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## PSC 381.02: The European Union

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UNIVERSITY OF MONTANA  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

## **PSC 381.02: The European Union**

“World peace cannot be safeguarded without the making of creative efforts proportionate to the dangers which threaten it. The contribution which an organized and living Europe can bring to civilization is indispensable to the maintenance of peaceful relations.”

— FRENCH FOREIGN MINISTER ROBERT SCHUMAN, MAY 9, 1950

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The European Union (EU) is the most successful experiment in international cooperation in modern times, but its 490 million citizens (and non-Europeans) often see it as remote and unnecessarily complex. This is a result of the difficulty in classifying what the EU is. By combining features of a state with those of an intergovernmental organization, European integration has stretched our conceptual understanding of international relations and comparative politics. This course introduces the main conceptual approaches to understanding what the EU is, how it works, and why it works when similar attempts at high-level international cooperation have failed. It then explores the major challenges facing the EU with an eye towards Europe's future.

### **COURSE PHILOSOPHY**

Learning is more than memorizing facts and answering questions on a test. It is using information to gain an understanding of how things work and how to make them better.

In this course, learning will be defined as the process of enhancing your ability to:

- ask the right questions and frame good problems,
- acquire information and evaluate sources of information,
- critically investigate and solve problems,
- make choices among different alternatives,
- explain concepts to others both verbally and in writing and,
- generalize to new situations.

### **METHOD OF INSTRUCTION**

To provide students with the opportunity to practice these skills, this course will primarily be conducted using a format known as problem-based learning (PBL). Students will be randomly assigned into *learning groups* of 3-4 students that will work on a series of problems related to European integration (See Appendix A). These groups will also complete a larger collaborative research paper and presentation (See Appendix B). Students will also participate in a simulated EU legislature (See Appendix C).

In addition, some classes will be conducted as mini-lectures and group discussion.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

After completing this course, students should:

- Know the respective functions of the EU's three main legislative institutions.
- Know the decision-making procedures within those institutions, and how they influence negotiations among the members.
- Be able to apply different theoretical and conceptual approaches to explain historical and contemporary European integration.
- Understand the issues and challenges confronting an enlarged EU.
- Be able to evaluate the prospects for future European political development from multiple approaches.

## REQUIRED MATERIALS

There is one *required* textbook available for purchase at the UC Bookstore for \$9.95:

Pinder, John, and Simon Usherwood. 2007. *The European Union: A Very Short Introduction*. New York: Oxford University Press. ISBN: 0199233977.

Students will also have to register for LegSim ([www.legsim.org](http://www.legsim.org)) for \$12.00 (See below).

## COURSE WIKI

This course uses wikis, which are web sites that allow collaborative editing of content and structure by users. The course wiki can be accessed at <http://eu381.pbwiki.com>.

### PBwiki Identity

The course wiki is hosted by PBwiki. To access and edit it, students need to register for a free PBwiki identity at <http://my.pbwiki.com> using their university email account.

### Collaborative Note Taking

Each class period, 3 students will be randomly selected to be the course's primary note-takers for the day. These students will post their class notes on a designated page on the wiki by the next class period. These notes will be a secondary "text" that students can review (editing as necessary) in preparation for problems and their final projects. Students who fail to post their notes when they are selected will lose 25 points.

### Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0 Unported License

All material posted to course wikis will be licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution-ShareAlike 3.0 Unported License. Your use of the wiki constitutes acceptance of that license and the conditions of use for course materials. Students with questions on what this means should speak with the instructor.



### **STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES**

1. Students have the responsibility to attend class regularly and complete all assigned readings before coming to class.
2. Students have the responsibility to inform the instructor beforehand of any reasons why they are unable to attend class or complete an assignment on time.
3. Students have the responsibility to complete all assignments by the deadline given by the instructor.
4. Students have the responsibility to complete the requirements of this course within the semester. University policy on incompletes will be adhered to strictly.

### **ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT POLICY**

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, which 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 with me appropriate accommodations. Because 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 in this course please present me with a letter from Disability Services for Students (DSS), Lommasson Center 154 (243-2243), indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested accommodations.

### **COURSE REQUIREMENTS**

#### **Participation**

On days a text has been assigned, random students will be selected to respond to discussion questions posted in advance to the wiki. Students' responses will be graded on a "good faith" basis. This assumes that all students are prepared to respond to all questions. Those not prepared to answer when called on will lose 50 points.

#### **Learning Groups**

As mentioned above, students will be randomly assigned into learning groups that will work on a series of problems related to European integration. Three problems will be provided by the instructor. For the others, groups will be assigned a question generated by their peers. For each problem, groups will produce their own original, written solution that they will post to the course wiki (See Appendix A).

#### **Collaborative Research Paper**

To promote active collaboration and learning, learning groups will combine into research groups for a collaborative research project on the EU's future (See Appendix B).

**European Union Simulation (LegSim)**

During the semester, students will participate in a simulation of the EU's main legislative process using an online software package known as Legsim (<http://eu.legsim.org>). As noted above, students have to register and pay a \$12.00 registration fee for the service. In the simulation, students will assume the roles of members of the European Parliament and the Council of Ministers and engage in negotiations and bargaining to advance the goals of their nations and constituencies (See Appendix C).

**FINAL GRADE**

Grades will be based on points distributed in the four areas discussed above as follows:

<i>Participation:</i>	200 points	<i>LegSim:</i>	400 points
<i>Learning Groups:</i>	500 points	<i>Research Paper:</i>	400 points

The plus/minus grading system will be used with grades based the total points:

A = 1500-1400, A- = 1359-1350, B+ = 1349-1300-, B = 1299-1250, B- = 1249-1200, C+ = 1199-1150, C = 1149-1100, C- = 1099-1050, D+ = 1049-1000, D = 999-950, D- = 949-900, F = <900.

**COURSE SCHEDULE**

I reserve the right to make changes to this schedule as the semester develops. All course material is on electronic reserve (<http://eres.lib.umt.edu>, password: eu).

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment
Jan 23	State of Nature Sim; Syllabus	
Jan 25	The Idea of "Europe"	McCormick, "Europe" <sup>1</sup>
Jan 28-30	<i>Film: Kameradschaft</i> (1931)	
Feb 1	Film Discussion; LegSim Tutorial	
Feb 4-6	Ever Closer Union: What is the EU For?	Pinder & Usherwood, Chs. 1-2
Feb 8	Ever Closer Union: The Only Way?	Parsons, "Interests" <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> John McCormick, "The idea of Europe," in *Understanding the European Union: A Concise Introduction* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 27-51, [http://eres.lib.umt.edu/eres/docs/65675/mccormick\\_2.pdf](http://eres.lib.umt.edu/eres/docs/65675/mccormick_2.pdf).

<sup>2</sup> Craig Parsons, "Introduction: The Institutional Construction of Interests," in *A Certain Idea of Europe* (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 2005), <http://eres.lib.umt.edu/eres/docs/65747/parsons.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> Derek Beach, "Why and When EU Institutions Matter," in *The Dynamics of European Integration* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005), 16-34, [http://eres.lib.umt.edu/eres/docs/65673/beach\\_2.pdf](http://eres.lib.umt.edu/eres/docs/65673/beach_2.pdf).

Date	Topic	Reading Assignment
Feb 11-13	The EU's Institutions	Pinder & Usherwood, Ch. 3 Beach, "Institutions" <sup>3</sup>
Feb 15	LegSim Plenary	
Feb 20-22	The EU's Policy Making Process	Stubb et.al, "Process" <sup>4</sup> Pinder & Usherwood, Chs. 4-6
Feb 25-27	Question Clinic; Question Time 2.0	
Feb 29	LegSim Plenary	
Mar 3-7	Problem: Is the EU Democratic?	Pinder & Usherwood, Chs. 7-8
Mar 10-12	Question Time 2.0	
Mar 14	LegSim Plenary	
Mar 17-21	Problem: What is the EU too big?	Pinder & Usherwood, Ch. 9
Mar 31-Apr 2	Question Time 2.0	
Apr 4	LegSim Plenary	
Apr 7-11	Problem: Is It Replicative?	
Apr 14-18	Problem: European Power	Pinder & Usherwood, Ch. 10 Nye, "Europe's Soft Power" <sup>5</sup>
Apr 21	LegSim Plenary	
Apr 23-May 2	Group Presentations	

<sup>4</sup> Alexander Stubb, Helen Wallace, and John Peterson, "The Policy-Making Process," in *The European Union: How Does it Work?*, eds. Alexander Stubb and Elizabeth Bomberg (New York: Oxford University Press, 2003), 136-155, <http://eres.lib.umt.edu/eres/docs/??>.

<sup>5</sup> Joseph Nye, "Europe's Soft Power," *The Globalist*, May 3, 2004, <http://www.theglobalist.com/StoryId.aspx?StoryId=3886> (accessed January 3, 2008).

## Appendix A: Learning Groups and Problem-Based Learning

Students will have the opportunity to practice the skills defined as learning above in small learning groups of 3-4 randomly assigned students. These learning groups will work on a series of six problems related to European integration. Three problems will be provided by the instructor. For the others, groups will be assigned a question generated by their peers. For each problem, groups will produce their own original, written solution that they will post to the course wiki.

### AN INTRODUCTION TO PROBLEM SOLVING

While there are many ways to solve problems (e.g., the scientific method), most follow a similar logic involving six basic steps:<sup>1</sup>

#### *Step 1: Explore the issues*

Discuss the problem statement and its significant parts in an attempt to discover what is already known about the topic. Task: *List "What do we know?"*

#### *Step 2: Define the problem*

Develop and write out a statement of the problem based on an analysis of what is known and will need to be known to solve it. Revise and edit as new information is discovered and "old" information is discarded. Task: *Write a problem statement.*

#### *Step 3: Investigate solutions*

List possible solutions to the problem, order them from strongest to weakest, and then choose the best ones to investigate further. Task: *Choose the best solution(s).*

#### *Step 4: Research the knowledge*

Research the knowledge and data that supports the solution. Plan the work, assign tasks, and set deadlines. Task: *Determine "What do we need to know?" and learn it.*

If your research supports your solution, and if there is general agreement, go to step 5. If not, go back to step 3.

#### *Step 5: Write your solution*

A presentation of your solution includes both the process and the outcome. State your solution clearly and support it with relevant arguments and evidence. Task: *Write up your solution with its supporting documentation, and submit it.*

#### *Step 6: Review your performance*

When you get an evaluation of your solution, review it to see what was done well and what mistakes were made. Discuss them to plan improvements on the next problem. Task: *Review the evaluation of solution.*

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<sup>1</sup> See Larry D. Spence, PBL Handbook (The Pennsylvania State University, College Station, PA, 2006), <http://pbl.ist.psu.edu/print/pbl-handbook.pdf> (accessed December 29, 2007).

### **SOLUTION GUIDELINES**

Solutions must be posted to the appropriate page on the course wiki by the beginning of the class period in which they will be discussed. At a minimum, solutions must conform to the following guidelines:

1. It must conform to the parenthetical citations—reference list source citation and paper formatting guidelines of the 7th edition of the Turabian writers manual.<sup>2</sup>
2. The solution should be between 900-1200 words in length for a instructor designed problem and 600-900 words for a peer-generated problem.

### **SOLUTION EVALUATION**

Solutions will be evaluated using a scoring rubric that will be posted to the course wiki no later than February 15. Each solution will be worth 100 points. The first solution, based on student questions, will not be graded. Of the remaining six solutions, I will drop the lowest score making solutions worth 500 points. Individual grades for this project may be raised or lowered based on peer evaluations (See Appendix B).

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<sup>2</sup> Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007). Available at the Library.



## Appendix B: Group Research Project and Presentation

"Europe has lost the plot," according to Oxford professor of European studies Timothy Garton Ash. This is troubling because, "Most Europeans now have little idea where we're coming from; far less do we share a vision of where we want to go to. We don't know why we have an EU or what it's good for." To resolve this problem he says, "We urgently need a new narrative."<sup>1</sup> To promote active collaboration and learning, research groups are tasked with the following collaborative research project:

### Task:

*Read Ash's essay "Europe's True Stories." Research the political, social, and economic challenges to continuing European integration. Develop a realistic plan for implementing changes to the EU that will enable Europe to overcome its loss of purpose and the various "identity crises" this has engendered. Present your research in a group paper, group presentation, and group wiki.*

### PAPER GUIDELINES

Each research group will submit their final, finished research paper at the beginning of the final scheduled class period (May 2, 2008). In order to be accepted for credit the paper must meet the following specifications:

1. The paper must conform to the parenthetical citations–reference list source citation and paper formatting guidelines of the 7th edition of the Turabian writers manual.<sup>2</sup>
2. The paper must be a minimum of 5 pages for each member of the group (e.g., if there is 5 people in the group, the final paper must be at least 25 pages in length). Front matter, references, etc. do not count towards the page total.

### PRESENTATION GUIDELINES

Each research group will make a thirty minute presentation to the class introducing their proposal and the challenges to sustainable development it faces, their policy proposal, and the political strategy their group has developed to implement it. The presentations will be followed a twenty minute question and answer session. These sessions are scheduled for the five class sessions prior the the last day of class (April 21-30).

### WEBSITE GUIDELINES

Each group will also develop and maintain a wiki featuring their plan for Europe's future. At a minimum, this site must contain the full text of the group's paper at the end of the

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<sup>1</sup> Timothy Garton Ash, "Europe's True Stories," *Prospect*, February 2007, [http://www.prospect-magazine.co.uk/article\\_details.php?id=8214](http://www.prospect-magazine.co.uk/article_details.php?id=8214) (accessed January 2, 2008).

<sup>2</sup> Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations: Chicago Style for Students and Researchers* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2007). Available at the Library.

semester. Students are encouraged to use this site as a mechanism for collaboration and to post further information learned during the research process not included in the final paper. Each group will be supplied with the URL and password for their wiki after groups have been assigned.

### PROJECT EVALUATION

A final group grade for the collaborative research project will be calculated using a scoring rubric that will be posted to the course website no later than February 15. Individual grades for this project may be raised or lowered based on peer evaluations.

#### Group Peer Evaluation

Since collaboration often suffers from collective action problems including free riding, the "Knickrehm Method" of peer evaluation will be used to overcome these problems.<sup>3</sup> Under this method, each member of a group will evaluate the group's other members (but not themselves) by distributing "shares" via confidential balloting before receiving the final grade on the project. Students will award two shares to the average group member, but will also award an additional share to the group's "Most Valuable Person." For example, a student in a group of 4 would have 7 shares to award however he or she wishes — two shares for each of the other four members plus one bonus share. Share awards represent the following:

- 0 - Contributed little or nothing.
- 1 - Contributed some, but significantly less than their share.
- 2 - Did a good, solid job, a fair share. (This should be the most common score.)
- 3 - Contributed significantly more than their fair share.
- 4 - Did most of the work. (This can go to no more than one person)

Any additional shares awarded above the two share average (with one bonus share) come at the expense of other group members, thus serving as a deterrent for many forms of collective action problems.

Students can gain or lose points from the group grade if the average shares they were awarded on by their peers deviates from from the two share average by half a share or more (e.g., 1.5 or 2.5 average shares). Since one share is worth half the final group grade, a student's final grade on the project would be calculated by divided the group grade by 2 and then multiplying it by the average number of shares the student earned. Single outlying scores are discarded in the calculation of mean shares awarded to limit the impact of individual personality clashes. Because of the MVP share, this system raises grades more often than it lowers them.

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<sup>3</sup> Robert Maranto and April Gresham, "Using 'World Series shares' to fight free riding in group projects," *PS: Political Science & Politics* 34, no. 4 (December 1998).

## Appendix C: European Union Legislative Simulation (LegSim)

During the semester, students will participate in a simulation of the EU's main legislative process using an online software package known as Legsim (<http://eu.legsim.org>). Students will assume either the role of a Member of the European Parliament (MEP) or a delegate to the Council of the European Union. The goal of the simulation is for students to engage in negotiations and bargaining to advance the goals of their nations and constituencies within the EU's main legislative process known as codecision.

### ROLES

Students will be draw a constituency — either the voters of member state or a member state government — from a hat on the second day of class. Those who draw the voters of a member state will represent them as a MEP. Those who draw a member state government will represent their member state as a delegate to the the Council of the European Union. Since the size of the class and the EU precludes a perfect representation of the two bodies, some students will be assigned hybrid constituencies that represents a combination of member states.

### REGISTRATION

To register for the simulation, go to <http://eu.legsim.org> and select the the session — “UMontana: EParliament 2008” or “UMontana ECouncil 2008” — you have been assigned to, and click “new user.” Then enter the correct session code below:

Code for European Parliament Members: 1384fvfm1005ioha  
Code for Council of Ministers Delegates: 9825xcwk0040xzbs

Please read and follow all of the instructions carefully during the registration process. There is a \$12 registration fee that can be paid by credit card or by PayPal.

After you have registered, LegSim will send a confirmation e-mail. If you do not receive this e-mail, please check to see whether it has been filtered out as spam. If you need additional assistance, send your name, e-mail address used in the transaction, and explanation to [support@legsim.org](mailto:support@legsim.org).

Finally, write down the login name and password that you use to login to LegSim.

### ASSIGNMENTS<sup>1</sup>

Students will submit three assignments during the simulation online:

#### **Position Paper (150 points)**

After the Commission has introduced its legislative proposals, students will research and evaluate the effects the proposals will have on their constituencies. This essay asks

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<sup>1</sup> These assignments are modified versions of the LegSim administrator's suggested assignments.

you to evaluate the proposals from the perspective of representative, and to lay out an agenda for advancing proposals that more closely reflects the interests and concerns of your constituency. Your essay will answer the follow questions:

1. Describe, in your own words, the main objectives of the legislative text(s) that were recently submitted to Parliament by the commissioner.
2. Describe, in detailed fashion based on background research, how these proposal(s) will be received by the people in your constituency.
3. Are the general objective of the proposal(s) something that your constituency would support? Are there any specific provisions that your constituency would strongly object to? Explain.
4. In order of importance, what changes would you (as representative) like to see between what is currently on the table and what becomes law? Please list these desired changes in order of importance.

### **Policy Position**

After students have submitted their position papers, each student will list on his or her LegSim member profile page (under "constituency description") the changes in the proposals they wish to see. This public list constitutes the student's starting point for bargaining and negotiations and will be accessed by other lawmakers as they attempt to line support for their own proposed changes. Because compromise is an inevitable part of the negotiation process, your (public) policy position does not necessarily represent the same set of objectives articulated in your (private) Position Paper.

### **Final Report on Accomplishments (150 points)**

At the end of the simulation, each student will write a summary report that answers the following questions:

1. Review the original position paper in which you laid out the policy goals that you hoped to advance on behalf of your constituency or nation. In about a page, summarize those goals and why you considered them to be priorities.
2. How does the final result compare to what you hoped to accomplish? Be specific. Was your constituency well served by the law that was enacted? Explain.
3. What would a critic point to as your most significant failure as the representative of your constituency or nation? Would this be a reasonable complaint?
4. Compared to your colleagues, how effective were you (on a 1 to 10 scale with 10 indicating among the most effective)? What does effective mean to you? Provide a specific example of where you were particularly effective, even if the effort did not result in an actual change in legislative language.

5. Recognizing that this was only a simulation, what lessons (if any) have you learned about how things get done in the European Parliament or Council of the European Union? Provide examples from the simulation as illustrations.

### **LEADERSHIP, PARTIES, COMMITTEES, AND EXTRA CREDIT**

The effective functioning of both the EP and the Council requires strong leadership from motivated students. To promote effective leadership and active involvement, students who choose (or are required) to take on a leadership position in the simulation will have the chance to gain extra credit contingent on peer evaluations at the semester's end.

#### **President of the European Parliament**

The most important leadership position in the simulation will be the President of the Parliament. The President, in consultation with the political groups, assigns members to committees, refers legislation to committee, and schedules floor votes. The election of the President will be the first order of business for the Parliament. Students interested in taking on this position must be nominated for the position and then win the election. The student elected to President can earn up to 100 extra credit points.

#### **Presidency of the Council**

In the Council of the European Union, the Presidency rotates in a prescribed order among the EU countries. The country that holds the Presidency chairs every meeting there is, from meetings of Prime Ministers down to junior technical sub-committees. The current president of the Council is Slovenia. The student who draws Slovenia in the simulation may trade his or her constituency position if they do not want to take on the responsibilities associated with this leadership position. The student who holds the presidency can earn up to 100 extra credit points.

#### **Committee Chairs**

Like any legislature, the workhorse of the EP is its committees. The simulated EP will have four committees, which each need a committee chair to schedule hearings, votes, and formally appoint a rapporteur. The Council also has committees, but all committees are chaired by Presidency. EP committee chairs can earn up to 50 extra credit points.

#### **Rapporteur**

A Rapporteur is a person appointed by a deliberative body to investigate an issue or a situation, and report back to that body. The EP uses rapporteurs to investigate legislation for committees, coordinate amendments, and write a committee's report to the full chamber. The student(s) selected as Rapporteur for legislation submitted by the Commission can earn up to 50 extra credit points.

#### **Party Groups**

Political groups made up of members from similar political parties across the EU coordinate much of the legislative process in the EP in consultation with the President. Students will be required to join one of the EP's party groups. Parties may elect a leader, and earn up to 50 extra credit points for his or her efforts on behalf of the party.