-275)

March 12: Ideologies and Party Families II

Readings:

- GLM, Chapter 8 (pp: 253-270)

March 14: Social Cleavages and Party Support

Readings:

- Lipset and Rokkan, "Cleavage Structures, Party Systems, and Voter Alignments" from *The West European Party System*, Edited by Peter Mair

March 19: Populism

Readings:

- Pappas, "Distinguishing Liberal Democracy's Challengers," *Journal of Democracy*
- Mudde "Three Decades of Populist Radical Right Parties in Western Europe: So What?," *European Journal of Political Research*
- Dempsey, "Will Populist Parties Run Europe?," *Newsweek*

March 21: Parliaments and Governments (+ 1st paper due)

Readings:

- Lijphart, Chapters 6 (all) & 7 (pp: bottom of 116 – 126)

SPRING BREAK

April 2: Midterm

April 4: Introduction to the EU

Readings:

- McCormick, *Understanding the European Union*, Chapter 1
- EU Guide for Americans (26-43)

April 9: EU History I

Readings:

- Phinnemore, "The European Union: Establishment and Development," *European Union Politics*

April 11: EU History II

Readings:

- Church & Phinnemore, "From the Constitutional Treaty to the Treaty of Lisbon," *European Union Politics*
- Egan, "The Single Market," *European Union Politics*

April 16: EU Institutions

Readings:

- Egeber, "The European Commission," *European Union Politics*
- Lewis, "The European Council and the Council of the European Union," *European Union Politics*
- Burns, "The European Parliament." *European Union Politics*

Optional:

- Kapsis, "The Court of Justice of the European Union," *European Union Politics*
- Eising, "Interest Groups and the European Union," *European Union Politics*

April 18: EU Enlargement

Readings:

- Vachudova, *Europe Undivided*, Introduction and Chapter 4
- Heath, "The Race for EU Membership," *Politico*

Optional: Juncos and Borragan, "Enlargement," *European Union Politics*

April 23: The Euro and the Eurocrisis

Readings:

- Verdun, "Economic and Monetary Union," *European Union Politics*
- Hodson and Puetter, "The Euro Crisis and European Integration," *European Union Politics*
- Goodman, "Europe's Economy, After 8-Year Detour, Is Fitfully Back on Track," *New York Times*

April 25: EU Identity

Readings:

- Fligstein, Polyakova, and Sandholtz, "European Integration, Nationalism and European Identity," *Journal of Common Market Studies* (106-122)
- Siegal, "The European Union Is Under Threat. Artists Say It's Time to Rebrand." *The New York Times*

April 30: The Refugee Crisis

Readings:

- Park, "Europe's Migration Crisis," *Council of Foreign Relations* (1-8)
- Schmidle "Ten Borders: One Refugee's Epic Escape from Syria," *The New Yorker* (1-21) (optional)

May 2: Brexit (+ 2nd paper due)

Readings:

- Hunt and Wheeler, "Brexit: All you need to know about leaving the EU," *BBC*
- Drummond, "Brexit opinions stick: Opinion poll shows little shift," *The Guardian*
- Erlanger, "The Messier Brexit Gets, the Better Europe Looks," *The New York Times*

May 7: Simulation

May 9: Simulation

FINAL EXAM: Saturday, May 18th, 9am-12pm