

**GOV324L (#38555)  
EUS 350 (#36650)  
Government & Politics of Western Europe  
Spring 2021**

**Professor: Zeynep Somer-Topcu, PhD**  
[zsomer@utexas.edu](mailto:zsomer@utexas.edu)

**Teaching Assistant (TA): Kendall Curtis**

**Office hours of the professor:** Tuesdays, 9:30-11:30am. You must reserve a 15-minute slot using <https://calendly.com/zsomer/office-hours>

### **Introduction**

This course provides students with a general introduction to the political institutions, voter behavior, and issues in West Europe. The objective is to equip students with a broad overview of the politics and political systems of Western Europe, as well as on concepts, methods, and tools to understand and analyze contemporary developments. The course is organized thematically (rather than in a country-specific way) around a framework that emphasizes the political determinants and policy consequences of institutional differences.

We will start the course with a short overview of the countries and the history of Europe. We will then look at political institutions in Europe—ranging from the executive power to the parliaments, electoral systems, parties, and party systems. In the second half of the course we will discuss the important issues/problems Western European countries face: (1) regionalism, (2) the European Union, (3) lack of voter interest/knowledge, (4) immigration, (5) the rise of anti-immigrant politics and challenges the mainstream parties face, (6) COVID-19, and (7) European foreign relations and security issues.

### **Online Lectures/ Discussion Sections:**

I will record and post both Tuesday and Thursday lectures by Sunday evening. You will find them on Canvas. You are expected to watch both by 9:30am on Thursdays, when we will have a discussion section on the topics covered in both lectures.

On Thursdays, we will have a discussion section about that week's material between 9:30-10:30am. You are required to participate in the discussion section. At 10:30am on Thursday there will be a multi-questions quiz about the Tuesday and Thursday lecture material as well as the discussion section material.

## **Course Requirements:**

<b>Participation in Discussion Session</b>	<b>+3 points (extra credit)</b>
<b>Quizzes</b>	<b>20%</b>
<b>Three Exams</b>	<b>20% (each)</b>
<b>Final Paper</b>	<b>20%</b>

### **Participation in Discussion (+3 points)**

While the class presentations are asynchronous (I will record the lectures and post them on Canvas), you are required to join us on **Thursdays** (only) for the discussion sections (between 9:30am and 10:30am). During this discussion section we will have a discussion of some important and interesting topics that are related to that week's readings.

Your attendance is a must, but your participation is not. However, in order to encourage your participation, I will assign you an extra-credit participation grade at the end of the semester which will increase your final course grade by at most 3 points. That is, if your average course grade from quizzes, exams, and papers is 91 (A-), you can increase your final grade to 94 (A) if you have a good participation record during these discussion sections.

I will cut a letter grade from your final course grade if you miss attending **more than four** of these sections. (That is, if your final grade is a B+, you will receive a B for the course grade).

### **Quizzes (20%)**

There will be 12 quizzes throughout the semester. The quizzes are always on Thursdays at 10:30am on Canvas and should last about 10-15 minutes to complete. The quizzes will be about the Tuesday and Thursday class videos, the Thursday discussion session, and the readings assigned for those classes.

You may use any written or online sources to answer the quizzes, but you should not discuss the quizzes with each other or receive assistance from anyone.

Quizzes cannot be made up or retaken. We will drop two lowest graded quizzes from your final quiz grade calculation.

### **Exams (20% each)**

There are three exams scattered throughout the semester (there is no final exam). Each exam will be a combination of short and long essays. You will take the exam during the course time (9:30am-10:50am) on the days they are assigned. The exams are not cumulative. The exams are open notes but you cannot work with other students in the class on the exams.

If you foresee problems with the exam dates, see me during office hours, or contact me by e-mail at least two weeks *before* the assigned dates.

### **Final Paper (20%)**

Late March/early April I will announce 3-4 topics for the final paper, on one of which you will be assigned to write your research paper. The paper will require you to do extra research beyond class readings (you must cite about 10 sources at minimum). The final paper will be no more than 8 pages long (double-space, 12 font Times New Roman), excluding the bibliography and the title page. You are required to develop an opinion about the topic, summarize the literature and the scholarly debate on the topic, and convince me about your argument/opinion.

You are NOT allowed to collaborate with other students in writing this paper.

### **Grading Scheme:**

In this course I will use the following grading scheme:

A	100 - 93.34
A-	93.33 - 90
B+	89.99 - 86.67
B	86.66 - 83.34
B-	83.33 - 80
C+	79.99 - 76.67
C	76.66 - 73.34
C-	73.33 - 70
D+	69.99 - 66.67
D	66.66 - 63.34
D-	63.33 - 60
F	Below 60

### **Required Text:**

The following book is available for purchase at the bookstore or can be purchased online:

Gallagher, Laver and Mair. 2011. *Representative Government in Modern Europe: Institutions, Parties, and Governments*. McGraw Hill. **5th Edition**.  
(Make sure you have the correct edition)

There will also be required news articles or editorials assigned for each class period. These will be based on the current events for the topic under discussion. We will post them on Canvas on Fridays before each week.

There will be additional required articles/chapters for some classes. These readings are denoted with an asterisk (\*\*) in the syllabus, and will be available on Canvas in advance.

## **MAKE-UP EXAMS AND EXTENSION OF DEADLINES POLICY**

You cannot make-up for the quizzes. Make-up exams and extension of deadlines for the final paper will not be offered except in extremely rare circumstances. These extremely rare circumstances can be: (1) University sanctioned events (verification required) (2) extraordinary circumstances such as medical emergency, or (3) religious observances. Make-up exams and extension of deadlines requested for any other reason will be decided on a case by case basis, and will be subject to a 20% grade penalty. **Vacations and early departure for breaks do not constitute legitimate reasons for extensions or make-up exams.** If you know you are going to miss an exam or a deadline, notify me as soon as possible BEFORE the exam and the deadline – no later than 14 days prior to the exam date or deadline.

## **Citation and Reference Guidelines for Written Work**

The papers, as well as the citations of articles and books in the body of the papers, and the list of citations or references at the end of the papers, should all adhere to formatting guidelines for all papers written for courses in the Government department. Those guidelines are presented in a memo that I will post to Canvas.

## **Academic Honesty and Plagiarism**

**University's Honor Code governs all work in this course.** As commonly defined, plagiarism consists of passing off as one's own the ideas, words, writings, etc., which belong to another. In accordance with the definition, you are committing plagiarism if you copy the work of another person and turn it in as your own, even if you should have the permission of the person. Students are expected to familiarize themselves with and observe university's policies against cheating and plagiarism. If you have any questions regarding academic honesty, please consult the university's Honor Code: <http://registrar.utexas.edu/catalogs/gi09-10/ch01/index.html>

## **Senate Bill 212 and Title IX Reporting Requirements**

Under Senate Bill 212 (SB 212), the professor and TAs for this course are required to report for further investigation any information concerning incidents of sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, and stalking committed by or against a UT student or employee. Federal law and university policy also requires reporting incidents of sex- and gender-based discrimination and sexual misconduct (collectively known as Title IX incidents). This means we cannot keep confidential information about any such incidents that you share with us. If you need to talk with someone who can maintain confidentiality, please contact University Health Services (512-471-4955 or 512-475-6877) or the UT Counseling and Mental Health Center (512-471-3515 or 512-471-2255). We strongly urge you make use of these services for any needed support and that you report any Title IX incidents to the [Title IX Office](#).

## **Students with Disabilities**

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this

legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a learning or physical disability, or if you learn best utilizing a particular method, please discuss with me how I can best accommodate your learning needs. I will maintain the confidentiality of your learning needs. If appropriate, you should contact the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259, <http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/> to get more information on accommodating disabilities.

### **Sharing of Course Materials is Prohibited:**

No materials used in this class, including, but not limited to, lecture hand-outs, videos, assessments (quizzes, exams, papers, projects, homework assignments), in-class materials, review sheets, and additional problem sets, may be shared online or with anyone outside of the class unless you have my explicit, written permission. Unauthorized sharing of materials promotes cheating. It is a violation of the University's Student Honor Code and an act of academic dishonesty. I am well aware of the sites used for sharing materials, and any materials found online that are associated with you, or any suspected unauthorized sharing of materials, will be reported to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity in the Office of the Dean of Students. These reports can result in sanctions, including failure in the course.

### **Class Recordings:**

Class recordings are reserved only for students in this class for educational purposes and are protected under FERPA. The recordings should not be shared outside the class in any form. Violation of this restriction by a student could lead to Student Misconduct proceedings.

## **Course Schedule**

Below is a tentative schedule of readings, topics and assignments that will be covered in the course. I reserve the right to make changes to the schedule, including exam dates, and it is the student's responsibility to be aware of these changes. Date changes will be announced well in advance during class.

**All readings are required. Those reading marked with double asterisks (\*\*) will be available through Canvas. Readings should be done in the order listed.**

January 19, Tuesday

**Introduction: Brief Overview of the European History and Countries, Overview of Syllabus**  
Gallagher et al., ch.1

## **Module 1: European Political Institutions**

January 21, Thursday	<b>The Executive</b> Gallagher et al., ch.2 ** News article/ editorial QUIZ AT 10:30AM ON CANVAS
January 26, Tuesday	<b>Parliaments I</b> Gallagher et al., ch.3 (up to section 3.4 on p.63) Gallagher et al. ch. 12 (between pages 414-420) ** News articles/ editorials
January 28, Thursday	<b>Parliaments II</b> Gallagher et al., ch.3 (rest of the chapter) ** News articles/ editorials QUIZ AT 10:30AM ON CANVAS
February 2, Tuesday	<b>Elections, Electoral Systems, and Referenda I</b> Gallagher et al., ch.11 (up to section 11.5.5 on p.387)
February 4, Thursday	<b>Elections, Electoral Systems, and Referenda II</b> Gallagher et al., ch.11 (from p. 389 to p. 400) ** Blais, Andre and R. K. Carty. 1991. "The Psychological Impact of Electoral Laws: Measuring Duverger's Elusive Factor." <i>British Journal of Political Science</i> 21: 79-93. QUIZ AT 10:30AM ON CANVAS
February 9, Tuesday	<b>Elections, Electoral Systems, and Referenda III</b> Gallagher et al., ch.11 (referenda section (11.7) and mixed member section (11.5.2)) ** News articles/ editorial
February 11, Thursday	<b>Building and Maintaining a Government</b> Gallagher et al., ch. 12 (from section 12.3 onwards (from page 420 until the end of the chapter)) ** News article/ editorial QUIZ AT 10:30AM ON CANVAS
February 16, Tuesday	<b>Democratic (Selective) Representation in Europe</b> ** Ezrow, Lawrence, C. E. De Vries, M. Steenbergen, and E. E. Edwards. 2011. "Mean Voter Representation and Partisan Constituency Representation." <i>Party Politics</i> 17(3): 275-301.
February 18, Thursday	<b><u>EXAM #1</u></b>

February 23, Tuesday      **Constitutions, Judges and Politics**  
Gallagher et al., ch. 4  
\*\* News article/ editorial

## **Module 2: European Parties and Party Systems**

February 25, Thursday      **Cleavage Structures and Electoral Change**  
Gallagher et al., ch. 9 (up to section 9.9)  
QUIZ AT 10:30AM ON CANVAS

March 2, Tuesday      **Patterns in Party Politics and Party Systems**  
\*\* Ware ch. 5  
\*\* News articles/ editorials

March 4, Thursday      **Party Change**  
\*\* Katz, Richard S. and Peter Mair. 1995. "Changing Models of Party Organization." *Party Politics* 1(1): 5-28.  
QUIZ AT 10:30AM ON CANVAS

March 9, Tuesday      **Inside European Political Parties: Party Members**  
Gallagher et al., ch.10 (up to the section of "Power within Parties")  
\*\* Norris, Pippa. 1995. "May's Law of Curvilinear Disparity Revisited: Leaders, Officers, Members and Voters in British Political Parties" *Party Politics* 1: 29-47.

March 11, Thursday      **Inside European Political Parties II: Manifestos, leaders, and candidates**  
Gallagher et al. ch. 10 (the rest of the chapter)  
\*\* Horiuchi et al. 2015. "Hard Acts to Follow." *Party Politics* 21: 357-366.  
QUIZ AT 10:30AM ON CANVAS

March 16, 18:      **Spring break- no class**

## **Module 3: Issues in European Politics**

March 23, Tuesday      **Levels of Governance I**  
Gallagher et al., ch. 6 (sections 6.4 and 6.5)  
\*\* News articles/ editorials

March 25, Thursday      **Levels of Governance II**  
Gallagher et al., ch. 6 (section 6.6)  
\*\* News article/ editorial  
QUIZ AT 10:30AM ON CANVAS

March 30, Tuesday	<b>European Voters— Political knowledge, partisanship, vote</b> ** Dalton, Russell. Citizen Politics. Ch. 2 ** Blais, André. 2006. “What Affects Voter Turnout?” <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i> 9: 111-125.
April 1, Thursday	<b>EXAM #2</b>
April 6, Tuesday	<b>The European Union I</b> Gallagher et al. ch. 5 (up to section 5.4, page 139)
April 8, Thursday	<b>The European Union II</b> Gallagher et al. ch. 5 (rest of the chapter) ** News articles/ editorials <b>QUIZ AT 10:30AM ON CANVAS</b>
April 13, Tuesday	<b>The European Union III</b> Review ch. 5 of Gallagher et al. ** News articles/ editorials
April 15, Thursday	<b>European Parliamentary Elections vs. National Elections</b> ** Hix, Simon and Michael Marsh. 2007. “Punishment or Protest? Understanding European Parliamentary Elections.” <i>Journal of Politics</i> 69(2): 495-510. <b>QUIZ AT 10:30AM ON CANVAS</b>
April 20, Tuesday	<b>Immigration and Asylum</b> ** News articles/ editorials
April 22, Thursday	<b>Anti-System Politics: The rise</b> **van der Brug, Wouter, Meindert Fennema and Jean Tillie. 2005. “Why Some Anti-immigrant Parties Fail and Others Succeed: A Two-Step Model of Aggregate Electoral Support.” <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> 38:537. <b>QUIZ AT 10:30AM ON CANVAS</b>
April 27, Tuesday	<b>Anti-System Politics: How to Deal with It? Is it Relevant?</b> ** Meguid, Bonnie. 2005. “Competition between Unequals: The Role of Mainstream Party Strategy and Niche Party Success.” <i>American Political Science Review</i> 99(3): 347-360. ** Mudde, Cas. 2013. “Three Decades of Populist Right Parties in Western Europe: So What?” <i>European Journal of Political Research</i> 52: 1-19.
April 29, Thursday	<b>Exam #3</b>



May 4, Tuesday

**European Security after the Cold War**

\*\* Heywood et al., ch.17 (by Epstein and Gheciu)

\*\* News article/ editorial

May 6, Thursday

**Europe in the COVID age and the future of Europe**

Readings TBA

QUIZ AT 10:30AM ON CANVAS

**Final Papers Due May 14, Friday 5pm**