

Gov 2400 | West European Politics
Syllabus | Fall 2017

Instructor: Professor Alyssa Maraj Grahame

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Class meeting time and location: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:00-2:25 in Pickering Room, Hubbard Hall

Office hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10:30-11:30 in Dudley Coe 306 and by appointment

Course Description

This course considers the politics and government of West Europe, home to nearly 400 million people and 20+ democratic states (most old, some new). It will emphasize social and political developments, institutions, behavior, and policies common to the major European democracies while considering as well the unique aspects of these two dozen countries. The focus will be “thematic” rather than merely successive country studies, but there will be ample opportunity to focus on specific national cases. In addition to national politics, these countries collaborate closely through the European Union and other regional organizations.

This course is about politics in West Europe, but it is not just about West Europe, or Europe for its own sake. Its spirit is decisively comparative and we will investigate political phenomena that have bearings beyond Europe alone. The modern nation-state was “born” in western Europe during the Reformation and Renaissance. So were many of the characteristics of political (liberal) democracy. While such developments have scarcely been smooth and linear and while the contributions of other continents have become increasingly significant, the fate of democracy and particularly American democracy still is closely tied to Western Europe. Moreover, in assessing American politics and democracy, Western Europe is the main “alternative.” It is a perennial source of comparison and contrast for Americans. At the same time, the course offers a critical view of Eurocentric and European exceptionalist assumptions and narratives.

In addition to examining the historical trajectory of European political institutions and cultures, the course will also investigate significant contemporary developments, including Brexit, the refugee/asylee crisis, the financial crisis and austerity, protest, and populism. The course content highlights the role that ordinary people play in West European political life. In addition to gaining a broad understanding of the major structures, processes, and institutions of West European politics, students will have the opportunity to pursue their own in-depth investigations of European political developments according to their interests.

Finally, it should be noted that this course is not about the European Union. The EU is addressed in a separate course. That being said, the EU and other transnational European institutions cannot be and are not ignored since they have significant bearings on domestic politics.

Course format

This course consists of two 85-minute meetings per week. Class time will be comprised of lecture, discussion, group activities, and individual activities. Students are expected to come to class having completed the assigned readings. Students should also bring questions and comments.

Readings

Required & suggested readings:

Students should expect approximately 50-60 pages of required reading per week. Suggested readings are optional.

Required texts:

There is no traditional textbook for this course. We will be reading all or most of two books on recent developments in West European politics that engage a number of themes that will emerge throughout the course. In the comparative spirit, you may also find that the topics these books deal with bear both striking resemblances and departures from recent transformations in U.S. politics, and indeed other parts of the world.

The two required texts are as follows:

1. Principe, Catarina and Bhaskar Sunkara, eds. 2016. *Europe in Revolt*. Chicago: Haymarket Books. ISBN-13: 978-1608465934
2. Goodwin, Matthew and Caitlin Malazzo. 2016. *UKIP: Inside the Campaign to Redraw the Map of British Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

These books will be available for purchase on Chegg. The current selling prices on Amazon are \$9.24 and \$8.78, respectively. They are also on reserve in the library.

* Please let me know if you think you will have difficulty acquiring these books. *

Recommended book:

Pelz, William A. 2016. *A People's History of Modern Europe*. London: Pluto Press.

This book is available on Blackboard and through the library website, so you do not need to buy it if you do not wish to do so.

Readings on Blackboard:

The remaining readings will be posted on Blackboard. I encourage students print out the required readings that are on Blackboard. This is for two reasons. One is the classroom technology policy (phones, tablets, and laptops must be put away, see below). The other is that the ability to easily annotate and mark-up readings is a valuable analytic tool. Studies show that people get more out of reading when they read from actual paper. But in the interest of saving paper, double-sided printing is encouraged.

Course Requirements

1. Midterm exam 20%
2. Three short papers 30%
3. Final exam 20%
4. Reading quizzes 20%
5. Group presentation 10%

1. Midterm exam (20%)

The midterm will be a take-home exam consisting of short answer and essay questions. It will cover all material between weeks 1-6. It will be due on Friday, October 13 at 11:59 PM. The exam will be distributed on October 5 at the end of class.

2. Three short papers (30%)

Students will each choose *one* West European country to follow through three short papers throughout the semester (I will provide a list). Each paper will analyze and evaluate the corresponding week's readings through the comparative lens of the country you choose. Each paper must make use of at least two sources beyond the

course material. Since the goal is to deepen your knowledge of one West European country, you may not change countries midstream!

Each paper should be 500-700 words (about 2 pages, double-spaced) and is worth 10% of your final grade.

You will have some choice as to which weeks you choose to write papers for, but you must submit one paper for each part of the course (weeks 1-4, 5-9, and 10-13). Papers must be typed and are due at the beginning of class on the Tuesday for the week you are writing for. More details to come.

3. Final exam (20%)

The final exam will be a seated exam during the final exam period. It will consist of short answer and essay questions. It will cover the second half of the course.

4. Reading quizzes (20%)

Reading quizzes are designed to help keep you on track with the assigned readings and to gauge your basic comprehension of, and thoughtful engagement with, the material. There will be 11 reading quizzes given over the course of the semester. Your lowest quiz grade will not count against your final grade. Reading quizzes are unannounced and can take place during any class meeting. Quizzes will be given at the beginning of class and will be timed. The quizzes can also take on any of the following formats: short answer, multiple choice, or true or false. No make-ups will be given due to late arrival to class or absence without a documented excuse. If you have written a paper for the week during which the quiz is given, you will automatically receive full quiz credit.

5. Group presentation (10%)

During the penultimate week of class, students will synthesize their research from their three individual papers into a group presentation. Students will be assigned groups and asked to create a short presentation comparing their respective countries' experiences with shared political phenomena. More details will be provided in class.

Logistics & Course Policies

Technology: Laptops, phones, and tablets must be turned off/silenced and put away unless otherwise indicated (e.g. during group activities that require research). Studies show that students retain for information and gain a deeper understanding of the material if they handwrite notes. If you have a disability accommodation and need to take notes on a computer, please speak with me directly.

No recording devices of any kind are allowed without express permission.

Attendance Policy: The professor will make reasonable accommodations for excused absences, but *students are responsible* for all material covered, assignments distributed or collected, and announcements made during any classes missed. For an absence to be excused, you must notify me *before* class. Documented illnesses, family emergencies, and university-sponsored activities count as excused absences; vacations, early departure from campus for breaks, and oversleeping are not excused absences.

Communication: If you need to correspond with me via email, please include GOV2400-F17 in the subject line of your email. Please allow up to 48 hours for a response. If you have not heard from me after 48 hours, please resend your message.

Grades: please wait 24 hours after an assignment is returned before discussing a grade with the professor. You should retain original copies of all graded material until you have received your final grade for the course.

Succeeding in this course:

To succeed in this course, students must:

- 1) Complete the readings by the due date.
- 2) Take good notes during class. Please note that I do not share my lecture slides, except for images or charts (upon request). My lecture slides consist primarily of visual aids. They will not substitute for thorough note-taking practices. Lectures and readings are designed to complement one another. They are not interchangeable.
- 3) Ask questions to clarify the course material.
- 4) Incorporate feedback from the professor into subsequent assignments.

Academic honesty is paramount. All instances of plagiarism will be immediately referred to university disciplinary procedures.

Disabilities accommodation: If you have a documented disability that requires an accommodation, please notify me within the first two weeks of the semester so that we may make appropriate arrangements.

Course Schedule

Note: This schedule is subject to change. Please keep an eye on the Blackboard page and your email inbox for updates.

PART I

Week 1

Date	Topic	Required Reading
8/31	No class meeting today	<p>“Terrorism, Migrants, and Crippling Debt: Is this the End of Europe?” http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2016/01/europe-terrorism-migrants-debt-crisis</p> <p>Garton Ash, Timothy. 2016. “Is Europe Disintegrating?” <i>The New York Review of Books</i>.</p> <p>Grygiel, Jakub. “The Return of Europe’s Nation-States: The Upside to the EU’s Crisis.” <i>Foreign Affairs</i>. Sept/Oct 2016.</p>

Week 2

Date	Topic	Required Reading
9/5	What is West Europe?	Introduction and Chapter 1 in Pelz, William. 2016. <i>A People’s History of Modern Europe</i> . London: Pluto Press. (24 pages)

9/7	Why study West Europe?	Chapters 2 and 3 in <i>A People's History</i> . (22 pages)
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Week 3

Date	Topic	Required Reading
9/12	Building blocks of West Europe 1: the state	Rousseau, Jean-Jacques. <i>On the Social Contract</i> . Chapters 1, 6-8. (4 pages) Hobbes, Thomas. <i>Leviathan</i> . Pages 75-79 and 106-110. (9 pages) Tilly, Charles. 1985. "War making and state making as organized crime." (18 pages)
9/14	Building block 2: the nation	Anderson, Benedict. 1983. <i>Imagined Communities</i> . London: Verso. Pages 5-7 and 37-46. (13 pages)

Week 4

Date	Topic	Required Reading
9/19	Building block 3: the market	Smith, Adam. "An Inquiry into the nature and causes of the wealth of nations." a very short selection (2 pages) Marx, Karl. 1867. "The So-Called Primitive Accumulation" in <i>Capital, Volume I</i> (34 pages).
9/21	Putting the building blocks together	Polanyi, Karl. 1944. "Habitation versus Improvement" and "The Self-Regulating Market and the Fictitious Commodities: Land, Labor, and Money" in <i>The Great Transformation</i> , Boston: Beacon Press. (20 pages). Suggested reading: A People's History, Chapter 5

PART II

Week 5

Date	Topic	Required Reading
9/26	Industrialization and the working class	Thompson, E.P. <i>The Making of the English Working Class</i> , Preface (4 pages) Marx, Karl. 1867. "The Struggle for a Normal Working Day." In <i>Capital, Volume I</i> . 375-389. (14 pages).

		Suggested reading: A People's History, Chapters 4 and 7
9/28	How did West Europe become democratic?	Tilly, Charles. 2003. "Contention and Democracy" in <i>Contention and Democracy in Europe</i> . 1-34 (34 pages). Suggested reading: A People's History, Chapter 6

Week 6

Date	Topic	Required Reading
10/3	Why did democracy fail in the 20 th century?	Berman, Sheri. 1997. "Civil society and the collapse of the Weimar Republic." <i>World Politics</i> . 49 (3): 401-429. (29 pages)
10/5	The Great Transformation and review	Polanyi, Karl. 1944. "Conservative twenties, revolutionary thirties" in <i>The Great Transformation</i> . (14 pages). Suggested reading: A People's History, Chapters 10 and 11

Week 7

Date	Topic	Required Reading
10/10	FALL BREAK - NO CLASS	none
10/12	Documentary screening	None: work on take-home exam

Week 8

Date	Topic	Required Reading
10/17	Guest lecture: Gladys Ganiel on Northern Ireland	Finn, Daniel. "The Adaptable Sinn Fein." in <i>Europe in Revolt</i> . (13 pages). "On Irish Border, Worries That 'Brexit' Will Undo a Hard-Won Peace." New York Times, August 5 2017.
10/19	The postwar consensus and the welfare state	Esping-Andersen, Gøsta. 1990. "The Three Political Economies of the Welfare State" in <i>The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism</i> . 9-34. (25 pages)

		Suggested reading: A People's History, Chapter 12
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Week 9

Date	Topic	Required Reading
10/24	The neoliberal turn	Harvey, David. <i>A Brief History of Neoliberalism</i> . Pages 1-39. (38 pages) Suggested reading: A People's History, Chapters 13 & 14
10/26	Neoliberalism in crisis?	Crouch, Colin. 2011. <i>The Strange Non-Death of Neoliberalism</i> . Selection.

PART III

Week 10

Date	Topic	Required Reading
10/31	The financial collapse	Wade, Robert. 2009. "Iceland as Icarus." <i>Challenge</i> . (29 pages).
11/2	Austerity	<i>Europe in Revolt</i> , selections

Week 11

Date	Topic	Required Reading
11/7	Protest	<i>Europe in Revolt</i> , selections
11/9	Searching for political alternatives	<i>Europe in Revolt</i> , selections

Week 12

Date	Topic	Required Reading
11/14	UKIP and Brexit	<i>UKIP</i> , selections
11/16	UKIP and Brexit	<i>UKIP</i> , selections

Week 13

Date	Topic	Required Reading
11/21	UKIP and Brexit	<i>UKIP</i> , selections
11/23	NO CLASS	None

Week 14

Date	Topic	Required Reading
11/28	Research presentations (dates, groups, topics tbd)	Read your group members' papers
11/30	Research presentations	^ same

Week 15

Date	Topic	Required Reading
12/5	Wrapping up: what next for West Europe?	Crouch, Colin. 2016. "The march towards post-democracy, ten years on." <i>The Political Quarterly</i> .
11/23	Review	None

FINAL EXAM TBA