

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

NUMBER: INTL 4390
TITLE: European Politics

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Cas Mudde (mudde@uga.edu)
OFFICE: Candler 324
OFFICE HOURS: Wednesdays 10-12, or by appointment

TERM: Spring 2019
DATE & TIME: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 9:30-10:45
ROOM: MLC 268
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Introduction:

(Western) Europe is the continent most similar to the United States in terms of politics. Although the US has a unique political system, it was heavily influenced by experiences and ideas from “the Old Continent,” most notably from France and the United Kingdom. And yet, most Americans know little about European politics.

European politics is undergoing many shocks in the early 21st century. The terrorist attacks in the US of 9/11 have been followed by an ongoing stream of terrorist attacks in Europe. The Great Recession has divided the continent on a mostly North-West axis, while the so-called refugee crisis has redefined the older East-West axis. Both have tested the European Union and affected the process of European integration. Political parties that have ruled supreme for half a century, if not more, are being challenged and reduced to political rubble, while new “populist” parties grab the headlines after most European and national elections.

This course aims to introduce you to the essentials of European politics by taking a country- and issue-centered approach. We start with a short historical and comparative overview of the key aspects and institutions of European politics. Then we move to a pure country-centered approach. Each week we will discuss one country in three sessions; the first presents the key political aspects and institutions of that country’s political system, the second discusses the most recent national elections, analyzing the electoral system and main political parties; and the third addresses a specific political issue in that country, which has broader relevance across the European continent.

Readings:

The class is built around the following textbook, which you are advised to purchase before classes start.

Hay, Colin and Anand Menon, *European Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007.

In addition to the textbook, various additional reading will be assigned to specific classes. These texts will be made available on ELC, well ahead of the relevant class.

Course objectives:

- ☒ To introduce student to the key features of the political systems of European countries.
- ☒ To provide students with a historical background of European politics and societies.
- ☒ To discover and explain the differences and similarities between the politics and political systems of European countries.
- ☒ To explore the main political issues in contemporary Europe.

Teaching Methodology:

- ☒ Lectures
- ☒ Class discussions
- ☒ Movie presentations

Course Evaluation:

- ☒ Class participation (15%)
- ☒ Midterm Exam (25%)
- ☒ Short paper (15%)
- ☒ Final paper preparation (20%).
- ☒ Final paper (25%).

Class participation: includes the preparation, i.e. reading and reflecting on the compulsory readings for each class, and participation in discussion in the classroom and online on the ELC course page. You are expected to regularly participate in the class discussions in an active, civilized, and well-informed manner.

Midterm exam: the in-class midterm exam will test your knowledge of the key concepts, events, institutions, issues, and theories that have been covered in class until the date of the exam (**February, 14**). The midterm exam will include multiple choice, short answer question, and one short essay.

Short paper: you will write **one** short paper (max. 2,000 words) on the theme of '*Ostalgie*' in Germany, based on course readings as well as additional individual research and readings. Illustrative references to the movie *Goodbye Lenin!* are also strongly encouraged. Deadline: **Tuesday, April 2**. Upload to ELC (Assignments).

Final Papers: each student will write a research paper that investigates an issue related to European politics. You are not limited to topics covered in class. Each paper should begin with a question or puzzle, followed by a literature review, a theory to answer the question (includes your thesis or primary hypothesis), and in most cases an empirical analysis of the question involving one to two case studies. Papers should be max. 4,000 words in length (+/- 10%), well-written, spell-checked, and properly referenced, and contain **at least 10 academic sources** (of which, at least 8 not from the syllabus). All students are **strongly encouraged to see me during office hours to discuss their project**, especially before submitting your initial proposal. Please be aware of the following deadlines and their related contribution to your final paper grade:

- 2/21 – **Topic Proposal & Annotated Bibliography** (5%): 1-2 paragraphs describing your primary question, why this question is important/relevant, your primary hypothesis and supporting arguments, and likely case selection. The bibliography must include **at least 5 academic sources beyond class readings** with 2-3 sentences below each citation explaining how/why it is relevant to your paper. Upload to ELC (Assignments).
- 3/21 – **Revised Proposal and Outline** (3%): Revised proposal at top followed by a detailed outline of final paper, minimum 4 pages, demonstrating structure, organization, specific arguments, and quotes. Upload to ELC.
- 4/11 – **First Draft of Paper** (5%): Draft of approximately 2/3 of paper (10-12 pages) with outline of remaining parts. Upload to ELC.
- 4/18 – **2 Peer responses** (2%): 1 page response to each of the two drafts of your colleagues that you are responsible for reading. Upload to ELC.
- 4/23 – **Presentations** (5%): 4 minute presentation of your research project.
- 5/06 – **Final Paper** (25%): due by **noon**. Upload to ELC.

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). Each further absence will lead to a deduction of *one point off your final grade*.

You are expected to have **read and reflected upon** the compulsory readings before the relevant class, **to follow key events in European politics** in the media, and to **participate actively** in the class and in online discussions.

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

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.

Disability Statement:

UGA is committed to the success of all learners, and we strive to create an inclusive and accessible online environment. In collaboration with the [Disability Resource Center](#), we work with students who have documented disabilities to access reasonable accommodations and academic supports. For more information or to speak with a Disability coordinator, please call the Disability Resource Center at (706) 542-8719, TTY only phone (706) 542-8778.

Other Important Resources for Students

UGA has a vast array of resources to support students facing a variety of challenges. Please don't hesitate to come speak with me or contact these resources directly:

Office of Student Care & Outreach (coordinate assistance for students experiencing hardship/unforeseen circumstances) – 706-542-7774 or by email sco@uga.edu

Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS) - 706-542-2273 (during regular business hours) *After Hour Mental Health Crisis:* 706-542-2200 (UGA Police—ask to speak to the CAPS on-call clinician).

Relationship and Sexual Violence Prevention – 706-542-SAFE (Please note, faculty and staff are obligated to report any knowledge of sexual assault/relationship violence to UGA's Equal Opportunity Office. The advocates at RSVP can provide student confidentially).

Third-Party Software and FERPA:

During this course you might have the opportunity to use public online services and/or software applications sometimes called third-party software such as a blog or wiki. While some of these are required assignments, you need **not** make any personally identifying information on a public site. Do not post or provide any private information about yourself or your classmates. Where appropriate you may use a pseudonym or nickname. Some written

assignments posted publicly may require personal reflection/comments, but the assignments will not require you to disclose any personally identifiable/sensitive information. If you have any concerns about this, please contact your instructor.

Some Course Ground Rules:

1. This is a **more writing intensive course** than most ones that you will take. To do well, students must put in a great deal of effort. Please be certain that you are prepared to work hard! If not, another course might be more appropriate for you. As an upper division class, this class requires a somewhat firm grounding in the central concepts of political science.
2. **Late papers are not acceptable.** They are a burden for me and are unfair to your fellow students who do their work on time. Therefore, I will deduct **5 points** for each day a paper is late. Extensions may be given, but only if they are requested *well in advance* of the deadline, and if there is a compelling reason.
3. **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.*
4. **Plagiarism will not be tolerated.** Any student turning in a written assignment that is not your own work will receive a failing grade for the course, and may have further implications. *UGA makes available to its faculty several software programs that compare submitted material to previously written papers at a central database.*
5. **The use of academic sources is essential.** In the group presentation paper and in the final paper, you must make reference to the (academic) sources from which you drew your information. The accepted format is: (Alvarez 1990: 35) in case of quotations, or (Moore 1966) in case of more general references.
6. **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!*
7. I do not expect that your views on and perceptions of the often controversial themes discussed in class 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.
8. 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.
 9. 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 issue a “new” grade, which will be either the same, a higher, or a lower grade.
 10. Please use proper etiquette when emailing me (see ELC course page). **Emails with questions that can be answered by reading the syllabus will not be answered**. Remember, I am also a human being, and only work **Monday to Friday, 9-5** (excluding holidays). Hence, I will respond to your emails (only) during this period, irrespective when *you* send your email!

Important Dates:

February, 14	Library Visit
February, 21	Topic Proposal & Annotated Bibliography
February, 26	Midterm Exam
March, 11-15	Spring Break
March, 21	Revised Proposal & Outline
March, 28	Movie: Goodbye Lenin! (7-9 PM)
April, 2	Short Paper Deadline
April, 11	First Draft
April, 18	Peer Responses
April, 23	Presentation
May, 6	Final Paper Due (@ 12:00 PM)

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

01/10 – Introduction

We will discuss the intentions and outline of the course as well as our mutual expectations. We will further assess your 'general' background in post-industrial politics in general, and European politics in particular, and identify the best sources to follow current European political events.

Movie: [The Big Picture: The Making and Breaking of Europe \(Part 1\)](#)

PART I – HISTORICAL AND COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES

01/15 – European Integration

Although we focus primarily on national political systems in this course, contemporary European politics cannot be understood without the proper international context, most notably that of the European Union. To understand the EU, however, one has to understand the history of European integration.

Discussion question: What are the most important consequences of EU membership for national states?

Compulsory Reading:

Pinder, John and Simon Usherwood. *The European Union: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, chapter 2.

01/17 – Europe Today: Unity in Diversity

Europe is the most politically integrated continent in the world. The vast majority of European countries is a member of the EU and shares a comprehensive legal and political framework. Notwithstanding this political integration, Europe remains a continent with significant cultural, linguistic, religious, and social divisions.

Discussion question: What are the possible political consequences of the key distinctions within Europe?

Compulsory Reading:

Almond, Gabriel A., Russell J. Dalton, G. Bingham Power, Jr. and Kaare Strøm (eds.), *European Politics Today*. New York, etc: Longman, 2010, 4th edition, chapter 1.
[The Big Picture: The Making and Breaking of Europe \(Part 2\)](#)

01/22 – Executives and Courts

Politics is essentially about power, and power is most notably exercised through the implementation of policies. However, the power relationships between the various

political institutions differ among post-industrial democracies. Here we look in particular at the different systems of executive power and the role of the courts.

Discussion Question: How do the executives and courts in Europe compare to those in the United States?

Compulsory Reading:

Conant (15) and Peters (14) in *European Politics*.

01/24 – Political Parties

The famous American political scientist E. E. Schattschneider once said that democracy is impossible without political parties. Indeed, although the character and role of political parties differ between post-industrial democracies, they are always the most important political institution. In this class we look at the various types of parties and party systems within post-industrial democracies.

Discussion Question: How do the political parties in Europe compare to those in the United States?

Compulsory Reading:

Ladrech (12) in *European Politics*.

01/29 – Lijphart's Models

The Dutch-American political scientist Arend Lijphart has developed the most influential typology of democratic regimes today. Although his typology has received much criticism over the years, it is still broadly used in studies of European politics and can function as a good comparative tool for this course.

Discussion Question: Are Lijphart's models still useful in the 21st century?

Compulsory Reading:

Lijphart, Arend. *Patterns of Democracy: Government Forms and Performance in Thirty-Six Countries*. New Haven; London: Yale University Press, 2012, second edition, chapters 1-3.

Task: Compare two European democracies on the basis of Lijphart's models.

PART II – COUNTRY PERSPECTIVES

01/31 – The British Political System

The United Kingdom, often erroneously referred to as England, is the European country most familiar to North Americans. This notwithstanding, its society and

political system differ in many important aspects from the US. This class provides an overview of the key elements of the British political system.

Discussion Question: What are the defining features of the British political system?

Compulsory Reading:

Rosamond (4) in *European Politics*.

02/05 – How to Write an Original Paper

Given that this is a writing-intensive course, we will discuss what it takes to write a good and original (final) paper in this class. It would help if you come to class prepared with some concrete questions relating to issues of academic writing, referencing, or research design.

Compulsory Reading:

Gerring, John, “Some General Advice on Social Science Writing”, unpublished document 9 pp.

Van der Veen, Maurits, “Tips for Writing in Political Science”, unpublished document, 4 pp.

02/07 – The 2015 and 2017 British Elections

British politics has been dominated by just one issue in the last years: EU membership. Reflecting the impression that there was a pre-Brexit and there is a post-Brexit UK, the Brits went to the polls just before the EU Referendum and a good year after. Both elections surprised most observers, but for very different reasons. Is British politics changing for good?

Discussion Question: Is the British two-party system coming to an end?

Compulsory Reading:

Green, Jane and Christopher Prossner, “Party System Fragmentation and Single-Party Government: The British General Election of 2015”, *West European Politics*, Vol.39, No.6, 2016, pp.1299-1310.

Jennings, Will and Gerry Stoker, “Tilting Toward the Cosmopolitan Axis? Political Change in England and the 2017 General Election”, *The Political Quarterly*, Vol.88, No.3, 2017, pp.359-369.

02/12 – Brexit

The issue of EU membership has always been divisive within the United Kingdom. While initially Labour was opposed to EU membership, increasingly Euroscepticism moved to the Tories. Confronted with an ever more vocal anti-EU wing within his own party, and a resurgent UKIP outside of it, British PM David Cameron called for a referendum on EU membership. But against his, and most other people's, expectations, Brits did not vote to remain but rather leave the EU.

Discussion Question: What are the causes and consequences of Brexit?

Compulsory Reading:

Adler-Nissen, Rebecca, Charlotte Gilpin and Ben Rosamond, “Performing Brexit: How a Post-Brexit World Is Imagined Outside the United Kingdom”, *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, Vol.19, No.3, 2017, pp.573-591.

Hobolt, Sara B., “The Brexit Vote: A Divided Nation, A Divided Continent”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.23, No.9, 2016, pp.1259-1277.

02/14 – How to Use the Library

*You will meet librarian Elizabeth White, who is responsible for International Affairs within the UGA Library Services, in the **Instruction Lab in the Main Library!** Ms. White will teach you how to make best use of the rich library facilities at UGA. This meeting is **essential** to writing a good final paper, so you are not only expected to attend but also to pay attention and take notes.*

02/19 – The French Political System

One of the two powerhouses of continental European politics is France. Contemporary France, also known as the Fifth Republic, has a peculiar political system, i.e. a semi-presidential system, which has been adopted by various new democracies around the globe (though often significantly amended shortly after).

Discussion Question: Is the semi-presidential system (still) the best political system for France?

Compulsory Reading:

Elgie (2) in *European Politics*.

02/21 – The 2017 Presidential and Parliamentary Elections

Few national elections have been followed with such anticipation and anxiety as the 2017 French presidential elections. After coming third in 2012, and polling first for most of the past years, radical right candidate Marine Le Pen was broadly seen as the frontrunner. Instead, a “newcomer”, Emmanuel Macron, easily defeated Le Pen in the second round and, much more surprising, destroyed her and all others in the parliamentary elections.

Discussion Question: *What explains the explosive rise of Macron and what are the consequences of his victories?*

Compulsory Reading:

Evans, Jocelyn and Gilles Ivaldi. “An Atypical Honeymoon Election? Contextual and Strategic Opportunities in the 2017 French Legislative Elections”, *French Politics*, Vol.15, No.3, 2017, pp.322-339.

02/26 – MIDTERM EXAM

02/28 – The Greek Political System

Greece is the birthplace of democracy, but modern Greece is a relatively new democracy. The country shed its military junta only in 1974. Greek politics has always been different from that of other West European democracies, reflecting in part cultural and economic differences.

Discussion Question: What are the key characteristics of the Greek political system?

Compulsory Reading:

Tocci (8) in *European Politics*.

Pappas, Takis, “Why Greece Failed”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.24, No.2, 2014, pp.31-45.

03/05 – The (Two) 2015 Parliamentary Elections

The (two) 2012 Greek parliamentary elections were a political earthquake, reflecting both the internal division and anti-establishment frustration of the Greek people. The established parties both lost big, but held on to power despite insurgent extremist and populist parties on the left and right. Still, two-and-a-half years later the Greeks went to the polls again, bringing into power a populist coalition, which, after a turbulent referendum, got re-elected half a year later.

Video: Thug Politics (16 min)

Discussion Question: Is contemporary Greece comparable to Weimar Germany?

Compulsory Reading:

Rori, Lamprini, “The 2015 Greek Parliamentary Elections: From Great Expectations To No Expectations”, *West European Politics*, Vol.39, No.6, 2016, pp.1323-1343.

Ellinas, Antonis A., “The Rise of Golden Dawn: The New Face of the Far Right”, *South European Society and Politics*, Vol.18, No.4, 2013, pp.543-565.

03/07 – The Economic Crisis

European countries have been hard-hit by the Grand Recession, the economic crisis that started in 2008. While (initially) mostly South European countries were affected – the so-called PIGS (Portugal, Italy, Greece, and Spain), the crisis soon spread through the whole Union, not in the least the Eurozone.

Video: [This World: Michael Portillo’s Great Euro Crisis](#)

Discussion Question: Why did the economic crisis hit Southern Europe so hard?

Compulsory Reading:

Featherstone, Kevin, "The Greek Sovereign Debt Crisis and EMU: A Failing State in a Skewed Regime", *Journal of Common Market Studies*, Vol.49, No.2, 2011, pp.193-217.

Matthijs, Mattias, "Mediterranean Blues: The Crisis in Southern Europe", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.25, No.1, 2014, 101-115.

!!! 03/12 – 14 SPRING BREAK !!!

03/19 – The German Political System

Still wrestling with the shadows of the past, the Federal Republic of Germany has been a stable democracy despite recent fundamental changes. Germany's political system is interesting for (at least) two reasons: (1) it was mostly the construction of the Allied Forces, which occupied Germany in the late 1940s; (2) various aspects have proven very popular among new democracies.

Discussion Question: In what way is the German political system shaped by Germany's history?

Compulsory Reading:

Bendix in *European Politics*.

03/21 – The 2017 Federal Elections

While European politics is increasingly defined by change and upstarts, the 2017 German elections were a classic, almost 20th century, contest between a center-right (CDU) and a center-left party (SPD). However, they were also framed as a referendum on Chancellor Angela Merkel's controversial "Willkommenspolitik" (Welcome Politics) towards refugees in 2015.

Compulsory Reading:

Patton, David F., "The Race for Third: Small Parties in the 2017 Bundestag Election", *German Politics and Society*, Vol.36, No.1, 2018, pp.52-69.

Discussion Question: Is the era of the *Volksparteien* over?

Optional Readings:

Mannewitz, Tom, "Really 'Two Deeply Divided Electorates'? German Federal Elections 1990-2013", *German Politics*, Vol.26, No.1, 2017, pp.219-234.

03/26 – German (Re-)Unification

The End of Communism slowly but steadily erased the boundaries between Eastern and Western Europe. Nowhere was this more apparent than in Germany.

The Fall of the Berlin Wall was followed by a hastened (re-)unification, which effects can still be felt with both parts of the (re-)unified Federal Republic of Germany.

Discussion Question: Is Germany finally unified?

Compulsory Reading:

Conradt, David P, "The Civic Culture and Unified Germany: An Overview", *German Politics*, Vol.24, No.3, 2015, pp.249-270.

Optional Readings:

Kopstein, Jeffrey and Daniel Ziblatt, "Honecker's Revenge: The Enduring Legacy of German Unification in the 2005 Elections", *German Politics and Society*, Vol.24, No.1, 2006, pp.134-147.

03/28 – Movie: Goodbye Lenin! (EVENING!)

"In 1990, to protect his fragile mother from a fatal shock after a long coma, a young man must keep her from learning that her beloved nation of East Germany as she knew it has disappeared." In a highly absurd way this German movie (2003) deals with the topic of 'Ostalgie,' a combination of the German words Ost (East) and Nostalgie (nostalgia), referring to a nostalgia for the Communist German Democratic Republic (GDR) that exists among parts of the population of contemporary East Germany."

!!! TBA, 7.00 – 9.00 PM !!!

Compulsory Reading:

Dalton, Russell and Steve Weldon, "Germans Divided? Political Culture in a United Germany", *German Politics*, Vol.19, No.1, 2010, pp.9-23.

04/02 – The Italian Political System

Italy became a democracy after the defeat of Fascism in the Second World War. A relatively recent state, at least in a West European context, Italy has a tumultuous history, including a long record of regional strife. Just over two decades ago the Italian political system exploded again, after years of corruption, and from the rumbles an alleged new 'Second Republic' was built.

Discussion Question: What are the key characteristics of the Italian political system?

Compulsory Reading:

Hine in Hay & Menon

04/04 – The 2018 Parliamentary Elections

In March 2018 Italians elected both the 630 members of the Camera dei Deputati (Chamber of Deputies) and the 315 members of the Senato della Repubblica (Senate of the Republic). The elections were followed with great anticipation in Italy and beyond, as the center-left government had run out of steam years before, struggling with internal politics and mass immigration. Did the results confirm a fundamental change of the political system?

Discussion Question: Has the Second Republic come to an end?

Compulsory Reading:

Chiaromonte, Alessandro, Vincenzo Emanuele, Nicola Maggini and Aldo Paparo, “Populist Success in a Hung Parliament: The 2018 General Election in Italy”, *South European Society and Politics*, forthcoming..

Optional Reading:

D’Allimonte, Roberto, “The Italian Elections of February 2013: The End of the Second Republic?”, *Contemporary Italian Politics*, Vol.5, No.2, 2013, pp.113-129.

04/09 – Corruption

Few European countries have been tainted with the practice and stigma of corruption as Italy. In fact, Italians have a host of terms specifically describing practices of anti-corruption and corruption, such as mani pulite (clean hands) and Tangentopoli (bribesville). At the beginning of the 1990s hundreds of local and national politicians were investigated for their involvement in political corruption. But is the so-called Second Republic free of corruption?

Discussion Question: Is corruption still politically relevant in Italy today?

Compulsory Reading:

Della Porta, Donatella and Alberto Vannuci, “Corruption and Anti-Corruption: The Political Defeat of ‘Clean Hands’ in Italy”, *West European Politics*, Vol.30, No.4, 2007, pp.830-853.

04/11 – The Polish Political System

Poland is the largest and most well-known country in Eastern Europe – excluding the post-Soviet space. For a long time, it was considered as the prime model for post-communist success, providing hope for others in the region.

Discussion Question: What are the key characteristics of the Polish political system?

Compulsory Reading:

Haughton in *European Politics*.
Zubek, Radoslaw, “A Core in Check: The Transformation of the Polish Core Executive”, *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.8, No.6, 2001, pp.911-932.

04/16 – The 2015 Parliamentary Elections

On 25 October 2015 the Poles elected 460 members of the Sejm, the important lower house, and 100 members of the Senat (Senate), the less important upper house of parliament. Once again it was a story of the “Two Polands,” geographically, ideologically, and politically divided.

Discussion Question: Are the 2015 elections more of the same or has Poland moved beyond the “Two Polands”?

Compulsory Reading:

Szczerbiak, Aleks, “An Anti-Establishment Backlash that Shook Up the Party System? The October 2015 Polish Parliamentary Election”, *European Politics and Society*, Vol.18, No.4, 2017, pp.404-427.

Optional Reading:

Markowski, Radosław, “The Polish Parliamentary Election of 2015: A Free and Fair Election that Results In Unfair Political Consequences”, *West European Politics*, Vol.39, No.6, 2016, pp.1311-1322.

04/18 – Religion and Politics

Europe is a highly secularized continent where religion plays little role in day-to-day politics. While secularization in Western Europe was mostly gradual and spontaneous, in Eastern Europe it was a consequence of the anti-religious nature of the communist regimes. Still, religion did survive under communism and nowhere more so than in Poland, which remains a heavily Catholic country, where religion is often evoked in political struggles.

Discussion Question: Are religion and the (Catholic) Church still major factors in Polish politics?

Compulsory Reading:

Szelewa, Dorota, “Killing ‘Unborn Children’? The Catholic Church and Abortion Law in Poland Since 1989”, *Social & Legal Studies*, Vol.25, No.6, 2016, pp.741-764.

04/23 – The Hungarian Political System

Hungary entered the post-communist period as a frontrunner, based on its history of so-called ‘Gulash communism’, which allowed for some economic and political freedoms. Unlike its neighbors, Hungary went through the 1990s without much political unrest, developing a relatively stable political system.

Discussion Question: What are the key characteristics of the Hungarian political system?

Compulsory Reading:

Haughton in *European Politics*.

Ilonszki, Gabriella and Zsófia Papp, “The Paradoxes of Parliament–Citizen Connections in Hungary: A Window on the Political System”, *Journal of Legislative Studies*, Vol.18, No.3-4, 2012, pp.334-350.

04/25 – The 2018 Parliamentary Elections

On 8 April 2018 Hungarians elected the 199 members of the Országgyűlés, the National Assembly. The elections were held after eight years of Fidesz-rule, which had led to domestic and foreign accusations of illiberal policies, including government control of the media and manipulation of the election rules.

Discussion Question: Were the 2018 elections “free and fair”?

Compulsory Reading:

ODIHR, *Hungary: Parliamentary Elections 8 April 2018*. Warsaw: OSCE ODIHR.

04/30 – The Illiberal Backlash

In 2018 Premier Viktor Orbán and his Fidesz-KDNP coalition were convincingly re-elected to power in Hungary. They were even able to keep their constitutional majority in parliament. Despite mounting critique from within Hungary and abroad, Orbán continues his ambition to transform the country into an ‘illiberal state.’

Discussion Question: Is Hungary still a democracy?

Compulsory Reading:

Bánkuti, Miklós, Gábor Halmai and Kim-Lane Scheppele, “Disabling the Constitution”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.23, No.3, 2013, pp.121-131.

Jenne, Erin and Cas Mudde, “Can Outsiders Help”, *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.23, No.3, 2013, pp.147-155.

[Prime Minister Viktor Orbán’s Speech at the 25th Bálványos Summer Free University and Student Camp.](#)

OTHER TEXTBOOKS ON POLITICS OF POST-INDUSTRIAL DEMOCRACIES

Students who want to buy additional books for this course, for a broader comparative basis and/or deeper discussion of particular institutions and themes, are best served with (one of) the following books (unfortunately, virtually all cover only Europe):

Almond, Gabriel A., Russell J. Dalton, G. Bingham Powell Jr and Kaare Strøm (eds.), *European Politics Today*. New York et al.: Pearson Longman, 2009, fourth edition.

Bale, Tim, *European Politics: A Comparative Introduction*. London: Palgrave, 2017, fourth edition.

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