

THE POLITICS OF THE EUROPEAN UNION

L32 3093
Siegle 304
T-R 2:30-4:00 PM

Fall 2013

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Purpose of the Course

This course is designed to provide students with a general understanding of the European economic and political integration that is represented by the European Union (EU). European integration is an important component of contemporary international relations and international political economy. For example, the EU foreign policy institutions have led diplomatic and military responses (in connection with NATO) to ethnic conflict in the Balkan region. The EU is also the largest market in the world economy and as such plays a major role in international economic and political relations.

In addition, domestic politics in Europe is significantly shaped by policy making and legal rulings by the EU institutions. EU law sometimes challenges fundamental components of the member-states' cultural, economic, and political fabric. One of our assignments will focus on a current issue of this sort: how membership in a single currency affects domestic politics, particularly regarding fiscal policy.

Beyond its relevance for current international and domestic politics, European integration is interesting because it is a unique response to international conflict, representing an unprecedented degree of pooled sovereignty among European nations. Consequently, the process of European integration is possibly the most important post-war political development in Europe.

This course is designed to provide the student with an understanding of why European states created the European Union, what the European Union does (its scope of governance), how its political system functions, and where it is headed (enlargement and institutional reform). In addressing these issues, the course draws on general explanations from the study of politics. This will hopefully help students apply their understanding of European integration to questions of political and economic integration across the globe.

Course Organization

The Course is divided into three parts. The first section of the course will focus on the history of European integration and why member states have joined the organization. We will also discuss what the EU does—i.e., the policy areas over which the EU governs. The second part of the course will focus on the institutions of the EU and the process of supranational governance. The third portion of the course will address contemporary

issues regarding the “Euro crisis”—the serious fiscal and banking issues related to resolving debt problems in several members of the single currency.

The course grade is based on the following assignments:

1. *Participation (10%)*: While I will occasionally lecture, a significant portion of the course meetings is devoted to class discussion. To participate in discussions, students must read the assigned texts and prepare to discuss them.
2. *Map Quiz (5%)*: On September 5, I will give a quiz in class in which students will be asked to provide four pieces of information about the twenty-eight EU members: name, location, population, and Gross Domestic Product (GDP). This information is available at epp.eurostat.ec.europa.eu (e.g., in the eurostat yearbook, which is found under “publications”).
3. *Country report (5%)*: On September 24, each student will turn in a memo of about 600 words reflecting the position of a European nation in 1950 toward European integration. The report should include information about the country’s political and economic situation relevant to its relations with other European countries. This country report will form the basis for the student’s bargaining with other European states in the in-class simulation on September 26. Generally, the student should learn about the political ideology of the government, the economic conditions of the country, and the country’s international economic and political relations with its neighbors. For some nations, security issues will be paramount. For others, their main concern will be economic recovery and trade. Specific instructions for the report will be provided in class.
4. *Position Paper on the Euro crisis (10%)*: On November 26, each student will submit a policy position paper of not more than 2000 words. The paper will provide policy recommendations regarding management of the Euro crisis to one of the following governments (Estonia, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, or Spain). Instructions for the report will be provided at the beginning of the related material (tentatively scheduled for November 12).
5. *Two Exams (35% each)*. The final exam is not comprehensive. These exams will cover the class lecture/discussion and the assigned readings. This means that all of the reading material is fair game, even the parts that are not discussed in class. Note that make-up exams will only be given under extraordinary circumstances

Notes on Grading

Writing proficiency: On all written assignments (e.g., the country report), I will grade until either I have found five writing errors (including spelling and grammar) or I have completed the paper. Please proofread your work.

Cheating and Plagiarism: Cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. For further information on definitions of cheating and plagiarism, see the university document at <http://www.wustl.edu/policies/undergraduate-academic-integrity.html>.

Readings

1. The following books are available in the bookstore:

a. *The Political System of the European Union, 3rd edition.* Simon Hix and Bjorn Hoyland. 2011. Palgrave Macmillan Press.

b. *The Struggle for Europe.* William Hitchcock. 2004. Doubleday.

2. Articles and book chapters, available through ARes.

3. Students are encouraged to follow contemporary events in the European Union. The best two sources of current news on the EU are *The Economist* magazine and the *Financial Times*. The *Financial Times* is available on the web (for free) at www.ft.com. An on-line subscription provides valuable access to information on the current financial crisis.

Tentative Schedule

| Date | Topic | Reading Assignment |
|-------------|--|--|
| 8/27 | Introduction | |
| 8/29 | No class | |
| 9/3 | Europe to 1945 | Hitchcock, ch. 1 |
| 9/5-9/10 | Post-War Europe <u>*map quiz 9/5</u> | Hitchcock, chs. 2-5 |
| 9/12-9/17 | Some Basics on Political Integration and Disintegration | Hooghe and Marks (ARes) Alesina and Spolaore (ARes) |
| 9/19-9/24 | Some Basics on Economic Integration <u>*country report due 9/24</u> | Krugman, Nobel Prize Lecture (ARes) |
| 9/26 | In-class bargaining simulation | |
| 10/1-10/3 | Economic Integration and Spillover | Hix, chs. 8,9, 10 (245-254), 11(273-288), 12 (302-323); Hitchcock, chs. 8,13, 15 |
| 10/8 | Review | |
| 10/10 | First Exam | |
| 10/15 | Overview of EU Political system | Hix, ch. 1; Hitchcock, ch. 16 |
| 10/17-10/22 | Social and Political Cleavages | Hix, ch. 5 |
| 10/24 | Political Parties and Representation | Hix, chs. 6, 7 |
| 10/29 | Executive Politics | Hix, ch. 2 |
| 10/31-11/5 | Legislative Politics | Hix, ch. 3 |
| 11/7 | Judicial Politics and Legal Integration | Hix, ch. 4 |
| 11/12 | A Primer on the politics and economics of fiscal policy and sovereign debt | TBA |
| 11/14 | Background on the Euro and EMU | Hix, ch. 10 |
| 11/19-11/21 | The recent and continuing Euro area crisis | 2 Michael Lewis readings from Vanity Fair on ARes |
| 11/26 | Prospects and potential solutions <u>*Position paper due 11/26</u> | Economist readings on ARes (TBA) |
| 12/3 | Review | |
| 12/5 | Second Exam | |