

# European Politics

## Details

Instructor: Bogdan G. Popescu

Hours: TBA

Total Hours of Contact: 2:30 per week

Credits: 3

Prerequisites: None

Office Hours: TBA

## Course Description

This course explores the development and contemporary dynamics of European politics, focusing on the historical evolution of political institutions and ideologies and their implications for modern political challenges. The first half of the course covers foundational themes, including state-building through wars, the influence of religion, the emergence of democracy, nationalism, and the tension between federalism and centralization in Europe. The second half of the course transitions to examining post-World War II developments, the creation and impact of the European Union, welfare state varieties, and the rise of populism. Some questions that this course focuses on include:

- How did wars and religious institutions shape European nation-states?
- What were the key factors leading to the development of totalitarian regimes in interwar Europe?
- What role does the European Union play in transforming national political landscapes and addressing cross-border issues?
- How do modern European political challenges, like populism and economic integration, connect to these historical roots?

By engaging with various regions beyond Europe, including comparisons with the United States and the Middle East, students will critically examine political outcomes through the lens of border-making and explore the global role of Europe today.

## Summary of Course Content

This course introduces students to the historical and contemporary dynamics of European political development. It begins with the emergence of state structures through war and religion, exploring how these forces shaped governance, borders, and the foundations of democracy and nationalism. Students will examine federalism versus centralization and the role of political extremism and civil society across different eras.

The latter part of the course focuses on post-World War II transformations, such as the development of welfare states, the creation of the European Union, and varieties of capitalism. We conclude with an analysis of populism and identity politics, studying how economic pressures, globalization, and regional divisions impact modern European politics.

## Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the students will:

- Understand and articulate the historical development of European political institutions and ideologies.
- Analyze current political challenges and policies in European countries and assess their historical roots.
- Critically evaluate the impact of European integration and other international dynamics on political systems in Europe.

In addition to substantive knowledge, students will also gain transferable skills in analytical and critical thinking, written and verbal communication, and public speaking through presentations and discussions.

## Assessment

You will be graded based on how well-prepared you come to class. During the first session, there will be primarily a lecture, while the second session will be dedicated to student presentations and a discussion. During the second session, students must demonstrate their knowledge of the readings and ability to engage in independent, critical thinking. References to current global issues will be a constant. Contributions to class discussion, especially during the second session, will represent 33% of the final grade.

There will be a mid-term in-class, closed-book exam, which will test the improvement of students' knowledge of the theories and facts developed in the first half of the course. There will also be a final exam, which will be comprehensive of all topics covered in the course. The exam will test students' knowledge and ability to engage in proactive, independent critical thinking. Both the mid-term and final exams represent 33% of the grade.

A major exam (midterm or final) cannot be made up without the permission of the Dean's Office. The Dean's Office will grant such permission only when the absence was caused by a serious impediment, such as a documented illness, hospitalization or death in the immediate family (in which you must attend the funeral) or other situations of similar gravity. Absences due to other meaningful conflicts, such as job interviews, family celebrations, travel difficulties, student misunderstandings or personal convenience, will not be excused. Students who will be absent from a major exam must notify the Dean's Office prior to that exam. Absences from class due to the observance of a religious holiday will normally be excused. Individual students who will have to miss class to observe a religious holiday should notify the instructor by the end of the Add/Drop period to make prior arrangements for making up any work that will be missed.

## Attendance

Students are required to attend classes following the University's policies. Students with more than four unexcused absences (two weeks) are assumed to have withdrawn from the course. Thus, students must attend classes and all exams in person on campus (unless otherwise required by the University).

Students with a justified need to participate in any exam remotely may do so only if express permission has been obtained from the Dean's Office before the exam.

## **Students with Learning Difficulties and other Disabilities**

The University does not discriminate based on disability. Students with approved accommodations must inform their professors at the beginning of the term. Please see the website for the complete policy.

## **Required Books**

There are no specific required book for the course. See the items for every specific week's session.

## **Academic Honesty**

As stated in the university catalog, any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade on the work in which the dishonesty occurred. In addition, acts of academic dishonesty, irrespective of the weight of the assignment, may result in the student receiving a failing grade in the course. Instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs. A student who is reported twice for academic dishonesty is subject to summary dismissal from the University. In such a case, the Academic Council will then make a recommendation to the President, who will make the final decision.

## **Week 1**

### **Class 1: Intro to the Course**

Date - Day - Lecture

- Introduction and course overview
- How did wars make states in Europe?

#### ***Reading***

Charles Tilly. 1992. Coercion, Capital, and European States. Blackwell: Basil. C1: Cities and States in World History; C3: How War Made States, and Vice Versa

Nicola Gennaioli and Joachim Voth. 2013. "State Capacity and Military Conflict." Review of Economic Studies. Vol. 82(4): pp. 1409-1448

### **Class 2: Wars and States**

Date - Day - Seminar

- What is the relationship between wars and states?
- How do states control coercion?

#### ***Reading***

Tilly, Charles. 1985. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." In Bringing the State Back In, edited by Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol. Cambridge University Press.

Dincecco, Mark, and Massimiliano Gaetano Onorato. 2016. "Military Conflict and the Rise of Urban Europe." Journal of Economic Growth 21 (3): 259–82.

Acharya, Avidit and Alexander Lee. 2019. "Path Dependence in European Development: Medieval Politics, Conflict and State Building." *Comparative Political Studies*, 52 (13-14), 2171-2206.

## Week 2

### Class 1: Religion and States

Date - Day - Lecture

- How did Catholicism impact state-formation?
- How did Church censuses impact state development in Europe?

#### *Reading*

Grzymala-Busse, Anna. 2023. *Sacred Foundations: The Religious and Medieval Roots of the European State*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. C1, C2.

Grzymala-Busse, Anna. 2023. Tilly Goes to Church: The Religious and Medieval Roots of European State Fragmentation. *American Political Science Review*. Vol. 118 (1): pp.: 88 - 107

### Class 2: Religion and States

Date - Day - Lecture

- What cause the divergence between the Christian West and the Muslim World?
- How did religious wars impact political stability and institutional development?

#### *Reading*

Blaydes, Lisa. 2013. The Feudal Revolution and Europe's Rise: Political Divergence of the Christian West and Muslim World before 1500 CE. *American Political Science Review*. Vol. 107 (1): pp. 16-34

Blaydes, Lisa and Paik, Christopher. 2016. The Impact of Holy Land Crusades on State Formation: War Mobilization, Trade Integration, and Political Development in Medieval Europe. *International Organization*. Vol. 70(3): pp. 551-586

## Week 3

### Class 1: Governing Peripheries

Date - Day - Lecture

- Can peripheries be governed by competing states?
- What are the effects of periphery governance by competing states?

#### *Reading*

Abramson, Scott F. 2017. "The Economic Origins of the Territorial State." *International Organization* 71 (1): 97-130.

Abramson, Scott F., Carter, David B., and Ying, Luwei. 2022. "Historical Border Changes, State Building, and Contemporary Trust in Europe." *American Political Science Review*. Vol. 116 (3), pp. 875-895

## **Class 2: Borders and Ethnic Politics**

Date - Day - Seminar

- What is the relationship between ethnicity and territorial claims?
- How does homeland territoriality affect the necessity for sovereign claims?

### ***Reading***

Sahlins, Peter. 1991. *Boundaries: The Making of France and Spain in the Pyrenees*. Oakland: University of California Press. C1

Carl Müller-Crepon, Guy Schvitz, and Lars-Erik Cederman. 2024. *Shaping States into Nations: The Effects of Ethnic Geography on State Borders*. *American Journal of Political Science*.

## **Week 4**

### **Class 1: Making of Democracy in Europe**

Date - Day - Lecture

- How do historical institutions contribute to the emergence of democracy?
- How does historical public debt contribute to the making of states?

### ***Reading***

Abramson, Scott F., and Carles Boix. 2019. “Endogenous Parliaments: Urban Agglomeration, Technological Accumulation.” *International Organization* 73(4), pp. 793-837

Stasavage, David. 2003. *Public debt and the Birth of the democratic state: France and Great Britain 1688–1789*. Cambridge University Press. Introduction.

### **Class 2: Making of Democracy in Europe**

Date - Day - Seminar

- How do historical institutions contribute to institutional trust?
- What is the connection between institutional trust and political stability?

### ***Reading***

Putnam, Robert D., Robert Leonardi, and Raffaella Y. Nanetti. 1994. *Making democracy work: Civic traditions in modern Italy*. Princeton university press, pp. 83-137, 142-148.

Becker, Sascha O., Boeckh, Katrin, Hainz, Christa, and Woessmann, Ludger. 2016. “The Empire is Dead, Long live the Empire! Long-run persistence of Trust and Corruption in the Bureaucracy”. *The Economic Journal*. 126(580): pp. 40-74

Vogler, Jan. 2019. *Imperial Rule, the Imposition of Bureaucratic Institutions, and their Long-term Legacies*. *World Politics*, Vol. 71 (4): pp. 806–863

## **Week 5**

### **Class 1: Nationalism**

Date - Day - Lecture

- What is the connection between states and nationalism?

- What is the connection between nationalism and ethnicity?

### ***Reading***

Tilly, Charles. 1994. "States and Nationalism in Europe 1492-1992". *Theory and Society*. Vol. 23(1): pp. 131-146

Calhoun, Craig. 1993. "Nationalism and Ethnicity." *Annual Review of Sociology*. Vol. 19. pp. 211-239

### **Class 2: Nationalism**

Date - Day - Lecture

- Why do some specific historical legacies make some modern nationalisms more consequential?
- How does ethnic conflict lead to nationalism?

### ***Reading***

Lars-Erik Cederman, Yannick Pengl, Luc Girardin, and Carl Müller-Crepon. 2024. The Future is History: Restorative Nationalism and Conflict in Post-Napoleonic Europe. *International Organization*, 78(2), 259-292.

Carl Müller-Crepon, Guy Schvitz, and Lars-Erik Cederman 2024. 'Right-Peopling' the State: Nationalism, Historical Legacies and Ethnic Cleansing in Europe, 1886-2020. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

## **Week 6**

### **Class 1: Origins of Federalism and Centralization**

Date - Day - Lecture

- Why are some countries federal and others centralized?
- How do political leaders impact the emergence of federalism?

### ***Reading***

Ziblatt, Daniel. 2004. Rethinking the Origins of Federalism. *Puzzle, Theory, and Evidence from Nineteenth-Century Europe*. *World Politics* 57: pp. 70-98

Ziblatt, Daniel. 2006. *Structuring the State: The Formation of Italy and Germany and the Puzzle of Federalism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. C. Introduction

### **Class 2: Consequences of Federalism and Centralization**

Date - Day - Lecture

- What is the connection between indirect rule and federalism?
- How does federalism impact voting behavior?

### ***Reading***

Gerring, John, Ziblatt, Daniel, Van Gorp, Johan, and Arévalo, Julián. 2011. "An Institutional Theory of Direct and Indirect Rule". *World Politics*, Vol. 63(3): pp. 377-433

Ziblatt, Daniel. 2022. Wealth of Tongues: Why Peripheral Regions Vote for the Radical Right in Germany. *American Political Science Review*. Vol. 118(3): pp. 1480 - 1496

## Week 7

### Class 1: World War 2

Date - Day - Lecture

- What are the historical roots of political extremism?
- How does social capital impact voting behavior?

#### *Reading*

Satyanath, Shanker, Voigtländer, Nico, and Voth, Hans-Joachim. 2017. "Bowling for Fascism: Social Capital and the Rise of the Nazi Party". *Journal of Political Economy*. Vol. 125(2).

Fontana, Nicola, Tommaso Nannicini, and Guido Tabellini. 2018. "Historical roots of political extremism: The effects of Nazi occupation of Italy."

### Class 2: World War 2

Date - Day - Lecture

- How can civil society impact authoritarianism?
- How does experience with war impact voting behavior?

#### *Reading*

Berman, Sheri. 1997. Civil Society and the Collapse of the Weimar Republic. *World Politics*. Vol. 49(3): pp. 401 - 429

Haass, Felix, De Juan, Alexander, Koos, Carlo, and Tichelbaecker, Thomas. 2024. War and Nationalism: How WW1 battle deaths fueled civilians' support for the Nazi Party. *American Political Science Review*, 118(1): 144-162.

## Week 8

Class 1: Revision for Midterm

10/21/2024 - Mon - Lecture

Class 2: MIDTERM

10/23/2024 - Wed

## Week 9

### Class 1: Postwar Economic and Political Development in Europe

Date - Day - Lecture

- What factors contributed to the European political stability after WW2?
- How did social democracy come to be?

#### *Reading*

Maier, Charles S. 1981. The Two Postwar Eras and the Conditions for Stability in Twentieth-Century Western Europe. *The American Historical Review*, Vol. 86(2): pp. 327-352

Berman, Sheri. *The Primacy of Politics: Social Democracy and the Making of Europe's Twentieth Century*. Cambridge University Press: Cambridge. Chapter 8

### **Class 1: Postwar Economic and Political Development in Europe**

Date - Day - Lecture

- How did Europe emerge economically after WW2?
- How did social democracy come to be?

#### ***Reading***

Kalyvas, Stathis and Kees van Kersbergen, 2010. "Christian Democracy." *Annual Review of Political Science* vol. 13: pp 183-209.

Eichengreen, Barry. 2008. *The European Economy Since 1945: Coordinated Capitalism and Beyond*. Princeton University Press: Princeton. Chapter two.

## **Week 10**

### **Class 1: The Making of the European Union**

Date - Day - Lecture

- How to make sense of the EU?
- How did EU countries transition from nation states to EU member states?

#### ***Reading***

Simon Hix, 2005. *The Political System of the European Union*. Palgrave. C1 and C2

Bickerton, Christopher, 2012. *European Integration: From Nation States to Member States*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. C1 and C2

### **Class 2: Centralization and Decentralization in the EU**

Date - Day - Lab

- Can federalism explain the structure of the EU?
- What is the relationship between linguistic structure and federalism in the EU?

#### ***Reading***

Tanja A. Börzel, Madeleine O. Hosli. 2003. Brussels between Bern and Berlin: Comparative Federalism Meets the European Union. *Governance*. Vol. 16(2): pp. 179-202

Jan Erk, Koning, Edward. 2009. New Structuralism and Institutional Change: Federalism Between Centralization and Decentralization. *Comparative Political Studies*. Vol. 43(3).



## Week 11

### Class 1: East vs. West

Date - Day - Lecture

- What are the employer-centered approaches in explanations of welfare states?
- What is the role of organized labor and parties in the development of welfare states?

#### *Reading*

Eichengreen, Barry. 2008. The European economy since 1945: coordinated capitalism and beyond. Princeton: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 3.

Parrish, Scott. 1997. The Marshall Plan. Soviet-American Relations and the Division of Europe. in "The Establishment Of Communist Regimes In Eastern Europe, 1944-1949", Naimark, Norman (eds.) pp. 267-291

### Class 2: East vs. West

Date - Day - Lecture

- What are the social bases of political division in Post-Communist Eastern Europe?
- What is the productivity gape between Europe and the US?

#### *Reading*

Evans, Geoffrey. 2006. The Social Bases of Political Divisions in Post-Communist Eastern Europe. Annual Review of Sociology, Vol. 32. pp. 245-270.

van Ark, Bart, O'Mahoney, Mary, and Timmer, Marcel P. 2008. "The Productivity Gap between Europe and the United States: Trends and Causes". Journal of Economic Perspectives, Vol. 22 (1): pp. 25-44.

## Week 12

### Class 1: Britain vs. Europe

Date - Day - Lecture

- What is the relationship between Britain and the EU?
- How does British politics differ from European politics?

#### *Reading*

Baker, David, and Seawright. 1998. Britain For and Against Europe. British Politics and the Question of European Integration. Oxford: Oxford University Press. C1. C3

Cooper, Robert, 2012. Britain and Europe. International Affairs, Vol. 88, 6, pp. 1191-1203

### Class 2: Britain vs. Europe

Date - Day - Seminar

- What did Brexit mean for British politics?
- What is the relationship between US, Britain and the EU?

### ***Reading***

Evans, Geoffrey and Menon, Anad. 2017. Brexit and British Politics. Polity Press. C1

Gamble, Andrew. 2003. Between Europe and America. The Future of British Politics. Springer. C1, C3

## **Week 13**

### **Class 1: Varieties of Capitalism**

Date - Day - Lecture

- What are the employer-centered approaches in explanations of welfare states?
- What is the role of organized labor and parties in the development of welfare states?

### ***Reading***

Hall, Peter A. and Soskice, David. 2001. Varieties of capitalism. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Introduction

Esping-Andersen, Gosta. 1990. The three worlds of welfare capitalism. Princeton: Princeton University Press Princeton. [Intro, Chapters 1, 2]

### **Class 2: Varieties of Capitalism**

Date - Day - Seminar

- Does the “Varieties of Capitalism” approach explain economic development in the last decade?

### ***Reading***

Thelen, Kathleen, 2001. “Varieties of Labor Politics in the Developed Democracies,” in Peter Hall and David Soskice, eds., Varieties of Capitalism: The Institutional Foundations of Comparative Advantage. Oxford University Press.

## **Week 14**

### **Class 1: Populism**

Date - Day - Lecture

- What are the differences between land-border and sea-border regions?
- What are the other kinds of borders that replace or overlap with the traditional state borders?

### ***Reading***

Colantone, Italo and Stanig, Piero. 2018. Global competition and Brexit. *American Political Science Review*, 112(2):201–218

Dancygier, Rafaela and Walter, Stefanie. 2015. ‘Globalization, Labor Market Risks, and Class Cleavages’. In: Beramendi, Pablo, Silja Häusermann, Hebert Kitschelt and Hanspeter Kriesche (eds). *The Politics of Advanced Capitalism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 133-56

## **Class 2: Populism**

Date - Day - Lecture

- What are the differences between land-border and sea-border regions?
- What are the other kinds of borders that replace or overlap with the traditional state borders?

### ***Reading***

Noury, Abdul and Roland, Gerard. 2020. Identity Politics and Populism in Europe. *Annual Review of Political Science*. Vol. 23. pp. 421-439

Guriev, Sergei and Papaioannou, Elias. 2022. The Political Economy of Populism *Journal of Economic Literature*. Vol. 60 (3). pp. 753–832

## **Week 15**

**Class 1: Final Exam**