European Issues: Comparative integration and Latin American Relations

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Content:

This graduate course/seminar, open to advanced undergraduates, will be composed of four thematic blocs. The first one will open with a consideration of the fundamental structural and historical dimensions of the European Union (topic #1a), with special attention to the EU’s development, its essence and theoretical framework, and its nature as a potential model and point of reference for regional integration. Then an analysis of its main institutions (topic #1b) will follow. Topic #2 will be dedicated to the main dimensions of the European Union activity in the world, with an introduction to its relations with Latin America in a wider context. Topic #3 will deal with the main policies of the EU (what it does and how it is administered), with a special focus on the common agricultural policy, the development aid programs and the impact of the euro, all in a comparative setting.

The second bloc will offer a comprehensive treatment of the main features of the EU’s external relations (topic # 4). Special attention will be given to the external role of the European Commission, Parliament and Council. This includes the consideration of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (including the position of the High Representative of the CFSP and its transformation as Vice President of the Commission according to the Reform Treaty) and the construction of an autonomous defense structure. A consideration of the nature of the "internal" relations and policies of selected member states with the European Union as an entity, as well as their autonomous foreign policies, will be added. Finally, topic #5 will be dedicated to the enlargement plans to the rest of Europe, the EU's relations and intimate link to the “Neighborhood” (Eastern flank and the Mediterranean), and the international profile and legal personality of the EU in its external competences as a result of the development of the failed “constitutional” process leading to its substitute, the Reform Treaty of Lisbon.

The third bloc will begin by crossing the Atlantic Ocean and first deal with the EU’s linkages with an ample North American area (topic #6). In addition to the fundamental EU-US relationship (economic, strategic and political), special attention will be given to the development and nature of the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA) and its expansion, the failed Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), both as examples of the US-led “NAFTA” model of regional integration. A comparison of regional integration architectures in the rest of the world, with special attention to the European Union experience as hypothetical model for inter-American integration, will simultaneously complete this exploration of the EU’s link to the Western hemisphere link. Then, topic #7 will deal with the EU’s relations with the combined area of Central America and the Caribbean. In both cases, emphasis will be placed on the EU's practice of North-South development aid and cooperation. While in Central America the EU has historically concentrated on direct development aid and contributions to the pacification of the area, in addition to insistence on regional integration, the Caribbean region was placed early on in the framework of the Lomé/Cotonou agreements. Topic #8 will be dedicated to the EU’s attention and role in the huge South American region. The development of the Andean Community and MERCOSUR will illustrate examples of the imprint of the EU model of integration.

The last and fourth part of the course will be dedicated to the consideration of a special case of European-Latin American relations centered around the actions of Spain (topic #9), in the context of the EU
and as an autonomous state through its individual linkages. Two case studies will serve to illustrate this purpose. The first will be an analysis of bilateral links between Spain and selected Latin American countries. The second will deal with the historical background, development, logic and experiences of the Ibero-American Summits. Finally, individual focus will be placed on the very special relationship of the European Union and Spain with Cuba (topic #10).

Meetings will be conducted in a lecture/seminar format, supplemented by presentations offered by guest speakers. The expected work to be developed will be student-oriented. Participants will be able to specialize in some of the thematic and regional topics and geographical dimensions, and de-emphasize others.

Requirements:

- Two mini-papers/reports (40%, 20 points each), 600-800 words in essay format, with an attractive title, and developing an angle of the “central focus” of each of the thematic parts, and/or one of the “subtopics” of units 1-5 (paper #1) and 6-10 (paper #2). This essay has to use as references a balanced minimum number of sources:
  1. Basic information from EU pamphlets or EU web content
  2. A news item (30-day term) to prove current value of the subject chosen
  3. A chapter(s) of one of the basic books
  4. An advanced reading chapter from a secondary book
  5. An advanced scholarly reading, an academic article published in an academic journal, or a policy/analytical paper extracted from an institute, center, or think-tank (such as our own works found at www.as.miami.edu/eucenter under ‘publications’.)
  6. A direct reference to the content of a treaty of the EU or the Latin American integration systems.

Note: At least one source must be published or transmitted in a language other than English (preferably Spanish).

Note: 1 extra point for a 400-500 report on guest presentations within the sessions of the course. See special offer on seminar of March 1

- One major paper (40%), 3,000-4,000 words, or special project (approved by instructor). Number of sources: a minimum of 10, balanced, as in the mini-papers. To be due on the last day of classes, April 29.

- Objective testing (20 points, 20%; 10 each). First Test (Units 1-5). Date March 4; Second Test (Units 6-10). Date: Monday May 6 (final exam day). Retake of test I: same May 6.

Basic/priority books (ordered for bookstore and placed on Library reserve):

