

Dr. Petia Kostadinova

Office hours:

TR 8:30-9:30, 12:30-1:30 and by appt.

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Pols 234 Western European Politics and Government

Course Description:

The aim of this course is to provide students with a broad overview of the politics and political systems of Western Europe, as they have developed after WWII. 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 discuss the wide variety of democratic political institutions found across Europe (e.g. multi-party systems, proportional representation vs. majoritarian electoral systems, and types of cleavages and political systems), the political economy of Western Europe, as well as some of the challenges facing Western democracies. Finally, where appropriate, the class discusses the nature and types of the political institutions that have emerged in the European Union. The class is designed for students who have already taken Introduction to Comparative Politics or its equivalent and assumes familiarity with the basic institutions of modern democracies. Students who do not think that they have the necessary background information but are still interested in taking the class, should review the additional readings suggested for the first week of class.

Required Texts:

- Marcus Crepaz and Jurg Steiner. *European Democracies*, (8th edition) 2012. Pearson. ISBN-10: 0205854788

- Arend Lijphart. *Patterns of Democracy: Government forms and Performance in 36 Countries*, (2nd edition) 2012. New Haven and London: Yale University Press; ISBN-10: 0300172028

Additional **required** readings (marked with *) are available through Blackboard.

In addition to the assigned readings, students are responsible for keeping up with Europe-related current events. Students should read internationally-themed newspapers and magazines regularly (e.g. Financial Times, Economist, NY Times, International Herald Tribune) and follow news reports online (e.g. CNN International, BBC News). At the beginning of class, a few minutes of class time will be devoted to discussing the latest news from Europe. One or more questions related to current events are likely to appear on each exam.

Course Requirements:

Attendance and participation in class discussions:	10%
Map quiz	5%
Presentation:	10%
3 Exams:	75%

Grading Scale

A: 90-100 B: 80-89 C: 70-79 D: 60-69 E: < 60

Attendance is mandatory. You are expected to attend every class meeting, and come prepared to

discuss the assigned readings and relevant European news events. Attendance will be taken every time. You are allowed to miss one class without a proper excuse. Each absence (after the one you are allowed to) will count for half a point deduction from your attendance score. It is solely your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet. If you miss a class, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate.

Participation in class discussions is required. Throughout the course students are encouraged to raise questions and relevant discussion topics in class, and students are expected to contribute to class discussions. To prepare for discussions, it is important that assigned readings be completed prior to the corresponding class period.

Note: I make a strong distinction between attendance and participation. Attending every class, without ever speaking up, does not constitute participation. To receive credit for participation, students are required to ask questions, raise issues, express opinions, etc. regarding the topics covered, as well as respond to the questions. *Students who do not feel comfortable speaking in class must contact me by the end of the second week of class at the latest to arrange for alternative methods of participation.*

The joint attendance and participation grade will depend on both class attendance and meaningful participation in discussions. Regular attendance without meaningful participation will result in less than perfect attendance and participation score.

Map quiz: It will be conducted in class during the third week of the semester. Students will be asked to identify the countries of Western Europe on an outline map. To practice for the map quiz, consider the following interactive game

<http://www.ilike2learn.com/ilike2learn/Western%20Europe.html>

Country presentations and discussions: Students, individually or in groups, will be assigned to provide a brief overview of the current political institutions and issues of a country in Western Europe or a political group of the European Parliament. Participation in this assignment is mandatory. All presentations must be prepared in MS PowerPoint format and e-mailed to the instructor minimum **two (2)** calendar days prior to the scheduled presentation. Presentations will be posted on the class website on Blackboard and made available to the rest of the class. On the day of each presentation, all students will be required to read select news articles and analyses specific to each country. Following each presentation, there will be a class discussion on the main issues facing the country. Questions regarding the institutions of individual countries will appear on each of the exams as appropriate.

If group presentations are scheduled - depending on the final enrollment in the class - each student will be assigned both an individual, and a group grade for this assignment. More details regarding this assignment, including whether or not presentations will be individual or in groups, will be provided during the second week of class when the final enrollment numbers are available. In the interest of time and ease, students will be randomly assigned to countries. Students may change their assignment only if they find a colleague with whom to switch.

Exams: There will be three exams in this class, each worth 25% of the final grade. All exams will take place during regular class meeting time, as identified in the detailed syllabus below. Exams will consist of short answer, multiple choice, identification, true/false and fill-in the blank questions. With the exception of the characteristics of majoritarian/consensus types of democracies, the exams **will not be cumulative**.

Make-up for the examinations: If a student cannot attend an examination, s/he needs to notify me as soon as physically possible by phone or e-mail. My e-mail is available 24 hours a day. Students who fail to notify me prior to the examination will not be allowed to take it. Make-ups will be given only to students who have been unable to take the regularly scheduled exam due to a medical or personal condition, which has incapacitated them. Written documentation explaining the situation is required for make-up exams. I need to receive the documentation *before* I allow any student to take a make-up.

If any make-up exams are necessary, they will be given during the final week of class at a time that is convenient for both the student and the instructor.

Electronics use in class: You are welcome to use a laptop to type your notes during lectures. You may not use your laptop and/or phone to browse the Internet or chat with your friends or classmates. When I see you doing so, I reserve the right to call you on the spot to answer questions related to class discussion. Please put your cell phones on vibrate/silent mode during class. If you are expecting an important call, please step quietly outside to take it.

Students with disabilities must inform the instructor of the need for accommodations. Those who require accommodations for access and participation in this course must be registered with the Disability Resource Center. Please contact ODS at 312/413-2183 (voice) or 312/413-0123 (TTY).

Course Drops: Only a student can initiate the dropping of a course. The student can drop a course through Banner up through the 10th day of the semester; there is no academic penalty nor does a 'W' appear on the transcript. After the 10th day and through Friday of the 10th week, the student may drop courses by seeing a college academic advisor. These late drops are indicated by 'W' on the transcript and are limited to a total of four for the student's entire UIC career.

Enrollment in class: Campus policy requires that students be properly registered for a class in order to earn academic credit for that class.

Incompletes will not be allowed except in a case of a medical emergency resulting in hospitalization.

Academic Honor: Students are expected to adhere to the UIC Student Honor Code. **Students violating the honor code will receive zero (0) points for the assignment or exam in question, and may receive an 'E' for the class.**

DETAILED SYLLABUS

Aug 26 **Introduction: Variation in Political and Economic Structures across Europe**
- Sept 2 Crepaz and Steiner ch 1.
 Lijphart, ch. 1-4

Optional readings (for those wishing to gain or refresh basic knowledge of comparative government)

Online course on Introduction to Comparative government
<http://ocw.mit.edu/courses/political-science/17-50-introduction-to-comparative-politics-fall-2006/>

Aug 28 **NO CLASS: INSTRUCTOR WILL BE OUT OF TOWN**

Sept 4 - **Political Parties: Definitions, Ideologies, Cleavages**
Sept 9 Crepaz and Steiner ch 2
 * Mair ch 7, 8, 9

Sept 11 **Categories of Party Systems**
 Lijphart, ch. 5
 * Sartori, Giovanni. 1990. A Typology of Party Systems. In Peter Mair, ed., The West European Party System. New York: Oxford University Press. p. 316-349.

MAP QUIZ SEPT 11 IN CLASS

Sept 16- **Electoral Systems and Their Impact on Parties and Politics**
Sept 23 Lijphart ch. 8
 Crepaz and Steiner. Ch 3.
 * Riker, William. 1982. "The Two-Party System and Duverger's Law: An Essay on the History of Political Science." American Political Science Review 76, no. 4: 753-766.
 * 2006. William Clark & Matt Golder. "Rehabilitating Duverger's Theory: Testing the Mechanical and Strategic Modifying Effects of Electoral Laws" Comparative Political Studies 39: 679-708.

Sept 23 **EXAM ONE**

Sept 30 - **From Legislative to Executive Authority: cabinet formation and heads of state**
Oct 7 Crepaz, Steiner, ch 4
 Lijphart, ch. 6, 7 11;
 * Lanny Martin and Randolph Stevenson. 2001. "Government Formation in Parliamentary Democracies", American Journal of Political Science, 45(1): 33-50.
 * Giovanni Sartori. Comparative Constitutional Engineering (2nd edition), 1997, ch. 5-7.

- Oct 9** **Legal Matters: Courts, Constitutions, and Referenda**
Crepaz, Steiner, ch 5, 6
Lijphart, ch 12
- Oct 14** **Federalism**
Crepaz, Steiner, ch 7
Lijphart, ch 10
- Oct 16** **Central Banks**
Lijphart, ch 13
- Oct 21 -** **The state, corporatism, and Great Meltdown, and the Greek Crisis**
Oct 23

Crepaz, Steiner, ch. 9
Lijphart ch. 9
* Lewis, ch 2
- Oct 28** **EXAM TWO**
- Oct 30** **Nationalism and Ethnicity**
Crepaz, Steiner, ch 12
- Nov 4-6** **Power-sharing in divided societies**
Crepaz, Steiner, ch 13
Lijphart, ch 16
- Nov 11-13** **Policy Outcomes**
Crepaz, Steiner, ch 10
Lijphart, ch. 15
- Nov 18-25** **The European Union**
Crepaz, Steiner, ch. 14
- Nov 27** **NO CLASS THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY**
- Dec 2** **Globalization and European Democracies**
Crepaz, Steiner, ch. 15
- Dec 4** **EXAM THREE**

The instructor reserves the right to change this syllabus at any time with adequate advance notice to students