

# UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

**NUMBER:** INTL 4335  
**TITLE:** **The Far Right in Western Democracies**

**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. Cas Mudde (mudde@uga.edu)  
**OFFICE:** Candler 324  
**OFFICE HOURS:** Wednesdays 1:00-3.00, or by appointment

**TERM:** Spring 2017  
**DATE & TIME:** Tuesdays & Thursdays, 2:00-3:15  
**ROOM:** Park Hall 145  
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## **Introduction:**

Since the end of World War II, and the defeat of the Nazi Third Reich, few political phenomena have commanded so much attention in western democracies as far right politics. This has been particularly the case since the 1980s, when the so-called ‘third wave’ of radical right parties hit the shores of (Western) Europe. Though far right politics differ in many ways between countries, in and outside of Europe, there are few western countries where the far right is not regularly debated.

This highly topical course aims to introduce students to far right groups and politics in contemporary western democracies. We will discuss the (i) ideology and issues; (ii) parties, organizations and subcultures; (iii) leaders, members and voters; (iv) causes; (v) consequences; and (vi) response to far right politics.

While most of the readings focus exclusively on the situation in (Western) Europe, students are encouraged to apply the insights to the current situation in Eastern Europe and North America too, by staying up-to-date on current affairs in general, and national elections in particular.

## **Readings:**

The readings come almost exclusively from two recently published books, which you are strongly advised to purchase.

**Cas Mudde, The Populist Radical Right: A Reader.  
London: Routledge, 2017. (Reader)**

**Tjitske Akkerman, Sarah L. de Lange and Matthijs Rooduijn (eds.),  
Radical Right-Wing Populist Parties in Western Europe: Into the  
Mainstream? London: Routledge, 2016. (Book)**

**Course objectives:**

- To provide students with a conceptual and theoretical foundation to understanding far right politics in western democracies.
- To introduce the students to case studies of far right politics in various western countries.
- To discover and explain the differences and similarities that exist among far right politics in individual western countries.
- To offer students a deeper understanding of the relevance of far right politics in western democracies.

**Teaching Methodology:**

- Lectures
- Class discussions
- Group presentations
- Film presentations

**Classroom Attendance and Activity**

This class meets twice a week and attendance is **mandatory**. You can miss a maximum of **three** classes (no excuses or notes are necessary, although a heads-up will be appreciated). All further documented absences will lead to a lower class participation grade (**10 points** per missed class).

You are expected to have **read and reflected upon** *at least* the compulsory readings before the relevant class, *to follow key events in radical right politics* in the media, and to **participate actively** in the discussions in class *and* on the ELC-discussion board.

**Course Evaluation:**

- Participation (10%)
- Group presentation (15%)
- Individual journal (15%)
- Midterm exam (25%)
- Final exam (35%)

**Participation (10%):** you are expected to prepare, i.e. read and reflect upon, *at least* the required readings for each class, and participate in class in an active, civilized, and well-informed manner. You can also participate in the discussions on the New-Elc course page.

**Group presentation (15%):** you will give one group presentation on an assigned topic (schedule and topics to be announced in the third week of the course). The presentation should not be longer than **15 minutes**, be well-structured and well-researched – that means going well beyond the compulsory reading that all students have to do. A short **collective paper** on the topic (max. 1.500 words) must accompany the in-class presentation, which should include references to the consulted academic sources.

**Individual Journal (15%):** you will maintain an online journal to reflect on the issues discussed in the course. You are free to draw on current events or pop-culture to motivate your post, but each post should make an explicit reference to at least one reading (with citation). Students must have **8 journal entries** of at least 250 words with **no more than 1 entry per week**. You may **not** submit entries for weeks 15 and 16.

**Midterm Exam (25%):** you will have an in-class midterm exam that will assess your knowledge of all the material discussed up to that point. The exam will consist of 10 multiple choice and 3 short-answer questions. Date: **February, 16**.

**Final Exam (35%):** you will have a final exam at the end of the semester, which will assess your knowledge of all the material discussed *since the midterm exam*. The exam will consist of 10 multiple choice, 3 short-answer, and 1 essay question. The exact date is determined by the final exam schedule.

### **Academic Integrity:**

As a University of Georgia student, you have agreed to abide by the University's academic honesty policy, "A Culture of Honesty," and the Student Honor Code. All academic work must meet the standards described in "A Culture of Honesty" found at: <http://www.uga.edu/honesty>. Lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy is not a reasonable explanation for a violation. Questions related to course assignments and the academic honesty policy should be directed to the instructor.

### **Grading:**

Letter Grade	Points
A	93 – 100 points
A-	90 – 92 points
B+	87 – 89 points
B	83 – 86 points
B-	80 – 82 points
C+	77 – 79 points
C	73 – 76 points
C-	70 – 72 points
D+	67 – 69 points
D	63 – 66 points
D-	60 – 62 points
F	59 and below

### Some Ground Rules:

1. **It is not my practice to give incompletes.** However, if there is suitable reason – subject to my approval and supported with appropriate written documentation – an exception to the “no incompletes” rule may be possible. With respect to these first ground rules, *if you have problems in completing assigned work, please let me know about it.*
2. **Laptops, tablets, phones, etc. are not allowed!** Be ready with pen and paper to make notes during the class. If you use any of these banned devices in class, you will be punished with a deduction of **10 points** of your *final grade!*
3. **You will be expected to attend class regularly, on time, and for the entirety of each class period.** Do not sign up for this class if you have social or other engagements (sports classes, meets, etc) that interfere with the time length of this course.
4. I do not expect that your views and perceptions of these controversial themes are identical with those of your classmates or me, either now or at the completion of the course. This course is a place for the free (and perhaps even heated) exchange of ideas. Thus I expect you to **challenge viewpoints** that differ from your own, but I also expect you to **substantiate your arguments** on the basis of the readings, lectures and discussions.

5. If you need to use outside **reference works**, please consult Joel Krieger, et. al., *Oxford Companion to Politics of the World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001) as a place to start for political terms or concepts – do **not** use Webster or other dictionaries for political science definitions. For outside research sources, please use Galileo. Please do **not** use the notoriously unreliable Wikipedia until or unless this source emphasizes accuracy as much as it does volume and speed.
6. If you believe that you should have received a better grade, please provide **an explanation** to me *in writing* and *within a week* of receiving the grade. I will then grade your *whole* exam/paper again and I will issue a “new” grade, which will be either the same, a higher, or a lower grade.

**Important Dates:**

February, 16	Midterm Exam
TBA	Final Exam

**Finally:**

*THE COURSE SYLLABUS IS A GENERAL PLAN FOR THE COURSE; DEVIATIONS ANNOUNCED TO THE CLASS BY THE INSTRUCTOR MAY (AND MOST PROBABLY WILL) BE NECESSARY!*

## THEMATIC OUTLINE

### **01/05 Introduction**

*In this introductory class we will discuss the intentions and outline of the course as well as the mutual expectations. We will also assess the students' backgrounds in the politics of western democracies in general, and in far right politics in particular.*

#### Compulsory Readings:

Mudde, "Introduction to the Populist Radical Right" (Reader)

#### Optional Reading:

Akkerman et al., "Inclusion and Mainstreaming?" (Book)

## PART I – IDEOLOGY AND ISSUES

### **01/10 The Far Right in the 'Post-Fascist' Era**

*The First War was supposed to be "War to End All Wars" but instead gave rise to fascism and the Second World War, the most destructive war in human history. After WW2, the world was divided between capitalism and communism in the Cold War, but both agreed on one thing: "never again." So how did the far right, which has always been linked to fascism, adapt to this 'post-fascist' era?*

#### Compulsory Readings:

Griffin (Reader)

#### Optional Reading:

Levy, Carl. "Fascism, National Socialism and Conservatives in Europe, 1914-1945: Issues for Comparativists", *Contemporary European History*, 8:1 (1999), 97-126.

### **01/12 The Far Right in the Postwar West**

*This class will focus on the major developments within the far right in the postwar period as well as on the variety of groups that encompass the contemporary far right in Europe and North America.*

#### Compulsory Reading:

Von Beyme and Blee & Creasap (Reader)

#### Optional Readings:

Taggart (Reader)

### **01/17 The Radical Right Ideology**

*The 'post-fascist' era creates problems for the successful mobilization of far right groups, but it doesn't exclude it. While openly anti-democratic and racist ideas are no longer acceptable, other far right tenets are. This class discusses the specific "nostalgic ideology" of the radical right and identifies its increasingly successful program.*

#### Compulsory Readings:

*Betz & Johnson* (Reader) and *Akkerman et al.* (1) (Book)

#### Optional Reading:

*De Lange* (14) (Reader)

### **01/19 From the Margins to the Mainstream**

*Although far right groups and parties have existed throughout the postwar era, they remained largely marginal during the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Even in the last two decades far right parties had modest electoral success and political power. But things have changed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

#### Compulsory Readings:

*Rooduijn* (Book)

#### Optional Reading:

*Van Spanje* (Reader)

### **01/24 Islamophobia**

*At least since the terrorist attacks of 9/11 "Islam" has become a major target of the far right and so-called "Islamophobia" has become a key part of their program. But what is Islamophobia and how does it play out in far right propaganda? And how does Islamophobia connect the far right to the mainstream?*

Movie: *Submission Pt.1* (2004), The Netherlands, 11 min.

#### Compulsory Readings:

*Zúquete* (Reader)

#### Optional Reading:

Mudde, Cas. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, chapter 3.

### **01/26 Denmark**

*Denmark has always been known as one of the most progressive and tolerant countries in the world, but this has changed in recent years. The country has one of the most Islamophobic political parties in Europe, while one of its national newspapers published the Muhammed cartoons that led to controversy around the world.*

Compulsory Readings:  
*Christiansen* (Book)

### **01/31 Euroscepticism (UK)**

*The European far right mobilizes within a specific political context, dominated by the most ambitious supranational project in human history: the European Union (EU). Far right parties are among the most important Eurosceptic parties in Europe, although their level of skepticism differs. And that opposition to the EU can lead to a powerful alliance between the far and mainstream right has most recently been shown in the United Kingdom.*

Compulsory Readings:  
*Vasilopoulou* (Reader) and *Usherwood* (Book)

Optional Reading:  
Mudde, Cas. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, chapter 7.

## **PART II – LEADERS, MEMBERS AND VOTERS**

### **02/02 Leaders**

*Far right politics has always been closely linked to strong leaders, going back to the so-called Führerprinzip (leadership principle) of fascism. Far right groups are said to be led by “charismatic leaders”, but what is “charisma” and what makes a leader “charismatic”? And can “charisma” be inherited?*

Compulsory Readings:  
*Eatwell* (Reader)

Optional Reading:  
Mudde, Cas. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, chapter 4.

### **02/07 Members**

*European political parties have members, who pay annual membership dues, and are active, to different levels, within the parties. But who are the members of far right parties? Why do they join a party that is, in most cases, highly controversial? And what is the role of women within far right organizations?*

Compulsory Readings:  
*Klandermans* and *Blee* (Reader)



Optional Reading:

Mudde, Cas. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, chapter 4.

**02/09 Norway**

*Norway is one of the few European countries to have remained outside of the EU. Known for its strong oil-based economy and extensive welfare state, the country is also home to one of the oldest and strongest right-wing populist parties in Europe: the Progress Party (FrP). Is this FrP a far right party? And what is its role in Norwegian politics?*

Compulsory Readings:

*Jupskås* (Book)

**02/14 Voters**

*Far right parties get their political relevance from their voters. Without (many) voters a political party is just a small sect of irrelevant elites. Who votes for far right parties and why? And what explains the significant gender gap in the electorates of most far right parties in Europe?*

Compulsory Readings:

*Arzheimer and Givens* (Reader)

Optional Reading:

Mudde, Cas. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, chapter 4.

**02/16 Midterm**

*You will have an in-class midterm exam of 10 multiple choice and 3 short-answer questions. You are not allowed to use books or notes!*

**PART III – CAUSES**

**02/21 The Silent Counter-Revolution**

*In the late 1970s the American political scientist Ronald Inglehart argued that the rise of new social movements in the 1970s, as well as Green parties in the 1980s, could be explained by the so-called “silent revolution.” The Italian political scientist Piero Ignazi argued more than a decade later that a “silent counter-revolution” could similarly explain the rise of far right parties in the 1980s. Does the “silent counter-revolution theory” (still) make sense?*

Compulsory Readings:

*Ignazi* (Reader)

Optional Reading:

Mudde, Cas. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, chapter 9-11.

Taggart (Reader)

**02/23 Ten Theories of the Extreme Right**

*There are many other theories that claim to explain the success of far right parties, some focusing on the demand-side, others on the supply-side, some at the macro level, others on the micro level. In this class we will critically assess ten of the most popular theories and see whether they still hold today.*

Compulsory Readings:

Eatwell (Reader)

Optional Reading:

Kitschelt and De Lange (14) (Reader)

Mudde, Cas. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, chapter 9-11.

**02/28 France**

*The Front national (National Front, FN) in France is broadly considered to be the prototype of the modern populist radical right party. It exists this year for 45 years and will be a major factor in the presidential elections, scheduled for April 23 (first round).*

Compulsory Readings:

Ivaldi (Book)

Optional Reading:

Mayer, Nonna. "From Jean-Marie to Marine Le Pen: Electoral Change on the Far Right", *Parliamentary Affairs*, 66:1 (2013), 160-178.

**03/02 Far Right Women in the Media**

*The media have a strongly masculine frame for discussing the far right. Stories are always illustrated with pictures of (young) males, most often aggressive, heavily tattooed skinheads. Women are almost invisible from far right stories. So, how do the media cover far right women? Is it different from far right men? Is it different from non-far right women?*

Movie: *The Female Face of Populism* (2013), France, 54 min.

Compulsory Readings:

Beaumont, Peter. "Marine Le Pen: Her Heart Still Belongs to Daddy", *The Observer*, 8 January 2011, available at: <http://www.theguardian.com/theobserver/2011/jan/09/observer-profile-marine-le-pen>.

Wasburn, Philo C. and Mara H. Wasburn. "Media Coverage of Women in Politics: The Curious Case of Sarah Palin", *Media, Culture & Society*, 33:7 (2011), 1027-1041.

## **03/07 – 09 SPRING BREAK**

### **03/14 The Post-Communist Radical Right**

*Since 1989 we have been referring to Eastern Europe as the "post-communist world," assuming that its unique, shared history has shaped a fundamentally different political space. But is there something like a post-communist far right, and does it require a different explanation than that in Western Europe?*

#### Compulsory Readings:

*Mudde* (10) and *Minkenberg* (20) (Reader)

### **03/16 The Netherlands**

*On Wednesday March 15 the Netherlands will hold parliamentary elections. Like Denmark, the Netherlands was long held up as a liberal utopia, admired and reviled for its progressiveness and tolerance. Today it has the most Islamophobic political debate in Europe and the elections are believed to be a race between the mainstream right VVD and the far right PVV. Who has won and what will it mean for the power of the far right in the Netherlands?*

#### Compulsory Readings:

*Akkerman* (7) (Book)

## **PART IV – CONSEQUENCES**

### **03/21 The Radical Right in Office**

*Until the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century far right parties had barely been represented in parliament, let alone in government. Only one far right party had been a member of a coalition government before 2000: the Lega Nord in Italy. How do far right parties in government operate and what is their impact? Do Minkenberg's insights still hold today?*

#### Compulsory Readings:

*Minkenberg* (23)

### **03/23 Hungary**

*Hungary's Prime Minister Viktor Orbán is one of the most vocal opponents of multiculturalism and refugees in Europe. He is leading an increasingly far right government against an even further right opposition of the Movement for a Better Hungary (Jobbik). Peter Krekó, a leading scholar of the far right from Hungary, will discuss the recent developments in his country.*

Compulsory Readings:

TBA

**03/28 Immigration Policies**

*As the core of all far right parties is nativism, i.e. the belief that the state should be inhabited only by natives and that everything non-native ('alien') is threatening, immigration policies are at the heart of their programs. How successful have they been in influencing immigration policies in Europe?*

Compulsory Readings:

*Schain and Akkerman (Reader)*

**03/30 Belgium**

*Belgium has one of the oldest far right parties in Europe, the Flemish Interest (VB). It only contests elections in the Dutch-speaking part of Flanders, as well as in bi-lingual Brussels, and has faced, and mostly overcome, many challenges in its almost 30-year existence. One of the most significant, and increasingly debated, is the so-called cordon sanitaire, which excludes the party from all government coalitions.*

Compulsory Readings:

*Lucardie at al. (Book)*

**04/04 Liberal Democracy**

*The key question that underlies all interest in, and research on, the far right is: what is its effect on liberal democracy? Surprisingly, we know quite little about this, in part because far right parties have rarely dominated governments in liberal democracies.*

Compulsory Readings:

*Albertazzi & Mueller (Reader)*

*Mudde, Cas. Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, chapter 4.*

**04/06 Austria**

*In 2016 Europe almost elected its first far right president of the postwar period. Although the presidential elections of 2016 were exceptional, the far right is a well-established political force in Austria and is currently leading the polls.*

Compulsory Readings:

*Heinisch & Hauser* (Book)

**04/11 Three Decades of (non-)Impact**

*Political impact is a complex and multifaceted issue. Far right parties can have direct and indirect effects upon policies, parties, people, and politics. What has their impact been so far, and what does the future hold?*

Compulsory Readings:

*Mudde* (28) (Reader)

Optional Reading:

*Akkerman* (13) (Book)

Mudde, Cas. *Populist Radical Right Parties in Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007, chapter 12.

**PART V – RESPONSES**

**04/13 Liberal Democratic Responses to the Far Right**

*Given the tensions between the far right and liberal democracy, how have liberal democracies responded to the far right challenge? Which responses have been more effective? And how should liberal democracies respond?*

Compulsory Readings:

*Van Donselaar and Art* (Reader)

Optional Reading:

*De Lange* (32) (Reader)

**04/18 Far Right Responses to Liberal Democracy**

*Obviously, not only do liberal democracies respond to far right parties, but far right parties also respond to liberal democracies. They adapt to the liberal democratic contexts in various ways, some more successful than others.*

Compulsory Readings:

*Dézé* (Reader)

**04/20 Normal Pathology or Pathological Normalcy**

*Traditionally the far right has been perceived as a normal pathology of western democracies, an unwanted remnant of a premodern time. But what if it actually is a pathological normalcy, a radicalization of mainstream values?*

Compulsory Readings:

*Mudde* (22) (Reader)

**04/25 Assessing the Far Right Today**

*How strong is the far right today? Is it in power in the United States? Is it dominating the European Union? In what ways has it affected western democracies? And how have western democracies affected the far right?*

Compulsory Readings:

*Mudde*, “Conclusion” (Reader)