

Intro to European Government

Spring 2018

T-Th 3:30 – 4:45; Fetzer Hall 0106

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Office hours (300 Hamilton Hall): Tuesdays 1 – 3 pm & Thursdays 9 – 10 am, or by appointment.

Course Content and Goals

This course is designed to introduce students to the post-WWII politics of Europe. Instead of looking at Europe one country at a time, we will be examining Europe's political institutions, discussing how these institutions were shaped by political considerations, and looking at how these institutions shape politics today. Throughout the course, we will be analyzing current events to see the contemporary interplay between political institutions and European politics. Besides educating students about an area of the world that they may not be familiar with, this course is intended to provide students with some of the historical knowledge necessary for understanding what has happened and is happening in the region, help them learn how to independently assess the merits of various political institutions, and allow them to practice analyzing politicians' actions and current events. Consequently, this course will consist primarily of interactive lectures, short small group activities, and large group discussions.

Textbook

European Democracies: Ninth Edition, Markus M.L. Crepaz (2017)

Readings and assignments

While the only book you need to own is the Crepaz textbook, it is also possible that I will assign news articles and additional readings. These will be posted on the course website on Sakai, and I will send an email via Sakai once the readings have been posted. Because we will be discussing current events, which (for obvious reasons) cannot be listed on the syllabus in advance, it is important that you check your email / Sakai to make sure you have read everything assigned for a given class period. Class periods 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. If it becomes necessary, graded quizzes may be assigned to encourage doing the readings. You are responsible for being in class, checking your UNC email, and learning about any additional assignments from a fellow student if you miss class.

Please let me know as soon as possible if you are not able to access the course website on Sakai.

Course Grade Components

15%: Attendance quizzes and participation

15%: Mid-term exam

20%: Simulation

20%: Final exam, short-answer portion (in-class)

20%: Final exam, take-home essay content

5%: Turning in final essay intro and outline on time (2.5% each, all-or-nothing)

5%: Map quiz

1. Attendance and participation

Since no one wants to listen to a lecture for an hour and fifteen minutes, our meetings will combine lecture, discussions, and exercises. Attending class regularly will help you considerably on the exams, and allow you to participate in discussions. I will also take attendance at random throughout the semester, using a very short quiz at the beginning of class. Everyone who submits an answer (right or wrong) will receive full credit; the quiz itself is meant to help you check your understanding of the material. One missed quiz will be dropped without penalty; unexcused absences after the first will result in a reduction in your attendance score. I will send an announcement via Sakai after each quiz, so that anyone who missed class can keep count.

I will excuse absences due to illness with documentation from a doctor or Campus Health Services, due to University-sanctioned events with documentation (i.e., you are traveling to compete in a University athletic event), and for religious observations. In the case of other personal obligations that will prevent you from attending class, please discuss it with me in advance if you would like me to consider excusing the absence (no guarantees).

As a benchmark, regular attendance without participating denotes average performance (around a 75%). Raising this grade requires demonstrating that you have both read and thought about the readings. The only way for you to do this is to actively participate. An easy way to do this is to come to class with prepared comments and/or questions relating to the week's readings, the lectures, or to how current events reflect what we are studying in class. I will give you ample opportunities to participate in class. If you receive an F for participation, you will fail the class.

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.
- 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 as soon as possible so that we can figure out some strategies you are comfortable with to help you earn points towards your participation grade.
- Don't be afraid to ask questions! Everyone has different areas of expertise, and I don't expect you to understand or remember everything immediately, so don't demand that of yourself, either. 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.

2. Mid-term exam

The mid-term will take place on February 22nd, and will be a multiple choice exam. As a result, you will need to bring an exam sheet (available from the Student Stores) and a pencil to class.

3. European Council simulation

We will have a weeklong simulation of the European Council on 4/17 and 4/19. Students will spend several weeks preparing for this simulation—after the mid-term, students will sign up to be either the executive of a particular EU member state, a member of the European Commission, or a party leader in the European Parliament. Students will then need to use the blog function on Sakai to start a blog in which they, in the character of their chosen EU executive, discuss their opinions on different issues/current events and, staying in character, respond to other students' blog posts. Students must post at least 1 post a week and must make 3 comments on posts (responses to other students' posts or comments) each week. This level of contribution will denote an average performance, or a grade of 75%. All of these blog posts will help students prepare for the paper assignment and the weeklong simulation. During the simulation students will, in character as their chosen EU leader, present their views on what actions the EU should take next and, as the European Council, students will attempt to come to an agreement on specific steps for future EU policy. We will spend the first day of the simulation discussing issues in regional groups, and on the second day the whole European Council will meet together to debate and finalize policies.

4. Final exam and essay

The final exam will be on May 1. It will consist of two parts: an in-class short answer portion (using blue books from the Student Stores), and a take-home essay portion. The take-home essay question will refer to a country of your choice, and it will be due the last day of class (April 26). For the take-home essay question you will need to write approximately 10 pages. There will be periodic due dates throughout the semester for different parts of your paper, and meeting these due dates counts for part of your paper grade. These due dates exist to help you write a strong paper that addresses the prompt and is finished on time. We will also devote one class period as a writing workshop focused on the paper. Details about the paper will be given on the simulation sign-up date. The rest of the final will take place during the regularly scheduled time for finals for this class period (May 1 at 4pm).

5. Map quiz

Knowing the basic geography of Europe is important for understanding processes like European integration. As a result, early in the semester we will take a map quiz. You will be presented with a mostly blank political map of Europe, and asked to name selected countries and capitals. A high resolution map is available to study under the Resources tab on Sakai.

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. All work for this course falls under the University'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 the honor code, please visit <http://instrument.unc.edu/>.

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. Take the library's tutorial at <http://www.lib.unc.edu/instruct/plagiarism/> and ask me if you have any questions.

Electronic Devices

Cell phones should not be used during class (emergencies, of course, excepted). If you use your phone during class, I may deduct from your participation grade. Laptops are permitted, but should generally not be used during discussion sessions. Please be aware that using the laptop for non-class purposes can be distracting for those around you, and is not very difficult for instructors to detect! Using laptops in a distracting way may also result in a reduced participation grade.

Also, it has been shown (although not conclusively) that taking notes by hand better promotes understanding and retention than taking notes by computer. The choice is yours, but I recommend taking notes with pen and paper. See here: <http://www.npr.org/2016/04/17/474525392/attention-students-put-your-laptops-away>.

Late Penalties

Late work may be penalized up to one letter grade for each 24-hour period that it is late. Please reach out to me in advance if it will be difficult for you to complete an assignment by the deadline.

Communication and grade revisions

I try to respond to emails promptly, but don't be alarmed if it takes a full business day for me to reply. Please include the course number in the subject line of any emails (this makes it harder for your email to get lost). If you wish to discuss your grade with me, please see me in person. I ask that you allow a 24-hour waiting period after the grade is posted.

In general, I will not revise grades except in cases of a clear error on my part. If you would like me to consider revising a grade, you must submit the request in writing, and indicate the major errors in grading you have identified. If I agree to re-grade the assignment, please be aware that this may result in an increase or decrease in the original grade (or it may stay the same).

Grading Scale

94 – 100: A
90 – 94: A-
87 – 90: B+
84 – 87: B
80 – 84: B-
77 – 80: C+
74 – 77: C
70 – 74: C-
60 – 70: D
0 – 60: F

Important dates

1/25: Map quiz
2/22: Mid-term exam
2/27: Simulation sign-ups
4/3: Paper outline due
4/10: Paper introduction due + writing workshop
4/17 – 4/19: In-class simulation
4/26: Final exam essay due
5/1: Final exam

Useful Resources

The Writing Center: <http://writingcenter.unc.edu/> – Resources and services that can help improve your academic writing, including one-on-one tutoring, handouts, and support for students for whom English is a second language.

Accessibility Resources and Service: <https://accessibility.unc.edu/> —Works with colleagues throughout the University to ensure that the programs and facilities of the University are accessible to all students. Additionally, ARS determines reasonable accommodations to provide students with disabilities with equal access to the opportunities available to them at Carolina as independently as possible.

Counseling and Psychological Services: <https://campushealth.unc.edu/services/counselingand-psychological-services> —Can provide resources, individual therapy, academic interventions and more to students who are experiencing challenges related to their mental health.

Other resources: <http://studentsuccess.unc.edu/resources-carolina/> —A fuller list of resources available to students at UNC.

Tips on how to study: <http://www.vox.com/2014/6/24/5824192/study-smarter-learn-better-8-tips-from-memory-researchers>

Course schedule

Week 1

- 1/11: Introduction
 - Chapter 1

Week 2: Political Parties

- 1/16: Parties and party systems
- 1/18: Parties in Western and Eastern Europe
- Reading: Chapter 2

Week 3: Electoral systems and courts

- 1/23: Electoral systems
 - Chapter 3
- 1/25: Courts + map quiz

- Chapter 5

Week 4: Parliamentary systems

- 1/30: Executive
- 2/1: Parliament
- Reading: Chapter 4

Week 5: Coalitions

- 2/6: Coalition types and government formation
- 2/8: No class

Week 6: Nationalism and ethnicity

- 2/13: Ethnic identity and nationalism
- 2/15: Nationalism in contemporary European cases
- Reading: Chapter 13

Week 7: Power-sharing and mid-term

- 2/20: Power-sharing
 - Chapter 14
- 2/22: Mid-term

Week 8: Federalism, referenda and social movements

- 2/27: Federalism and referenda
 - Chapter 6
- 3/1: Social movements
 - Chapter 7

Week 9: History and evolution of the EU?

- 3/6: EU history and evolution
- 3/8: EU institutions
- Reading: Chapter 10, pp. 181-205

Week 10: Spring break

- No class
- No class

Week 11: Institutions and policies

- 3/20: EU expansion and the euro
- 3/22: Policy outcomes and common EU policies
 - Chapter 12

Week 12: Expansion and political culture

- 3/27: Overview of contemporary crises in the EU
 - Chapter 11
- 3/29: European political culture
 - Chapter 9

Week 13: Immigration and welfare states

- 4/3: Immigration and right-wing populism
- 4/5: European welfare states
- Reading: Chapter 8

Week 14: Writing workshop and Brexit

- 4/10: Writing workshop and simulation prep
- 4/12: British relations with the EU, Brexit, and aftermath
 - Chapter 10, pp. 205-208

Week 15: Simulation

- 4/17: Simulation I
- 4/19: Simulation II

Week 16: EU foreign relations and review

- 4/24: EU foreign relations
 - Chapter 15
- 4/26: Review for final exam