RPOS 351 European Politics (Class #: 10439)
(tentative) Syllabus – 2017 Fall
TTH 08:45 AM-10:05 AM HU109

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Your email will be responded within 12 hours during weekdays and within 24 hours during weekends. If you do not get my response in this time frame, send me another email.

Office Hour: Tuesday 10:10-12:00 PM at Humanities B16 & by appointment

Course Description

This course is a comparative introduction to the governmental systems and current political issues in Europe, with a concentration on Western Europe. The focus will be on a selection of European states and the European Union (EU) as an overarching integration project. We will start the course with a short overview of the countries and the history of Europe. We will then examine the institutions, parties and political processes that affect political behavior in representative European democracies. In the second half of the course we will explore the European Union’s development by addressing four main dimensions: its historical development, the main theories that explain its political evolution, the European institutional framework, and its main public policies. Gen. Ed: International Perspectives.

Course Objectives

The goals of this course relate both to the specific content presented and to critical thinking and communication. By the end of the course, you will be able to:

- Summarize and compare the key sociopolitical attributes and dynamics of the European Union and its member states.
- Evaluate several key issues in comparative politics in the context of the EU
- Demonstrate ability to think critically and to analyze and contextualize historical and political-cultural materials and concepts relevant to Europe

Reading Materials


2) The other required readings are available as pdf files through the e-reserves on the Blackboard system – you can either read them on-line or print them out.

3) Recommended websites and newspapers
Course Activities & Method of Assessment

1) Every Monday – fact check quiz: 20%
   - You will take the quiz in group every two weeks

2) Participation: 20%
   - (10%) Every Wednesday – European current issue discussion
   - (10%) Three out – If you used your electronic devices and got called for three times, you will lose this 10%.

3) Group Presentation (10 groups/3-4people each): group members are going to be randomly assigned in the first meeting: 15 %

4) Midterm: 20%

5) Final Paper: 25 %
   - You will get to revise your paper two times. (5% for 1st draft; 5% for 2nd draft; and 15% for final draft)
   - Your drafts will be reviewed by the instructor and peer-reviewed at the initial stage.

Accommodating Disabilities

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation, please notify the Director of Disabled Student Services (BA-120, 442-5490). That office will provide the course instructor with verification of your disability, and will recommend appropriate accommodations.

How to find out more

The University provides a great deal of information on the services it offers to disabled students which can be found on the Disability Resource Center page.

University Policies
It is essential that students understand, appreciate and model the highest standards of academic integrity. The University's policy regarding what constitutes plagiarism and the penalty is available at http://www.albany.edu/eas/104/penalty.htm. There is also a useful tutorial available at the University library website that can clarify the issue and provide strategies and best practices to avoid it http://library.albany.edu/usered/ncplaga/index.html. Violations of academic integrity will be reported to the Office of Undergraduate Education and will result in failure of this course. If you are not sure the limits of borrowing someone else's idea or acceptable team collaboration, please ask me.

**Week-by-week Summary (Readings are subject to change)**

**Part 1. What is Europe? How do we study Europe?**

**W1. 8/29 and 8/31**
- Class Introduction
- What is Europe? Where is the borderline of Europe? and Who are the Europeans?
- Historical Aspects

* Reading:
  - https://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2012/01/09/where-is-europe/?_r=0
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=isVdxUBAp78

**W2. 9/5 and 9/7**
- Political system (Party, government, civil society, and etc.)

* Reading: TBA

**Part 2. Country Profile**

**W3. 9/12 and 9/14**
- Recap the Political System
- France
- Policy issue: migration and populism

*Reading: Hay & Menon ch2, ch12 and 14

**W4. 9/19 (no class on 9/21: Rosh Hashanah)**
- Germany
*Reading: Hay & Menon ch1

W5. 9/26 and 9/28
- United Kingdom
- Policy issue: Brexit
*Reading: Hay & Menon ch4 and ch5

W6. 10/3 and 10/5
- Italy, Spain and Greece
- Policy issue: Eurozone financial crisis 1 (from the PIGS perspective)
*Reading: Hay & Menon ch3, ch7, and ch8 (only the part about Greece)

W7. 10/10 and 10/12
- Eastern Europe and Turkey
- Policy issue: Ukraine and Russia
*Reading: Hay & Menon ch8 (only the part about Turkey), ch9 and ch21

W8. 10/17 and 10/19 (Midterm)
- Midterm review & Midterm

Part 3. European Union and Common Policies
W9. 10/24 and 10/26
- History and theories of European regional integration (with major Treaties)
- Policy issue: TBA
*Reading:
- Hay & Menon ch10

W10. 10/31 and 11/2
- EU institutions and decision making process
- Policy issue: EU’s official languages

*Reading:
- Hay & Menon ch11


W11. 11/7 and 11/9
- Monetary system (Euro) and financial crisis
- Policy issue: Eurozone financial crisis 2 (from broader perspective)

*Reading:
- Hay & Menon ch16
- and TBA

W12. 11/14 and 11/16
- Welfare Policy
- Policy issue: Erasmus

*Reading:
- Hay & Menon ch17

W13. 11/21 (no class on 11/23: Thanksgiving holidays) & 11/28
- Common border and immigration
- Policy issue: Refugees

*Reading:
- Hay & Menon ch19

Part 4. Euroscepticism or Europhile?
W14. 11/30 and 12/5
- European Identity and attitude toward the EU (public opinion)
- Anti-EU far-right parties and democratic deficit
- Paper peer review 1

*Reading:


**W15. 12/7 (last class)**

- EU and other countries (foreign policy)
- Influence of the EU on the international society (diffusion of regional integration? What’s the role of the EU?)
- Class wrap-up and evaluation

*Reading:

- Hay & Menon ch22 and ch23