

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

NUMBER: INTL 4390
TITLE: European Politics

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Cas Mudde (mudde@uga.edu)
OFFICE: IA Building 324
OFFICE HOURS: Wednesdays, 9:00 – 11:00, or by appointment

TERM: Fall 2021
DATE & TIME: M-W-F, 11:30-12:20
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Introduction:

Europe is the continent most similar to the United States in terms of economics and 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. Yet, most Americans know little about European politics.

European politics is undergoing many shocks in the early 21st century. The terrorist attacks of 9/11 in the US have been followed by several waves 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. And now we have the COVID-19 pandemic. All have affected not just national politics but also regional politics, including the European Union (EU) and the process of European integration. Political parties that have ruled supreme for half a century, if not more, are being challenged and in some cases 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 fundamentals 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. We will discuss each country in three sessions; the first presents the key political aspects and institutions of that country’s political system, the second focusses on the most recent national elections, analyzing the electoral system and the 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 (but not required!) to purchase. Don't buy it new! Used copies are very reasonably priced and should be available online.

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
- Movies

Course Evaluation:

- Class participation (20%)
- Midterm Exam (20%)
- Op-Ed (20%)
- Short Essay (20%)
- Final exam (20%)

Class participation (20%): includes the preparation, i.e. reading and reflecting on the compulsory readings for each class, and participation in discussion in the classroom and/or 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 (20%): 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 (**September, 27**). The midterm exam will include multiple choice, short answer question, and one short essay.

Op-Ed (20%): you will write a 900 to 1200-word opinion piece on some issue related to European politics that will be shared on Tremr, an interactive web platform (students may post anonymously). The goal of the assignment is to make an argument regarding conflict and gender using academic research that will be easily accessible to a general audience of college students. Deadline is **November** at midnight.

Short Essay (20%): Europe has experienced at least four major “crises” in the 21st century: 9/11, the Great Recession, the “refugee crisis” and the COVID-19 pandemic. You will choose **one** crisis and answer the question: “How has the crisis affected European politics?” The essay should be max. 2,000 words, should reference **at least five academic sources** of which **at least three from the course literature**. Deadline: **November 22**, midnight EST.

Final Exam (25%): you have an in-class exam in which you have to answer **one essay** question, which draws upon knowledge of the whole course, in maximum 2.5 pages. The exam is “open book” in the sense that you can use **your own notes** (but not the articles and books). Exam is on **December 15, 12:00 – 3:00**.

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

Classroom Attendance and Activity

Under normal conditions, attendance of all my classes is always mandatory. Students learn so much more when they also attend classes and for some students mandatory attendance is the only way they will regularly attend, and therefore participate, in most classes. However, as the university has issued neither a vaccination mandate nor a mask mandate, I cannot in good conscience require anyone to enter the classroom. Consequently, attendance this semester is **voluntary**. I really hope you will attend regularly, and advise you to create a safe space around you if you do, but I will not punish you if you do not.

Irrespective of whether you attend in person, 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/or in online discussions.

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.

COVID-19 INFORMATION

Face coverings:

Following guidance from the University System of Georgia, face coverings are **recommended** for all individuals while inside campus facilities.

How can I obtain the COVID-19 vaccine?

University Health Center is scheduling appointments for students through the [UHC Patient Portal](#). Learn more [here](#).

The Georgia Department of Health, pharmacy chains and local providers also offer the COVID-19 vaccine at no cost to you. To find a COVID-19 vaccination location near you, please go to: <https://georgia.gov/covid-vaccine>.

In addition, the University System of Georgia has made COVID-19 vaccines available at 15 campuses statewide and you can locate one here: <https://www.usg.edu/vaccination>

What do I do if I have COVID-19 symptoms?

Students showing COVID-19 symptoms should self-isolate and schedule an appointment with the University Health Center by calling 706-542-1162 (Monday-Friday, 8 a.m.-5p.m.). Please DO NOT walk-in. For emergencies and after-hours care, see, <https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies>.

What do I do if I test positive for COVID-19?

If you test positive for COVID-19 at any time, you are **required to report it** through the [DawgCheck Test Reporting Survey](#). We encourage you to stay at home if you become ill or until you have excluded COVID-19 as the cause of your symptoms. UGA adheres to current Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) quarantine and isolation [guidance](#) and requires that it be followed. Follow the instructions provided to you when you report your positive test result in DawgCheck.

Guidelines for COVID-19 Quarantine Period (As of 8/1/21)

Students who are fully vaccinated **do not** need to quarantine upon exposure unless they have symptoms of COVID-19 themselves. All others should follow the Georgia Department of Public Health (DPH) recommendations (check the website to ensure that you are following the most recent recommendations):

Students who are not fully vaccinated and have been directly exposed to COVID-19 but are not showing symptoms **should self-quarantine for 10 days**. Those quarantining for 10 days must have been symptom-free throughout the monitoring period and continue self-monitoring for COVID-19 symptoms for a total of 14 days. You should report the need to quarantine on [DawgCheck](#) (<https://dawgcheck.uga.edu/>), and communicate directly with your faculty to coordinate your coursework while in quarantine. If you need additional help, reach out to Student Care and Outreach (sco@uga.edu) for assistance.

Students, faculty and staff who have been in close contact with someone who has COVID-19 are no longer required to quarantine if they have been fully vaccinated against the disease and show no symptoms.

Well-being, Mental Health, and Student Support

If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit <https://sco.uga.edu/>. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.

UGA has several resources to support your well-being and mental health: <https://well-being.uga.edu/>

Counseling and Psychiatric Services (CAPS) is your go-to, on-campus resource for emotional, social and behavioral-health support: <https://caps.uga.edu/>, TAO Online Support (<https://caps.uga.edu/tao/>), 24/7 support at 706-542-2273. For crisis support: <https://healthcenter.uga.edu/emergencies/>.

The University Health Center offers FREE workshops, classes, mentoring and health coaching led by licensed clinicians or health educators: <https://healthcenter.uga.edu/bewelluga/>

Monitoring conditions:

Note that the guidance referenced in this syllabus is subject to change based on recommendations from the Georgia Department of Public Health, the University System of Georgia, or the Governor's Office or. For the latest on UGA policy, you can visit coronavirus.uga.edu.

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. It is not my practice to give incompletes. However, if there is suitable reason – subject to my approval and supported by 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. 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.

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. 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 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:

September, 6	Labor Day (no class)
September, 27	Midterm Exam
October, 18	Deadline Op-Ed
October, 29	Fall Break (no class)
November, 22	Deadline Short Essay
November, 24-26	Thanksgiving Break (no class)
December, 15	Final Exam (12:00 – 3:00)

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

08/18 – 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.

08/20 – The Making and Breaking of Europe

To understand contemporary Europe, we have to understand the Second World War and, perhaps even more importantly, the way in which European elites (and masses) have responded to it. In this class we will discuss the documentary "The Making and Breaking of Europe", which focuses on the process of European integration and the intersection with mass immigration in postwar Europe.

Discussion question: How has the Second World War influenced postwar European politics?

Viewing:

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

08/23 – Europe Today: Unity in Diversity

Europe is the most politically integrated continent in the world. Most European countries are members of the EU and share 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?

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.

08/25 – 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?

Reading:

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

08/27 – Discussing European News

Every so often we will discuss recent European news in class. Topics and readings, mainly from (English-language) media outlets, will be suggested by students (!) and the professor will announce them in the preceding class!

Readings:

To be determined.

08/30 – European Union

The European Union has gone through various “crises” recently: Brexit, the so-called refugee crisis”, and the COVID-19 pandemic, to name just some of them. While often declared (almost) dead, it is still around. But what is its current state and what its most likely future?

Discussion question: How has the EU changed in the 2010s?

Reading:

Pinder, John and Simon Usherwood. *The European Union: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, chapter 3.

09/01 – 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?

Readings:

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

09/03 – Parties and Party Systems

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?

Reading:

Ladrech (12) in *European Politics*.

09/06 – NO CLASS (LABOR DAY)

09/08 – Party Families

While almost all political parties are national parties, contesting elections only in one country, and reflecting the particular political context and history of just one country, most parties share fundamental characteristics with those in other countries. Consequently, we speak of “conservative” or “socialist” parties? These are so-called “party families”. But what are they? And what are the key characteristics of the main party families in Europe?

Discussion Question: Does the concept of “party family” still make sense in today’s world? If so, what is the best criterion to define party families?

Reading:

Mair, Peter and Cas Mudde. “The Party Family and Its Study”, *Annual Review of Political Science*, 1, 1998, pp.211-229.

09/10 – Welfare State(s)

Welfare policies constitute the core of the so-called welfare state, a crucial aspect of European democracies. But while all European countries are welfare states, they differ significantly in how and what they spend. Irrespective of the type of welfare state, however, all European countries are facing pressures to fundamentally reform their welfare state.

Discussion Question: What are the main effects of globalization on Europe’s welfare states?

Reading:

Hantrais in *European Politics*.

09/13 – The COVID-19 Pandemic

Like the rest of the world, Europe has been hard-hit by the COVID-19 pandemic. The first wave started in Southern Europe and remained a mostly West

European phenomenon, but subsequent waves hit the whole continent, while vaccine rollouts have differed across the continent.

Discussion Question: Has the COVID-19 pandemic affected European politics?

Reading:

Goetz, Klaus H. and Dorte Sindbjerg Martinsen, "COVID-19: A Dual Challenge to European Liberal Democracy", *West European Politics*, Vol.44, No.5-6, 2021, pp.1003-1024.

09/15 – 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?

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.

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

09/17 – Doing Library Research

You will be visiting Elizabeth White (elizabethwhite@uga.edu) in the Main Library, where she will introduce you to the best ways to make optimal use of the excellent library resources that UGA has.

09/20 – 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?

Reading:

Bendix in *European Politics*.

09/22 – 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.

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

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.

09/24 – 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?

Reading:

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

09/27 – MIDTERM EXAM

09/29 – The 2021 German Elections

On Sunday September 26, the German parliamentary elections were held. It was the first German election of the post-Merkel era, which was also affected by the still ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. We will discuss the election results in class. You are expected to inform yourself through (quality) media.

10/01 – How to Write

You will need to write two short papers for this course: an op-Ed and a short essay. These are different types of writing assignments, in times of content and style. In this class I will explain the main differences and similarities.

Reading:

Van der Veen, Maurits, "Tips for Writing in Political Science", unpublished memo.

10/04 – 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?

Reading:

Rosamond (4) in *European Politics*.

10/06 – Brexit

The issue of EU membership has always divided the United Kingdom. While Labour was initially opposed to EU membership, increasingly Euroscepticism became a Conservative sentiment. 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 to leave the EU.

Movie: [How Did Brexit Happen?](#) (NL, 2020, 41:22 min)

Reading:

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.

10/08 – The 2019 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. In 2019 they went again: has Brexit transformed British politics for good?

Discussion Question: Has Brexit transformed British (party) politics?

Reading:

Cutts, David, Matthew Goodwin, Oliver Heath, Patricia Surridge, "Brexit, the 2019 General Election and the Realignment of British Politics", *The Political Quarterly*, Vol.91, No.1, 2020, pp.7-23.

10/11 – 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, known as 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?

Reading:

Elgie (2) in *European Politics*.

10/13 – 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?

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.

10/15 – Discussing European News

Every so often we will discuss recent European news in class. Topics and readings, mainly from (English-language) media outlets, will be suggested by students (!) and the professor will announce them in the preceding class!

Readings:

To be determined.

10/18 – The Rise (and Transformation?) of the Radical Right

France’s Rassemblement National (National Rally, previously National Front) has been the prototype of the contemporary ‘third wave’ of radical right parties in Europe. It has been linked to the issue of multiculturalism, another relatively recent and broader European phenomenon, and has had a profound effect on politics in France. As a more than fifty year old party, the FN/RN has changed leaders and “rebranded”, but has it really transformed?

Discussion Question: What characterizes the radical right in France/Europe and how has it changed in recent decades?

Reading:

Scrinzi, Francesca, “A ‘New’ National Front? Gender, Religion, Secularism and the French Populist Radical Right”, in Michaela Köttig, Renate Bizan and Andrea Petö (eds.), *Gender and Far Right Politics in Europe*. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2017, pp.127-140. *

10/20 – Football and Multiculturalism

In 1998 France won the 1998 men football World Cup. The team had a wide range of stars, including various players with a migration background. Its success led to a national celebration of multiculturalism, as an idea, but how much has it changed French society, and particularly the situation of French citizens and residents with a migration background?

Watch: [What Remains of Multicultural France that Won 1998 World Cup?](#) (F, 2018, 16:49 min)

Reading:

Hansen (19) in *European Politics*.

Recommended Watching:

The Blues: Another Story of France (F, 2016, 104 min).

10/22 – 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?

Reading:

Hine in Hay & Menon

10/25 – The 2018 Parliamentary Elections – The Run-Up

In 1998 France won the 1998 men football World Cup. The team had a wide range of stars, including various players with a migration background. Its success led to a national celebration of multiculturalism, as an idea, but how much has it changed French society, and particularly the situation of French citizens and residents with a migration background?

Watch: [Disrupting Democracy: Italy's 2018 Election](#) (D, 2018, 37:34 min)

Reading:

Chiaramonte, 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*, Vol.23, No.4, 2018, pp.479-501.

10/27 – 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?

Reading:

Chiaramonte, 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*, Vol.23, No.4, 2018, pp.479-501.

10/29 – NO CLASS (FALL BREAK)

11/01 – 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?

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.

11/03 – 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?

Readings:

Tocci (8) in *European Politics*.

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

11/05 – 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?

Readings:

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.

Recommended reading:

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

11/08 – The 2019 Greek Election

At the height of the economic crisis, the Greeks went to the polls twice in both 2012 and 2015 (as well as for a referendum). The elections created new parties and destroyed or marginalized old ones. In 2019, the center-right regained power, but have things returned to normal?

Discussion Question: Has Greece returned to pre-crisis "normal"?

Reading:

Rori, Lamprini, "The 2019 Greek Parliamentary Elections: *Retour à la normal*", *West European Politics*, Vol.43, No.4, 2020, pp.1023-1037.

11/10 – Discussing European News

Every so often we will discuss recent European news in class. Topics and readings, mainly from (English-language) media outlets, will be suggested by students (!) and the professor will announce them in the preceding class!

Readings:

To be determined.

11/12 – 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?

Readings:

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.

11/15 – The 2019 Polish Parliamentary Elections

Over the past decades Polish elections and politics have often been covered as a story of the “Two Polands,” geographically, ideologically, and politically divided. In 2015 the “conservative” Law and Justice (PiS) party came back to power, ousting the “liberal” Civic Platform (PO). Contrary to its moderate campaign, the party governed radically and divisively... and was rewarded in the 2019 elections.

Discussion Question: Has Poland moved beyond the “Two Polands”?

Compulsory Readings:

Markowski, Radoslaw, “Plurality Support for Democratic Decay: The 2018 Polish Parliamentary Election”, *West European Politics*, Vol.43, No., 2020, pp.1513-1525.

11/17 – The Role of the Church/Religion

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?

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.

11/19 – 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?

Readings:

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.

11/22 – Discussing European News

Every so often we will discuss recent European news in class. Topics and readings, mainly from (English-language) media outlets, will be suggested by students (!) and the professor will announce them in the preceding class!

Readings:

To be determined.

11/24 & 26 – NO CLASS (THANKSGIVING BREAK)

11/29 – 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.

12/01 – The Illiberal Backlash

In 2018 Premier Viktor Orbán and his Fidesz-KDNP coalition were convincingly re-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?

Readings:

Krekó, Péter and Zsolt Enyedi, "Orbán's Laboratory of Illiberalism", *Journal of Democracy*, Vol.29, No.3, 2018, pp.39-51.

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

12/03 – The EU's "Authoritarian Equilibrium"

The EU has long been seen, and still bills itself, as the most successful project of transnational liberal democratic cooperation in history. And while there is much to be said for that claim, the existence of an openly 'illiberal state' within the EU – not to speak to wannabe-Orbáns in Slovenia and Poland, to name but a few – has created a new challenge to the institution.

Discussion Question: How can the EU break its "authoritarian equilibrium"?

Reading:

Kelemen, R. Daniel, "The European Union's Authoritarian Equilibrium", *Journal of European Public Policy*, Vol.27, No.3, 2020, pp.481-499.

12/06 – What Have We Learned?

In this final class we will discuss what you have learned. Each student should email (at least) one point to me by Friday December 3, midnight.