

**POL381P:
WESTERN EUROPEAN GOVERNMENT AND POLITICS
SPRING 2010**

Professor: Dr. Davidson-Schmich

Phone: (305) 284-2143

Class meets Tues., Thurs. 11 – 12:15, MM101

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Office Hours: Tues/Thurs. 12:15 – 3:00; Friday 1 – 3;
by appointment (Room 314J Jenkins Building)

Class Web Site:
<http://www.courses.miami.edu>

I. Course Objectives

Both the United States and the countries of Western Europe are rich, long-term democracies. Despite these similarities, politics in the U.S. and Europe differ in many ways. Compared to this country, the countries of Western Europe have many more political parties that bring a broader range of issues to public debate than in the United States. Western European governments play a much greater role in redistributing wealth among their citizens than does the U.S. government. On average, Europeans tend to be more secular, more pacifist, more environmentally conscious, and less accepting of multiculturalism than their American counterparts. Finally, major European countries such as the U.K. and Germany have been led by a woman whereas the American Presidency remains a male domain.

This course will not only introduce students to these differences in greater depths, it will also search for explanations as to *why* these differences exist. We will examine institutional, cultural, and economic explanations for the political and economic variance across such similar countries.

II. Course Materials

1. Jürg Steiner and Markus M. L. Crepaz. 2009. *European Democracies*. 6th Edition. New York: Pearson Longman.
2. Ronald Inglehart and Pippa Norris. 2003. *Rising Tide: Gender Equality and Cultural Change Around the World*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
3. Articles on Blackboard
4. Pen(cil) and paper for note-taking.

III. **Course Requirements**

Students' grades will be based on the following assignments. Cheating or plagiarism on any assignment will result in a failing grade for the entire course.

Midterm Exam: 33%

Final Exam: 33%

Analytical Paper: 33%

Class Participation: 1%

Mid-Term and Final Exams

These will both be written exams based on class lectures and assigned readings..

Analytical Paper

Students will write an approximately 10 page analytical paper on a country of their choosing. Throughout the semester you will be asked to collect and turn in data about your particular country in order to, at the end of the semester, analyze and explain the percentage of women or minorities in your country's national parliament. The final paper will be due the last week of class; data collection will be due throughout the semester.

A Note on Participation

Participation grades will be based on several factors including regular class attendance, routine constructive contributions to class discussions, as well as active participation in in-class simulation activities. Students who end the semester with borderline grades and who have excelled in class participation will see their grades rounded up, while those who are not routinely prepared to participate in class will not have earned the extra point.

IV. **Schedule of Class Meetings, Readings, and Assignments**

In addition to the following assignments, students will be occasionally assigned newspaper articles to read. Readings labeled "S & C" come from the Steiner and Crepaz textbook, those labeled I&N are from the Inglehardt and Norris book. The other articles are available on our Blackboard website.

Europe is Different

Jan 19: Introduction: Europe is Different (S & C Chapter 1; read syllabus and course policies)

How is Europe Different? Party Systems

- Jan 21: What are parties and what do party members do? Party Families and Party Systems (S & C Chapter 2; Gallagher Chapter 10 – on Blackboard)
- Jan 26: Left-Wing Parties: Communists and Social Democrats (S & C Chapter 10 -- pages 197 to 205 of this chapter are optional; Marliere article on Blackboard)
- Jan 28: Christian Democratic Parties (Shea article; Gallagher et al Chapter 9; both on Blackboard; **data gathering assignment due; in class I will ask you to sign a statement stating that you have read and understood course policies**)
- Feb 2: Forms of Political Participation and the Rise of Social Movements in Western Europe: The Peace and Environmental Movements (S & C Chapter 7; **data gathering assignment due**)
- Feb 4: Green Parties (O'Neill article on Blackboard)
- Feb 9: Immigration and New Radical Right Parties (Schain et al article and excerpts of Gallagher et al Chapter 9 – both on Blackboard)
- Feb 11: Regional Parties (Hough article on Blackboard; **data gathering assignment due**)
- Feb 16: Liberal and Center Parties (S & C Chapter 12; optional: S&C Chapter 13)

How Else is Europe Different? Policy Making

- Feb 18 and 23: Corporatism vs. Pluralism (S & C Chapter 8; **data gathering assignment due Feb 18**)
- Feb 25: Welfare States (Esping-Andersen article)
- Mar 2: Globalization and Challenges to the Welfare State (S & C Chapter 15)
- Mar 4: **Mid-term Exam**

Why is Europe Different?

- Mar 9: Women's Political Participation (N&I pp. 101-118 and pp. 129-130)
- Mar 11: Explaining variance (S & C Chapter 9)
- Mar 23: Economic Explanations (N&I Chapters 1 and 2)

Mar 25: Cultural Explanations (N&I Chapter 3; **data gathering assignment due**)

Mar 30: Institutional Explanations & Path Dependency: (N&I Chapters 6 and 7; **data gathering assignment due**)

Apr 1: Electoral Systems (S & C Chapter 3)

Apr 6: Making an Electoral List Simulation (Simulation Materials; **data gathering assignment due**)

Apr 8: Presidentialism vs. Parliamentarism / Heads of State (S & C Chapter 4)

Apr 13: Coalition Formation (Gallagher et al Chapter 12)

Apr 15: No Class

Apr 20: Coalition Simulation (Simulation materials)

Apr 22: Legislative Institutions (Gallagher et al Chapter 3)

Apr 27: Judicial Institutions (S & C Chapter 5); **analytical papers due at the start of class**

Apr 29: Referenda and Federalism (S & C Chapter 6)

May 5: **Final Exam at 11AM**

May 19: Final Grades Available on MyUM (earlier if you do online course evaluations)