

UNIVERSITY OF GEORGIA

NUMBER: INTL 8300
TITLE: Transformations of European Politics

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Cas Mudde (mudde@uga.edu)
OFFICE: IA 324
OFFICE HOURS: by appointment only

TERM: Spring 2025
DATE & TIME: Mondays, 15:00-18:00
ROOM: IA 117

Introduction:

At the beginning of the 20th century few European countries were democratic. At the end of the century, few European countries were still undemocratic. Still, rather than just a century of democratization, the 20th century was an “Age of Extremes” (Hobsbawm), defined at least as much by totalitarianism as by democratization. Even after the fall of communism, the famous “End of History” (Fukuyama) never materialized.

After five decades of unprecedented affluence, peace and stability, European politics has experienced several crises in the still young 21st century, which have all profoundly affected European politics and societies, albeit in very different ways. Brexit and Trump have amplified the feeling of crisis and change, leading to (inflated) accounts of the “rise of populism” and the “crisis of democracy.”

This course aims to analyze the transformations of European politics, focusing primarily on the 21st century. While the main focus is on changes in electoral/party politics, we will also analyze the underlying economic and social transformations, as well as other forms of political mobilization. What is going on and why? And, ultimately, is European politics undergoing a fundamental transformation or are we just experiencing a temporary crisis?

This course differs from many other graduate courses in at least two important ways. First, rather than teaching students about a well-defined body of knowledge, which is broadly accepted within the broader (sub)discipline, we are analyzing ongoing phenomena of which the outcome is not yet certain. Second, the course is mainly based on academic books, several written for a broader audience, rather than academic journal articles.

Readings:

The course is based on a broad variety of readings, including a large number of books. I have done my best to use mainly books that you can read free through the UGA Library (with *) or that are relatively cheap in paperback or ebook. Remember, many of these books are old(er) and can be bought cheaply second hand online!

Phillip Ayoub, *When States Come Out: Europe's Sexual Minorities and the Politics of Visibility*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016. *

Simon Bornschier, Lukas Haffert, Silja Häusermann, Marco Steenbergen and Delia Zolinger, *Cleavage Formation in the 21st Century: How Social Identities Shape Voting Behavior in Contexts of Electoral Realignment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024. *

Rafaela M. Dancygier, *Dilemmas of Inclusion: Muslims in European Politics*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2017. *

Anthony Giddens, *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 1998. *

Peter Mair (ed.), *The West European Party System*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1990.

Peter Mair, *Ruling the Void: The Hollowing of Western Democracy*. London: Verso, 2013.

Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox*. London: Verso, 2009.

Jan-Werner Mueller, *What is Populism?* Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. *

Simon Usherwood and John Pinder, *The European Union: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 4th edition.

Anna Catalano Weeks, *Making Gender Salient: From Gender Quota Laws to Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022. *

You are urged to buy the books that are not online available from the UGA Library, as texts from these books will not be made available online. If you loan it from the UGA Library, let other people in the class know you have it and try to share.

All *other* texts will be made available on the Elc course site, well ahead of the relevant class. If you have any problems accessing or locating readings, send me an email at mudde[[@](mailto:mudde@uga.edu)]uga.edu.

Course objectives:

- To introduce you to some of the key characteristic of European political systems.
- To think about contemporary economic, political, and social developments in Europe and about the ways in which they interact with each other.
- To analyze some of the most important transformations in European politics.

Teaching Methodology:

The course is primarily discussion based. Students are expected to take the lead and the professor is mainly a facilitator.

Classroom Attendance and Activity

This class meets once a week and attendance is **mandatory**. You can miss up to **two** classes (*no excuses or notes are necessary*, although a heads-up will be appreciated). A third absence will lead to a lower participation grade (-20 points). When you miss **four** classes without a valid excuse, you **fail** the course!

Obviously, you are expected **read and reflect upon** (at least) the compulsory readings before you come to class. In other words, I expect you to read the books (articles) well in advance of the class, and then reflect upon them in anticipation of the class discussion.

Many of the books are less dense and jargony than the average political science literature, which should make them easier and quicker to read. That said, they don't come with a convenient abstract, summarizing the one main idea of the article, and often include many interesting side notes and thoughts. Take your time to

read them, think about them while you read, make notes, connect it to your own area of interest. Be creative!

Office Hours:

Office hours are only by appointment this semester. However, I very much appreciate catching up with students to discuss their progress or discuss other (academic) issues on their mind. New students are particularly encouraged to come to office hours at the beginning of the semester, as this helps us to get to know each other and increases your chances of being successful in the course.

Course Evaluation:

- Participation (20%)
- Presentations (15%)
- Book review (15%)
- Analytical papers (20%)
- Final analytical paper (30%)

Participation (20%): You are expected to actively participate in each class, which is based almost exclusively on student discussion. Your grade is based on the *quality and quantity* of your participation in the discussions. If you attend all classes but never participate in the discussions, you will receive a **C!**

Presentation (15%): You will be assigned to introduce one book for a class (max. 15 minutes per presentation). It is your task to present the most important points **in your own words** and clarify them (if necessary) with **original** examples, i.e. examples that go beyond the ones presented in the reading(s). You are also expected to take the lead in the class discussion of that day; for instance, by preparing some questions we can discuss in class.

Book review (15%): You have to write a book review of *Dilemmas of Inclusion* (Dancygier). It should be written as an official book review, set for publication in an academic journal (like *Perspective of Politics*). The review should be max. 1,500 words and shortly summarize the main points, discuss the strengths and weaknesses, and provide an overall judgment. Due in class on **March 10**.

Analytical papers (20%): You have to write **two** analytical papers on the compulsory readings for a specific week during the course. The paper should be max. 1,000 words and discuss the

strengths and weaknesses of the article(s)/book of the week but should also draw upon some other academic literature.

Final analytical paper (30%): You have to write **one** final analytical paper for the last class, addressing the question: “Is Europe facing a crisis of democracy?” The essay should be max. 2,000 words and should discuss the compulsory readings for the last class as well as relevant other readings. It is due at the beginning of the last class, on **April, 21**.

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.

ChatGPT

Unauthorized use of artificial intelligence software or word mixing software to write your paper or disguise plagiarized work is considered unauthorized assistance in this course

Visual or Audio Recording

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability, students may **not** make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.
- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

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.

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/>

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.

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:

1. Introduction (01/06)

We will start out by mutual introductions and an assessment of your 'general' background with regard to European politics in general, and party politics in particular. We will then discuss the intentions of the course and go through the syllabus to address the outline of the course as well as our mutual expectations.

2. European Integration (01/13)

The European Union (EU) is a unique political experiment in world history. Never have so many countries integrated economically and politically to such an extent. Therefore, one cannot understand European politics, or its transformation, without a basic understanding of the process of European integration and the current power and structure of the EU.

Compulsory Watching:

[*The Big Picture: The Making and Breaking of Europe \(Parts 1 & 2\)*](#)

Compulsory Reading:

Usherwood, Simon and John Pinder. *The European Union: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018, 4th edition.

NO CLASS – MLK DAY (01/20)

3. The West European Party System II (01/27)

European politics is party politics! Political parties are the prime political organizations in the region and the way they interact, i.e. in their respective party systems, is one of the key factors of their political system. In the first two substantial classes, we will discuss the characteristics and origins of political parties and party systems on the basis of a collection of (excerpts of) classic texts from the 20th century.

Compulsory Reading:

WEP, Introduction, Parts I & II (minus chs. 7-8, 10), Parts III & IV (minus chs. 16, 17 & 19).

4. The Silent Revolution (02/03)

Building upon the seminal cleavage theory framework of Seymour Martin Lipset and Stein Rokkan, the US political sociologist Ronald Inglehart developed

one of the most influential concepts and theories in political science, “postmaterialism” and “the silent revolution”. While developed to explain the emergence of the “New Left” in the 1970s, i.e. the so-called “new social movements” and the Green parties, it also offers insights into the transformations that are characterizing the early 21st century.

Compulsory Reading:

Inglehart, Ronald, “The Silent Revolution in Europe: Intergenerational Change in Post-Industrial Societies”, *American Political Science Review*, Vol.65, No.4, 1971, pp. 991-1017.

Flanagan, Scott C., “Measuring Value Change in Advanced Industrial Societies: A Rejoinder to Inglehart”, *Comparative Political Studies*, Vol.15, No.1, 1982, pp. 99-128.

Ignazi, Piero, “The Silent Counter-Revolution: Hypotheses on the Emergence of Extreme Right-Wing Parties in Europe”, *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol.22, No.1, 1992, pp. 3-34.

Inglehart, Ronald, “Changing Values among Western Publics from 1970 to 2006”, *West European Politics*, Vol., No.1-2, 2008, pp. 130-146.

5. Cleavage Politics in the 21st Century (02/10)

In the 1960s, Rokkan and Lipset argued that the cleavages of West European politics had become “frozen”, with most political parties reflecting a partly foregone time. But in the next decades, scholars were mainly focused on new developments and trends, identifying a never-ending set of new parties and cleavages. Does cleavage politics still dominated (West) European politics? And, if so, how?

Compulsory Reading:

Simon Bornschier, Lukas Haffert, Silja Häusermann, Marco Steenbergen and Delia Zolinger, *Cleavage Formation in the 21st Century: How Social Identities Shape Voting Behavior in Contexts of Electoral Realignment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2024. *

6. Gender (02/17)

The Post-Industrial Revolution changed the economic emphasis on services, which required and rewarded different skillsets, several traditionally associated more with women than men (e.g. communication and teamwork). As more women entered the job market, and made better careers, social norms shifted, and women became more active and visible in politics. Still, women remain underrepresented in politics, which has led to the introduction of so-called gender quota as well as a discussion about their effectiveness.

Compulsory Reading:

Weeks, Anna Catalano. *Making Gender Salient: From Gender Quota Laws to Policy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2022. *

Optional Reading:

Inglehart, Ronald F., Eduard Ponarin, and Ronald C. Inglehart, “Cultural Change, Slow and Fast: The Distinctive Trajectory of Norms Governing Gender Equality and Sexual Orientation”, *Social Forces*, Vol.95, No.4, 2017, pp. 1313-1340.

7. Sexuality (02/24)

While gender equality is becoming less and less contested, at least openly, sexual minorities still face significant marginalization and opposition. But as “gay rights” have improved in various countries across the continent, transgenders have been catapulted to the center of the “culture wars” in Europe.

Compulsory Reading:

Phillip Ayoub, *When States Come Out: Europe’s Sexual Minorities and the Politics of Visibility*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016, selected chapters. *

Magni, Gabriele and Andrew Reynolds, “Why Europe’s Right Embraces Gay Rights”, *Journal of Democracy*, 34:1 (2023), 50-64.

NO CLASS – SPRING BREAK (03/03)

8. Ethnicity (03/10)

Unlike the US, which has been multicultural (or “multiracial”) since its foundation, Western Europe has a relatively recent history of “multiculturalism.” Dating back to mass immigration in the 1950s and 1960s, relatively homogeneous societies transformed fairly rapidly into heterogeneous ones – particularly in cities and industrial areas – but this was not without problems. Moreover, with the largest portion of immigrations being Muslims, 9/11 has had a profound effect on the debate about inclusion.

Compulsory Reading:

Rafaella M. Dancygier, *Dilemmas of Inclusion: Muslims in European Politics*. Princeton, Princeton University Press, 2017. *

Deadline book review: You have to write a book review of max. 1,500 words of Dancygier’s book, in which you shortly summarize the main points, discuss the strengths and weaknesses, and provide an overall judgment.

9. The Third Way (03/17)

One of the most debated transformations in European politics is the right-wing turn of center-left parties, most notably Social Democratic parties adopting neoliberal economic ideas and policies. In Europe, it was Tony Blair who transformed the left-wing Labour Party into the centrist New Labour. While he copied much of his strategies from Bill Clinton in the US, his ideological inspiration was one of the most prominent British sociologists, Anthony Giddens.

Compulsory Reading:

Giddens, Anthony. *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy*. Cambridge, UK: Polity, 1998.

10. Radical Democracy (03/24)

In the wake of the Great Recession left-wing grassroots movements like the Indignados and Occupy protested in the streets of cities across the globe. Several of these movements were followed by new “radical left” parties, such as and Podemos in Western Europe, who were profoundly influenced by the work of the Belgian philosopher Chantal Mouffe and her late husband, Argentinian political philosopher Ernesto Laclau.

Compulsory Reading:

Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox*. London: Verso, 2009.

11. The Hollowing of Western Democracy (03/31)

For a long time scholars have been debating the so-called “democratic deficit” within the European Union, but only recently have they started to argue that European integration is weakening democracy within EU member states too. The late Peter Mair argued in his last book, which was still work-in-progress at his untimely death, that western democracy was being hollowed out by global and regional forces. Was he too pessimistic?

Compulsory Reading:

Mair, Peter. *Ruling the Void: The Hollowing of Western Democracy*. London: Verso, 2013.

12. The Rise of Populism (04/07)

Populism is the political buzzword of the 21st century. But its success is in part a consequence of its conceptual confusion. What is populism? And what is its

relevance for European politics? Are we living in a populist era? Is populism the future of Europe?

Compulsory Reading:

Mueller, Jan-Werner. *What is Populism?* Philadelphia, PA: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016. *

13. New Paradigms (04/14)

Although European politics is constantly changing, or developing, the last decades have seen a remarkable set of consecutive “crises” that have, more or less, significantly impacted European politics. In this class we will discuss some of the best original thinking on recent transformations of European politics.

Compulsory Reading:

Caramani, Daniele. “Will vs. Reason: The Populist and Technocratic Forms of Political Representation and Their Critique to Party Government”, *American Political Science Review*, Vol.111, No.1, 2017, pp. 54-67.

Ford, Robert and Will Jennings. “The Changing Cleavage Politics of Western Europe”, *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol.23, 2020, pp. 295-314.

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.

Hooghe, Liesbet and Gary Marks. “A Postfunctionalist Theory of European Integration: From Permissive Consensus to Constraining Dissensus”, *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol.39, No.1, 2009, pp. 1-23.

Kriesi, Hanspeter, Edgar Grande, Romain Lachat, et al. “Globalization and the Transformation of the National Political Space: Six European Countries Compared”, *European Journal of Political Research*, Vol.45, 2006, pp. 921-956.

Vachudova, Milada, “Populism, Democracy, and Party System Change in Europe”, *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol.24, 2021, pp. 471-498.

14. A Crisis of Democracy? (04/21)

In the wake of Brexit, and particularly the victory of Donald Trump, there has been an explosion of “crisis of democracy” literature. While several became (academic) bestsellers, receiving massive media attention, most mainly speculate what would happen if this or that would happen. Few actually analyze the state of democracy at this point in time. Are we in crisis?

Compulsory Reading:

Merkel, Wolfgang. “Is There a Crisis of Democracy?”, *Democratic Theory*, Vol.1, No.2, 2014, pp. 11-25.

Kriesi, Hanspeter. “Is There a Crisis of Democracy in Europe?”, *Politische Vierteljahresschrift*, Vol.61, 2020, pp. 237-260.

- Cianetti, Licia, James Dawson and Sean Hanley, "Rethinking 'Democratic Backsliding' in Central and Eastern Europe – Looking Beyond Hungary and Poland", *East European Politics*, Vol.34, No.2, 2018, pp. 243-256.
- Grzebalska, Weronika, and Andrea Pétö, "The Gendered Modus Operandi of the Illiberal Transformation in Hungary and Poland", *Women's Studies International Forum*, 85 (2018), 164-172.
- Mudde, Cas. "Populism in Europe: An Illiberal Democratic Response to Undemocratic Liberalism", *Government and Opposition*, Vol.56, No.4, 2021, pp. 577-597.
- Bartels, Larry. "The Populist Phantom", *Foreign Affairs*, No.103, 2024, pp. 108-125.

Final analytical paper: "Is Europe facing a crisis of democracy?" Your final analytical paper should address this question on the basis of the compulsory readings for this class as well as relevant previous readings. Max. 2,000 words!