



SYLLABUS 2018-2019

SSC 310 - European Political Systems Fall 2018-19

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CLASS: Monday, 9 - 11.45

Office hours : Monday, 11.45-12.45 (also via email or Skype)

Course Description

The course will focus on West European Political Systems and will be divided in three parts. The first part aims at providing students with the conceptual tools and the basic factual knowledge that are necessary for the understanding of political systems in West European democracy. A specific attention will be devoted to cleavages and historical determinants of Europe's social structure. The governmental models and the party systems will be illustrated in details. The second part will focus specifically on the political systems in three countries (United Kingdom, France, and Germany), highlighting peculiar societal and institutional features, also thanks to the conceptual tools provided in the first part. Comparisons with the US, whenever possible, will be made. The final section of the course will examine the relationship between political parties and foreign and security policy in Europe, focusing on the role of ideology, leaders, and coalition governments.

CSU GE category D3 or D5

Political Science

Required Books/ Readings

Gallagher et al (2011, fifth edition), *Representative Government in Europe* (Open University Press)

Hancock et al (2015 sixth edition), *Politics in Europe* (SAGE/CQ Press)

The books are available in the CSU library for consultation.

Additional readings and web resources may be given during the semester.

CSU Library Session

19 November 2018 (to be confirmed)

General Course Requirements

You are responsible for the weekly readings, the information given to you in class, on handouts and via email. Part of your grade will be determined by regular attendance, participation in class discussions and active engagement in all activities of this course (poster session of papers, presentation of movies related to the issues of the course, etc.). Questions and comments will always be welcome. Material covered in class will not always be covered in the readings and vice versa; students will be responsible for all material regardless of where presented. Readings listed as “recommended” are necessary for a full understanding of the course’s subject matter; knowledge of these readings, however, will not be assumed in evaluating and grading tests and exams. Make sure to check your email on a regular basis for updates and additional information.

Class Site Visits

It is possible occasional site visits will be part of this class. Additional information will be given during the semester.

Learning Objectives

Students will learn to:

- Understand the evolution and the features of the political systems in Western Europe;
- Understand the evolution and the features of the political systems in Germany, France, and the UK;
- Assess the relationship between political parties and foreign and security policy in Western Europe at the time of “populism”;
- Understand the cleavages and historical determinants of Europe’s social structure.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the semester students will be able to:

- Understand the past and current West European politics;
- Connect political science theories and concepts with current events, especially in France, Germany, and United Kingdom;
- Grasp the significance of political transformation in West European political systems;
- Identify the proper roles of institutional actors in West European political systems, especially in France, Germany, and United Kingdom;
- Compare different West European political systems;
- Identify the possible drivers of political decisions, especially concerning foreign and security policy;
- Present a paper through a poster session;
- Discuss issues of political science through movies.

Grades and Exams

Your grade will be determined by the following assignments:

- Midterm 30%
- Paper/ Class presentation/Field trip presentation 25%
- Final 35%
- Class participation 10%

100-94	A
93-90	A-
89-88	B+
87-83	B
82-80	B-
79-77	C+
76-73	C
72-69	C-
68-67	D+
66-63	D
62-60	D-
59 and below	F

A Student performance has been outstanding and indicates an exceptional degree of academic achievement in meeting learning outcomes and course requirements

B Student performance has been at a high level and indicates solid academic achievement in meeting learning outcomes and course requirements

C Student performance has been adequate and indicates satisfactory academic achievement in meeting learning outcomes and course requirements

D Student performance has been less than adequate and indicates deficiencies in meeting the learning outcomes and/or course requirements

F Student performance has been unacceptable and indicates a failure to meet the learning outcomes and/or course requirements

The + and - symbols will be used for grading (except for A+). Specific information about the paper, exams and other projects will be given to you during the semester.

Late submissions by up to two days will result in a two-point (e.g., from 87 to 85) deduction from the final total score irrespective of the quality of the report.

In multiple – choice test points I will assign points for any good answer, while no penalties/no points for blank or wrong answers. The mid–term exam will be based on knowledge taught in lessons held before the mid-term; the final exam will be based on the WHOLE program taught in class. Final scores will be translated into grades on the basis of a consideration of the class’ overall performance.

Class Code of Conduct

Activities unrelated to the course (including private conversations, emailing, text messaging, reading, web surfing, etc.) are not permitted during class time. Please turn off or put all electronic devices on silent mode prior to the beginning of the class.

Academic Dishonesty Will Not Be Tolerated.

Any form of plagiarism or cheating may result in a failing final grade in the course and might be reported to IP and your campus. If you have questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty, please refer to the student handbook and catalog of your campus and also ask me and/ or the Resident Director for more information.

Important: Exams

You must attend all exams and quizzes as scheduled. Make-up exams are given only for valid reasons. Please check your academic calendar **BEFORE** you book trips, flights and hotels.

Copyright and Privacy Laws

No portion of the texts, films, videos, and other material used in this course can be reproduced in any format including scanning, electronic downloading or sharing of files.

In addition, no portion of class lectures, discussions, and activities can be reproduced and used any format, including electronic, without the written consent of the instructor and/or guest speakers.

Changes- Important

Information contained in this syllabus, including the class calendar, other than that mandated by the University, may be subject to change with advance notice, as deemed appropriate by the instructor.

Class Calendar

Week 1 – 5/11: Introduction. European Political Systems: Overview. From Theory to Current Politics.

Readings: Gallagher et al (ch. 1)

Week 2 – 12/11: Party Families and Cleavages Structure. Social cleavages, political families, and electoral change.

Readings: Gallagher et al (ch. 8-9)

Week 3 – 19/11: Parliaments and Executives. Consensus Model vs. Westminster Model.

Readings: Gallagher et al (ch. 2-3)

Week 4 – 26/11: Elections and Governments. Electoral systems, coalitions, and governments.

Readings: Gallagher et al (ch. 11-12)

Week 5- 3/12: Politics in the UK (I). Context and Features of British Politics.

Readings: Hancock et al (part I)

Week 6 – 10/12: Politics in the UK (II). Political Parties and electoral system. Brexit: Causes and Consequences.

Readings: Hancock et al (part I)

Week 7 – 17/12: Mid Term Exam (multiple choice test)

Week 8 – 7/1: The context of French Politics. Institutional actors, political parties, and electoral system.

Readings: Hancock et al (part II)

Week 9 – 14/1

The context of German Politics. Institutional actors, political parties, and electoral system.

Readings: Hancock et al (part I)

Week 10 – 21/1 Political Parties, Parliaments, and Foreign and Security Policy in Europe.

Parties, Parliaments, and Foreign Policy in Western Europe (at the time of populism).

Readings: recommended readings (Kaarbo 2013, Wagner et al 2018; Chrissyogelos 2018, etc.) will be provided during the semester.

Week 11 – 28/1: Poster Session/Movies. Students are required to present a paper within the classroom through a poster session. Otherwise, students can choose to present a movie linked to a chapter/paper discussed in class.

Week 12 – 4/2 “You decide the issue”. The main issue of this lesson will be decided by (the majority of) students at the beginning of the course, according to their interests (e.g., the political system of another country, a specific political party, a current relevant topic in West European politics, etc.). A selection of issues will be provided.

Week 13 11-14 /2: Final Exam (multiple choice test) – exact day and time to be announced

Textbooks

Gallagher et al (2011, fifth edition), *Representative Government in Europe* (Open University Press)

Hancock et al (2015 sixth edition), *Politics in Europe* (SAGE/CQ Press)

The books are in the library.

Recommended readings:

Additional readings and web resources may be given during the semester.

Final exam

Feb. 11 – 14 – exact day and time to be announced.

Attendance Policy

“3 – Hour” Attendance Policy 2018-2019 (for classes that meet once a week for 3 hours)

Attendance to all CSU courses is mandatory. One unexcused absence is allowed during the semester but more than one unexcused absence will lower your grade as follows (excused absences will be accepted for serious medical reasons or emergencies): **TWO** unexcused absences, lowers by 1.5 letter grades (i.e., B to C-); **THREE** unexcused absences, lowers by 3 letter grades (i.e., A to D). More than **THREE unexcused absences could result in failure of the course.**

In order not to disrupt the class, punctuality is required. Students are expected to be in class at the beginning of the class hour; any delay exceeding **five** minutes will be considered an absence.

Dates of mid-term and final exams **can not** be changed for individual travel plans or personal needs. Students should take note of the dates and hours of the midterm and final exams and plan their trips after the last exam. It is important to inform friends and relatives about these exam dates so that no tickets are purchased for you that will interfere with these exam dates. **Missing the midterm or the final exam could result in failure of the course.**

During the academic year photocopies and other material may be distributed in class by the instructors. Students who were not in class are responsible for getting the material from their classmates and making their own photocopies.

Optional class policies:

° Use of computer in class is restricted to oral presentations, unless previously approved by the professor.

° **Eating** is **NOT** allowed in class.

° Cellular phones must be **turned off** or placed on ***silent mode*** during class.