Introduction

This course provides students with a general introduction to the political institutions and issues in West Europe. The objective is to equip students with a broad overview of the politics and political systems of Western Europe, as well as on concepts, methods, and tools to understand and analyze contemporary developments. The course is organized thematically (rather than in a country-specific way) around a framework that emphasizes the political determinants and policy consequences of institutional differences.

We will start the course with a short overview of the countries and the history of Europe. We will then look at political institutions in Europe, and briefly discuss the European Union. In the second half of the course we will discuss important issue areas and policies in Europe.

Course Requirements:

- Attendance 5%
- Class participation 10%
- Map/syllabus quiz 5%
- 2 Midterm Exams 20% (each)
- 2 short essays 10% (each)
- Final research paper 30%

Attendance (5%)

Attendance is mandatory starting on September 6, Tuesday. Sign-up sheet will be passed every class period. You are allowed to miss two classes without a proper excuse. Each absence (after the two you are allowed to) will count for one point deduction from your attendance score. The total attendance score you can achieve is 10 points. As an example, if you miss two classes after your allowed two absences (that is, four classes in total), then you will receive 8 points for this portion of your grade. If you miss 10 or more classes beyond your allowed two absences, then you will receive 0 points. **It is solely your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet. If you forget to sign, even if you attended the class, you will lose credit.**
Class Participation (10%)

Class participation is different from attendance. Throughout the course students are encouraged to raise questions and relevant discussion topics in class, and expected to contribute to class discussions. Students are expected to do the assigned readings before we discuss the topic in class, and arrive at class ready to discuss the readings.

I make a strong distinction between attendance and participation. Attending every class, without ever speaking up, does not constitute participation. To receive credit for participation, students are required to ask questions, raise issues, express opinions, etc. regarding the topics covered, as well as respond to the questions. Students who do not feel comfortable speaking in class must contact me by the end of the second week of class at the latest.

Map/syllabus quiz (5%)

There will be one quiz on September 6 in the first 10-15 minutes of the class. No extra time will be given for those who come late to class. The quiz will test your knowledge on the European political map and on the course syllabus. To receive full credit you have to master the locations of 18 Western European democracies on a map, and read the syllabus (up to the Course Schedule Part) carefully. Here is the list of the 18 countries: Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, the UK.

Midterm exams (20% each)

The structure of the exams will be announced before the exam date. The approximate exam dates are listed in the schedule below (Midterm I on Oct 18 and Midterm II on Dec 1). If you foresee problems with exam dates, see me after class, during office hours, or contact me by e-mail before the assigned dates.

Make-up exams will not be offered except in extremely rare circumstances. These extremely rare circumstances require a doctor’s note or a note from the Dean’s office. If you have an unanticipated emergency that causes you to miss the exam, contact me as soon as possible.

Short papers (10% each):

There are five topics with deadlines scattered throughout the semester. You have to choose two of these topics and write short papers. These short papers should not be longer than 4 pages (double-spaced), or shorter than 2 pages, excluding the title page and the bibliography.
These are the five topics and their deadlines:

- Compare and contrast the roles, election/selection, and powers of the French president with the president or monarch of another Western European country. Discuss the pro’s and con’s of having a powerful president. Conclude with your own opinion. (due September 27)

- Compare and contrast two bicameral systems from Western Europe. One of these systems should have a strong second chamber and the other one has to have a weak second chamber. Discuss the differences between these countries in terms of the distribution of powers between chambers, the composition of each chamber, how they are elected/selected, and their respective roles. Make sure to discuss the pro’s and con’s of having a strong or weak second chamber. Conclude with your own opinion. (due October 11)

- Discuss the evolution of the Green politics in Europe with a specific focus on German Greens. Briefly discuss how they have changed from an anti-system party to a coalition partner. Discuss briefly the changes in their policies between 1980 and 2010, and conclude with your opinion on which version of the Greens politics is better for democratic representation. (due October 25)

- Compare and contrast the electoral systems of Britain and the Netherlands for their specific electoral rules, formulas, and electoral thresholds, etc. Discuss the pro’s and con’s of each electoral system. Conclude with your own opinion. (due November 8)

- Discuss the evolution of the ultra-right politics in Europe with a specific focus on Austrian FPO party and French National Front. Compare and contrast the policies and power of these parties, and their pro’s and con’s for the democratic representation in Western Europe. (due November 17)

In these assignments, you will provide the facts about the question asked. However, you can receive full grade only if you provide a critical analysis for the question. You have to have a bibliography part and show your research. Wikipedia is not accepted as a scholarly citation.

There will be a sign-up sheet on my door starting at 9am on September 6. Please come and sign up for two topics. There are 12 slots available for each topic. If you do not sign up for a specific topic by 5pm on September 9, you will be randomly assigned to two topics.

If you are considering the possibility of dropping the course by the withdrawal deadline of October 14 depending on your performance, you should sign up for the first short paper topic so that you can receive a grade before the drop date.
You can work in groups for these assignments but your write-up must be original and demonstrate your own point of view.

**Final paper (30%)**

Each student is required to produce a research paper on a topic related to the politics of Western Europe. Paper should be no longer than 3500 words and no less than 3000 words, and is due on **December 12, noon**.

Students are expected to come up with a topic for their paper and email me a description of the project (no longer than one-page double-space) by the beginning of class on October 13. I will then either approve your project or schedule an appointment with you to discuss the details of your suggested topic or an alternative project. You will receive 10 points of your whole paper grade from this one-page assignment. Every hour after the October 13 class that you are late will cost you 1 point out of 10. You are welcome to come to my office hours or schedule an appointment to discuss the paper topic before the October 13 deadline.

The paper is due **December 12, noon**. You will lose one letter grade for every hour you are late after this deadline. You must return a hard-copy of your paper to my mailbox in Commons Center 3rd floor main office.

**Extra Credit Opportunity:**

There will be an extra credit opportunity during the semester. Research on Individuals, Politics, and Society (RIPS) lab in Calhoun Hall (directed by Professor Cindy Kam and Professor Liz Zechmeister) conducts experiments throughout the semester, and they look for undergraduate students. They will stop by our class in a few weeks and announce the details of the experiment. You will receive a letter grade increase for one of your midterm grades if you attend this experiment.

**Required Text:**

The following books are available for purchase at the bookstore:


Heywood, Jones, Rhodes, Sedelmeier. 2006. *Development in European Politics*. Palgrave (note that this is the first edition)

There will also be **required** news articles or editorials assigned for each class period. These will be based on the current events for the topic under discussion. I will post them on OAK on Fridays before each week. There will be additional required articles/chapters for some classes. These readings are denoted with an asterisk (**) in the syllabus, and will soon be available on OAK.
Citation and Reference Guidelines for Written Work

The papers, as well as the citations of articles and books in the body of the papers, and the list of citations or references at the end of the papers, should all adhere to formatting guidelines for all papers written for courses in the political science department. Those guidelines are presented in a memo that can be found on the department’s web page, at http://www.vanderbilt.edu/political-science/undergraduate/PAPERFORMAT2011.pdf. Those “Paper Formatting Guidelines…” can also be found on the OAK/Blackboard page for this course.

Cell phones and laptop computers

Since they cause interruptions and distractions, cell phones should be turned off during class time. In particular, no cell phones may be accessible during exams.

Students increasingly bring laptop computers to class – with the ostensible purpose of taking notes. If you choose to use your computer in this class you are required to sit in the last row of the classroom in order not to distract other students around you.

Make-Up and Late Work

The instructor does not take late work without a documented excuse. In case of a university excused absence, students should arrange a makeup with me no more than one class period following the due date of the missed work. If you do not have an excused absence (evidenced with a doctor’s note or a note from the Dean’s office) you will receive a zero for the assignment. No Exceptions.

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Vanderbilt Honor Code governs all work in this course. As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one’s own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with the definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of the person. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and observe Vanderbilt University’s policies against cheating and plagiarism. If you have any questions regarding academic honesty, please consult the student handbook, chapter 2, which is available at http://www.vanderbilt.edu/student_handbook/chapter2.html
Course Schedule

Below is a tentative schedule of readings, topics and assignments that will be covered in the course. Readings should be done in the order listed. I reserve the right to make changes to the schedule, including exam dates, and it is the student’s responsibility to be aware of these changes. Date changes will be announced well in advance during class. All readings are required. Those reading marked with double asterisks (**) will be available through OAK.

August 25, Thursday  Introduction
No reading

August 30, Tuesday  Brief Overview of the European History and Countries
Readings, and what we will study:
   Gallagher et al., ch.1
   ** Kesselman et al., p.16-27
   ** Lijphart, p.1-8

Sept 1, Thursday  NO CLASS— professor is out of town

Sept 6, Tuesday  The Executive  I
Readings: Gallagher et al., ch.2
   ** News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Sept.2

Map/syllabus quiz

Sept 8, Thursday  The Executive  II
Reading:

How to do research for your short papers and for your final paper? A workshop with Mollie Cohen in the second half of the class.

Sept 13, Tuesday  Parliaments I
Readings: Gallagher et al., ch.3
   ** Lijphart, ch. 11
Sept 15, Thursday  
**Parliaments II**  
**Readings:**  
** News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Sept.9

Sept 20, Tuesday  
**Constitutions, Judges and Politics**  
**Reading:** Gallagher et al., ch. 4  
** Lijphart, ch. 12  
** News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Sept.16

Sept 22, Thursday  
**The European Union I**  
**Reading:** Gallagher et al. ch. 5

Sept 27, Tuesday  
**The European Union II**  
**Readings:** Review ch. 5 of Gallagher et al.  
** News article/ editorial-- available on OAK on Sept.23

Sept 29, Thursday  
**Levels of Governance**  
Gallagher et al., ch. 6  
** News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Sept.23

Oct 4, Tuesday  
**Patterns in Party Politics and Party Systems**  
**Readings:** Gallagher et al. ch. 7  
** News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Sept.30

Oct 6, Thursday  
FALL BREAK- NO CLASS

Oct 11, Tuesday  
**Party Families**  
**Readings:** Gallagher et al., ch. 8  
** News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Oct 7
Oct 13, Thursday  
**Cleavage Structures and Electoral Change**  
**Readings:** Gallagher et al., ch. 9  
**News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Oct. 7**

Oct 18, Tuesday  
**MIDTERM I**

Oct 20, Thursday  
**Inside European Political Parties**  
**Readings:** Gallagher et al., ch.10  
**News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Oct. 14**

Oct 25, Tuesday  
**Elections, Electoral Systems, and Referendums**  
**Readings:** Gallagher et al., ch. 11  
**News article/ editorial —available on OAK on Oct.21**

Oct 27, Thursday  
**Elections, Electoral Systems, and Referendums**  
Review last Thursday’s readings and class notes before coming to class

Nov 1, Tuesday  
**European Parliamentary Elections vs, National Elections**  
**Readings:**  
**News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Oct.28**

Nov 3, Thursday  
**Building and Maintaining a Government**  
**Readings:** Gallagher et al., ch. 12  
**News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Oct.28**

Nov 8, Tuesday  
**Representative Government and Politics Outside Parliament**  
**Readings:** Gallagher et al., ch.13-14  
**News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Nov 4**

Nov 10, Thursday  
**Immigration and Asylum**  
**Readings:** Heywood et al., ch.15 (by Guiraudon and Jileva)  
**News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Nov 4**

Nov 15, Tuesday  
**Anti-System Politics**  
**Readings:** Heywood et al., ch.10 (by Cas Mudde)  
**News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Nov.11**
Nov 17, Thursday  Scandals and Corruption
  Readings: Heywood et al., ch.9 (by Heywood and Krastev)
  ** News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Nov.11

Nov 22, Tuesday  THANKSGIVING- NO CLASS

Nov 24, Thursday  THANKSGIVING- NO CLASS

Nov 29, Tuesday  European Welfare States
  Readings: Heywood et al., ch.14 (by Hemerijck et al.)
  ** News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Nov. 25

Dec 1, Thursday  Midterm II

Dec 6, Tuesday  The State and Religion
  Readings: Heywood et al., ch.143 (by Madeley)
  ** News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Dec 2

Dec 8, Thursday  European Security after the Cold War
  Readings: Heywood et al., ch.17 (by Epstein and Gheciu)
  ** News article/ editorial—available on OAK on Dec. 2

Dec 12, Monday  Research papers are due at noon