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### PSC 321H.01: Politics of Western Europe

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# Politics of Western Europe (PSC 321)

MWF 9:10-10:00 p.m., McGill Hall 237, Fall 2007

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Office Hours: MWF 10:10-11:00 and 3:10-4:00, or by appointment

Course Website: <http://psc321.erichines.com>

Course RSS Feed: <http://feeds.erichines.com/psc321>

## COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the postwar history, culture, and politics of Western Europe. It begins with a comparative study of national politics and postwar political development. Students will gain a familiarity with the factors that explain the different political and economic outcomes we observe in Western European states. Some of the factors we will examine include social cleavages, political institutions (e.g., electoral systems, regime types, and federalism), party systems, and interest groups. The course concludes with an examination of European political development since 1945. Students will gain insight into the challenges a united Europe faces at the dawn of the 21st Century. Some of the topics we will explore include European integration, Muslim immigration, and economic globalization.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this course, students will be able to:

- Use comparative analysis and causal reasoning to explain political phenomena in Europe.
- Evaluate the comparative effectiveness of democratic institutions.
- Understand the motivations of and constraints imposed on European political actors.
- Evaluate European political development within different historical and cultural frameworks.

## TEXTBOOKS AND OTHER REQUIRED MATERIALS

There are two required texts for this course available at the UC Bookstore:

Bale, Tim. 2005. *European Politics: An Introduction* (Comparative Government and Politics). New York: Palgrave Macmillan. ISBN: 1403918716.

Hitchcock, William. 2004. *The Struggle for Europe: The Turbulent History of a Divided Continent 1945 to the Present*. New York: Anchor Books. ISBN: 0385497997.

All other required texts for this class are on electronic reserve at the Mansfield Library (password: europe).

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS

### *Knowledge of Current Events*

Students are required to actively monitor a European news source. A working knowledge of current events in Europe is essential to grasping how the concepts we learn in class apply to real-world politics. I strongly recommend the European news section of the BBC (<http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/default.stm>). Students may want to consider subscribing to the BBC's RSS feed. Most class periods will begin with a discussion of current events in Europe.

### *Preparedness*

Students have a responsibility to themselves, the instructor, and each other to come to class prepared. Being prepared for class includes having read all assigned readings before class and completing all assignments by the deadline given by the instructor. It also includes the more abstract requirement that students come to class ready to learn. Being prepared also ensures that all requirements are completed within the time-limit of the course. University policy on incomplete grades will be adhered to strictly.

### *Homework*

During the semester, students will complete a handful of homework assignments to prepare them for the election simulation and the final paper. Homework will be distributed on Fridays and is due in class the following Friday.

*One-Minute Papers:* **Students will need to purchase a bluebook to complete this requirement.**

When appropriate, students will provide “immediate feedback” by answering two questions in a bluebook at the end of a class: “What major conclusions did you draw?” and “What questions remain in your mind?” Student responses will be collected and returned with instructor comments at the beginning of the next class. This feedback helps me evaluate the progress of the class and the effectiveness of my teaching, gives students an opportunity to synthesize the major ideas of a class, and allows students to ask me questions at any time.

#### *Question Time*

Most Fridays, we will adopt the parliamentary practice of “Question Time.” By 5:00 p.m. Wednesdays., each student will submit to me online a question on any topic related to the course and a short explanation why their question is an important to answer. The questions will then be submitted to a class vote each Thursday. Question Time will be comprised of answers to each week’s five top-rated questions. Before the first Question Time, a class vote will be taken to determine whether we will use Google Groups or Blackboard as the online forum for this exercise.

#### *German Election Simulation*

This simulation will give you first-hand experience with a PR electoral system and the process of forming a government coalition in a multi-party system. It will also reinforce many of the basic concepts needed to understand European politics from a comparative perspective. Detailed instructions on the simulation will be distributed in class and on the course website. Students will be required to write a reaction paper after the simulation that will double as a take-home examination over the first section of the class.

#### *Final Paper*

Students will write a 6-8 page analysis paper on a political phenomena of their choice contingent on instructor approval. The paper will require students to apply one of the comparative methods discussed in the course to their phenomena in order to provide an explanation for variation across Western Europe. The paper will require substantial library research. The full guidelines for the final paper will be distributed in class. The papers will be due in class on a date (Nov. 17 or Nov. 20) chosen by a class vote on Blackboard.

#### *Student Assessment and Exams*

Student assessment for this course is intended to measure how well students are achieving the course objectives listed above. Since those objectives deal with a synthesis of knowledge rather than its regurgitation, assessment will occur in a number of non-exam formats including homework, a highly structured reaction paper written after the election simulation and your final paper. There is one traditional essay examination, a final exam held during finals week on Friday, December 14 at 8:00 am.

### **COURSE POLICIES**

#### *Academic Misconduct Policy*

The University requires that this statement be placed on all syllabi at the University of Montana:

*All students must practice academic honesty. Academic misconduct is subject to an academic penalty by the course instructor and/or a disciplinary sanction by the University.*

*All students need to be familiar with the Student Conduct Code. The Code is available for review online at: <http://ordway.umt.edu/SA/VPSA/index.cfm/name/StudentConductCode>*

#### *Statement On Disabilities:*

I strongly encourage students with documented disabilities to discuss appropriate accommodations with me that might be helpful to them. However, I am not qualified to make an assessment of your need for an accommodation or what accommodations are needed. If you have a disability and feel you need accommodations, you must present a letter to me from Disability Services for Students (DSS), Lommasson Center 154 (243-2243), indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested accommodations.

#### *Course Communications*

I will communicate with you by email and by posting announcements and materials on the website for this course (<http://psc321.erichines.com>). To ensure that you receive my emails, you must either check your UM email account

on a daily basis or have email from there forwarded to an account that you check daily. It is now University policy that all electronic communication with students be sent to their official university account. This includes replies to emails from non-university addresses.

### *Non-Competitive Grading*

Grading in this class is non-competitive. Your grade is determined by the total number of points you have at the end of the semester, regardless of the points of other students. There is no "curve." You should therefore feel free to help each other learn, study, and succeed since grading is not a "zero-sum game."

### *Grading*

The final grade will be based on a 1000 points distributed across six different areas as follows:

Participation:	150 points	[Including one-minute papers, Question Time, and in-class participation]
Homework:	150 points	
Election Simulation:	100 points	[50 points for group participation, 50 points for individual participation]
Reaction Paper:	150 points	
Final Paper:	250 points	
Final Exam:	200 points	

A plus/minus grading system will be used based on the following scale:

93-100 A	90-93 A-	87-90 B+	83-87 B	80-83 B-	77-80 C+
73-77 C	70-73 C-	67-70 D+	63-67 D	60-63 D-	0-60 F

### **ADDITIONAL READINGS**

In addition to the three textbooks listed above, students will be required to read a handful of additional readings which are available via the Internet, through the Mansfield Library's Electronic Reserves, or Blackboard.

Laver, Michael and Norman Schofield. 1998. "Locating Political Parties on Empirical Policy Scales." In *Multi-party Government: The Politics of Coalition in Europe*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 245-266

Kagen, Robert. 2002. "Power and Weakness." *Policy Review* 113 (June/July): pgs. 3-28.

Sapir, André. 2005. "Globalisation And The Reform Of European Social Models" *Bruegel Policy Brief* (1): 1-8

Savage, Timothy M. 2004. "Europe and Islam: Crescent Waxing, Cultures Clashing" *Washington Quarterly* 27(3): 25-50.

### **COURSE ORGANIZATION AND SCHEDULE**

This course is primarily a lecture course, although there will be opportunities for discussion. All course materials will be posted to the course website (<http://psc321.erichines.com>). I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule. All changes will be announced in class and posted to the course website.

### *Prologue*

August 27 Introduction of Course and Distribution of Syllabus

Aug. 29-Sep. 1 What is Europe?

Due to my attendance of the American Political Science Association Conference in Chicago, class will not meet Wednesday or Friday. Instead, you are responsible for completing two writing assignments. The first assignment involves reading the following articles, and writing a short one-page memo to me in which you assess different definitions of the concept of "Europe" and then recommend a definition for use in this class. You will post your memo to the assignment section of the course's Blackboard shell.

### Readings:

Hansen, Peo. 2004. "In The Name of Europe." *Race & Class* 45(3): 49-62.

Malmberg, Mikael af and Bo Stråth. 2002. "Introduction: The National Meanings of Europe." In *The Meaning of Europe: Variety and Contention Within and Among Nations*. Mikael af Malmberg, and Bo Stråth, eds. Oxford: Berg Publishers: 1-26.

The second assignment involves comparing coverage of the May 2007 election of French President Nicholas Sarkozy in an American newspaper like the New York Times with the coverage of the news story from a non-French European news source like the BBC. After reading an article from the two news sources, you will write a short (200-300 word) essay you will also post as an assignment to the course's Blackboard shell.

*Introduction*

Sept. 3	<i>Labor Day</i>	<b>No Class</b>
Sept. 5	The Rise of the Nation-State	Bale, Chapter 1
Sept. 7	The Postwar Settlement	Hitchcock, Chapters 2 & 3
Sept. 10:	The End of the Nation State?	Bale, Chapter 2

*Part I: Governance in Western Europe*

Sept. 12:	Levels of Governance	Bale, Chapter 3
Sept. 14:	<i>Question Time</i>	
Sept. 17	Governments and Parliaments I	Bale, Chapter 4
Sept. 19	Governments and Parliaments II	
Sept. 21	<i>Question Time</i>	
Sept. 24	Party Systems and Party Families I	Bale, Chapter 5
Sept. 26	Party Systems and Party Families II	
Sept. 28	<i>Question Time</i>	Laver and Schofield, "Locating," pgs. 245-266
Oct. 1	Elections and Electoral Systems	Bale, Chapter 6
Oct. 3	The European Media	Bale, Chapter 7
Oct. 5	<i>Question Time</i>	
Oct. 8	Politics Outside Parliament	Bale, Chapter 8
Oct. 10	Does Politics Really Matter?	Bale, Chapter 9
Oct. 12	<i>Question Time</i>	
Oct. 15	German Election Simulation (Campaign Speeches & Election Day)	
Oct. 17	German Election Simulation (Election Results and Negotiations Begin)	
Oct. 19	German Election Simulation (Investiture of Government)	

*Part II: Historical Development of European Political Systems from 1945-1992*

Oct. 22	Europe's Economic Miracle	Hitchcock, Chapter 5, p. 127-161
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**PSC 321H: Politics of Western Europe — Fall 2007**

Oct. 24	De Gaulle and the End of Empire	Hitchcock, Chapters 6 & 8
Oct. 26	<i>Question Time</i>	Simulation Reaction Paper Due in Class
Oct. 29	Prosperity and its Discontents	Hitchcock, Chapters 9 & 10
Oct. 31	Margaret Thatcher	Hitchcock, Chapter 12
Nov. 2	<i>Question Time</i>	
Nov. 5	The European Union: Origins and Institutions	Hitchcock, Chapter 16, pgs. 435-464
Nov. 7	The European Revolutions	Hitchcock, Chapter 13
Nov. 9	<i>Question Time</i>	
Nov. 12:	<i>Veteran's Day</i>	<b>No Class</b>
Nov. 14:	The Balkans	Hitchcock, Chapter 14, pgs. 380-409
Nov. 16:	<i>Question Time</i>	

*Part III: Challenges in Contemporary European Politics*

Nov. 19:	Is there a European Pop Culture?	Reid, Chapter 8, pgs. 197-226
Nov. 26:	Who is European?	Hitchcock, Chapter 15, pgs. 410-434 Bale, Chapter 10
Nov. 27:	What is the Future of Islam in Europe?	Savage, "Europe and Islam," pgs. 25-50
Nov. 30:	<i>Question Time</i>	
Dec. 3	Can the European Social Model Survive Globalization?	Sapir, "Globalisation", pgs. 1-8
Dec. 5	What Is the Future of the Transatlantic Partnership?	Kagen, "Power and Weakness."

*Conclusion*

Dec. 7	Question Time
<b>Dec. 14</b>	<b>Final Exam 8:00-10:00</b>

# Appendix A: German Election Simulation

This simulation will give you first-hand experience with a PR electoral system and the process of forming a government coalition in a multi-party system. It will also reinforce many of the basic concepts needed to understand European politics from a comparative perspective.

## THE SCENARIO

### *Background*

German federal elections took place on September 18, 2005 to elect the members of the German Bundestag, the federal parliament of Germany. They became necessary after a motion of confidence in Chancellor Gerhard Schröder failed on July 1. Following the defeat of Schröder's Social Democratic Party (SPD) in a state election, Schröder asked his supporters to abstain in the Bundestag motion in order that it fail and thus trigger an early federal election.

The opposition Christian Democratic Union (CDU) and its sister party in Bavaria, the Christian Social Union (CSU), started the election campaign with a 21% lead over the SPD. Many commentators expected the Christian Democrats to win a clear electoral victory and that CDU leader Angela Merkel would become Chancellor, forming a government with the Free Democratic Party (FDP) and displacing the governing SPD-Green coalition. However, the CDU/CSU lost momentum during the campaign and won only 1% more votes and four more seats than the SPD.

Exit polls showed that neither coalition group had won a majority of seats in the Bundestag. Both parties lost seats compared to 2002, as did the Greens. Only the Left Party made significant gains. Despite this, both Schröder and Merkel claimed victory. After careful negotiations to form a government, officials from the SPD and the CDU/CSU announced that the two parties would form a Grand Coalition with Angela Merkel as Chancellor.

### *The Simulation*

The 17th federal election will be the next election to occur in the Federal Republic of Germany. Assuming the current Bundestag remains in office for the typical four years, it will likely occur in September 2009. In this simulation, it is September 2009 and Germany faces another general election. Germany's five major political parties — the CDU/CSU, SPD, Greens, FDP, and the Left Party/PDS — must decide what their election strategy will as they struggle to win over the voters. Will the Grand Coalition hold or will voters reject this coalition of the middle for a coalition of the left or right?

## SIMULATIONS MECHANICS

### *Social Cleavages*

At the beginning of the third week of the semester, students will be randomly assigned a persona reflecting a typical German citizen reflecting Germany's social cleavages. Students will represent this persona throughout the simulation.

### *Politician or Voter*

After students have been assigned a persona, they will have the option of deciding whether they wish to be a politician or a voter. Politicians are the members of Germany's major political parties. As members of a political party, politicians will have to work closely with other politicians to develop a campaign strategy, party manifesto, and other aspects of the election process. Voters will have fewer responsibilities prior to the election day, but will have more to do in the post-simulation assessment. The simulation requires a minimum of 20 politicians, so students may be assigned to be politicians if there are insufficient volunteers.

### *Tasks*

The specific tasks that politicians (and occasionally voters) must complete before the simulation will be provided in a series of homework assignments before the simulation itself.

## ASSESSMENT

Students will write a reaction paper after the simulation that will double as a take-home examination over the first section of the class. This assessment will ask students to reflect on the simulation experience and relate it to a number of concepts discussed in class. Both voters and politicians will discuss the election campaign and government formation, while voters will be asked additional questions concerning the voting process itself. The simulation reaction paper is worth 150 points.