

PS 210-401 Introduction to European Politics: East and West
Spring 2005

Instructor: Mark Schroeder, M.A.
Class Times: Tuesday and Thursday 5:30 pm – 6:45 pm
Location: CB 231 (White Hall Classroom Building)
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Office Hours: Monday and Wednesday 4:30 pm to 6:00 pm and by appointment

Required Texts:

Gabriel A. Almond, Russell J. Dalton, G. Bingham Powell, Jr., eds. European Politics Today. Second Edition (New York: Longman, 2002).

E. Gene Frankland, Global Studies: Europe. Seventh Edition (Guilford, CT: McGraw-Hill/Dushkin, 2002).

Course Overview

This course is designed to introduce students to the politics of contemporary Europe. Understanding the dynamics of “Old” and “New” European politics presents opportunities and challenges that confront traditional approaches for scholars and policy makers. This course seeks to understand the institutional, historical, political, social, and economic dynamics that drive the contemporary policies of European countries and regions. Students will gain familiarity with the concerns and policies of European countries, regions, and institutions. You will learn to evaluate the policies of and opinions held by individual and collective European countries towards each other and other states and regions of the world.

Throughout the course you will be expected to contribute with news from the rest of the world by reading the print or on-line versions of the Wall Street Journal, The Economist, the New York Times, and other similar newspapers. Following the countries and regions of the Europe by reading these daily journals will give you considerable information on the interactions and international relations between nation states in the new Europe.

Course Assignments and Grading:

25% Midterm Research Paper
20% Midterm Exam
20% Group project
25% Final Exam
10% Participation via quizzes, attendance, other short assignments

Late assignments, quizzes, research papers, projects, etc. will not be accepted later than seven calendar days following their due date. A penalty of one third of a letter grade per calendar day will be applied towards any late assignment. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and if found, for example, by “googling” your research paper, will result in a minimum of a failed grade; please refer to official University of Kentucky regulations regarding plagiarism.

Midterm Research Paper:

This is your opportunity to research how a European country relates to the world. You are to explain what drives the international relations policies of your selected European country. How does your selected country view its position in the world? How does your country understand the theories of and participate in international relations? What are the political, cultural, economic and historical values that have contributed to its current international relations position? Your purpose is not to determine whose “side” your country is on but to understand and explain why your country has its particular international relations position. More specifically: you are building a case to explain why your selected country takes the position in international relations it does on particular issues. You are not just stating what those positions are.

Begin by selecting a country that interests you. Perhaps it is one that you have traveled or would like to travel to. Since not all countries are concerned about all international issues, you will need to determine what world issues your country cares about. You will be providing these positions later in your paper. It is your job to present the motive of your selected country for taking those positions from their perspective. You are presenting the “why” of the case such that if you present your case well, it will seem obvious, given the characteristics of your selected country, that they would take the positions they have. You may find yourself disagreeing with the actions and positions of the country you are studying, but this is not a critique of what is right or wrong from your perspective, so you want to be careful to keep such commentary out of your paper. You are only interested in providing the reasons your selected country has for doing what they do, whether you agree with them or not.

This paper takes planning to do it effectively, and it will be well worth taking the time to outline your arguments before writing. I suggest that you consider at least several academic sources before writing. Be careful with your sources: Wikipedia, newspaper stories and country websites, while helpful for introductory purposes, don’t provide the substantive analytical content that your paper requires.

The paper must be 6-8 pages long, 12-point font, typewritten and double-spaced, and must include citations to all references used. E-mailed copies of your paper will not be accepted.

Group project:

You are to form groups of five people and select from a list of actionable topics that I will distribute in class. You are to research this topic, and, acting as members of the European Parliament, make a 15 minute presentation of this topic to the class. The class in turn will act as ministers of the Council of the European Union. You are to convince the class that your topic requires the support of, intervention by, and/or a resolution from the Council, whichever is appropriate to your topic. Your presentation is worth 50% of the group project grade.

Following your presentation you are to submit to me an eight page, type-written and double-spaced paper outlining your case to the Council of the European Union. Your paper is worth 30% of the group project grade. Attached on a separate page to your group paper, include a letter grade recommendation according to each member's participation.

Following each presentation, each student is required to submit to me a written evaluation of the presentation followed by a letter grade. This evaluation should include three aspects: the presenter's command of speech and delivery, the presenter's knowledge of the topic, and the presenter's ability to convince. The student evaluation is worth 20% of the group project grade.

Class Schedule:

Week 1 (January 13): Course overview

Week 2 (January 18-20): Introduction to the European Context

Readings: European Politics Today (EPT) Ch. 1
Global Studies: Europe (GSE) pp. 3-16

Week 3 (January 25-27): Democratic Political Culture

Readings: EPT Ch. 2
GSE pp.16-36

Week 4: (February 1-3): Democratic Government in Europe

Readings: EPT Ch. 2
GSE pp. 36-48

Week 5 (February 8-10): Established Democracy: England

Readings: EPT Ch. 4
GSE pp. 170-181

Week 6 (February 15-17): Established Democracy: France

Readings: EPT Ch. 5
GSE pp. 90-98

Week 7 (February 22-24): Established Democracy: Germany

Readings: EPT Ch. 6
GSE pp. 99-106, 223-229

Midterm Research Paper due at beginning of class on Thursday Feb. 24th

Week 8 (March 1-3): Democratic Transition: Spain

Readings: EPT Ch. 7
GSE pp. 152-156, 235-242

Tuesday March 8: Midterm Exam

Week 9 (March 10): Democratic Transition: Russia

Readings: EPT Ch. 8

Week of March 15-17: Spring Break—no classes

Week 10 (March 22-24): Democratic Transition: Poland

Readings: EPT Ch. 9
GSE pp. 49-60 (Poland section only)

Week 11 (March 29-31): Democratic Transition: Hungary

Readings: EPT Ch. 10
GSE pp. 49-60 (Hungary section only)

Week 12 (April 5-7): Institutions and Integration

Readings: EPT Ch. 11
GSE pp. 186-217

Week 13 (April 12-14): Group project presentations

Readings:

Week 14 (April 19-21): Group project presentations

Week 15 (April 26-28): Dead week, Review

Tuesday May 3: Final Exam from 5:30 pm to 7:30 pm in CB 231