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### **Pols 349: Current Issues in EU Politics**

Out of the ashes of WWII was born one of the most daring experiments in political and economic cooperation in human history. Just over 50 years after its establishment, the European Union (EU), an organization comprising of 28 member states (several more are in accession negotiations), has a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) exceeding that of the United States, and is the most generous donor of development assistance, in addition to being the most important economic, military and political partner of the United States. News regarding developments within the EU have proliferated in the last couple of years and this course aims to shed light to some of the most pressing issues that the EU is facing.

The first section of this course briefly overviews the historical development of the EU and its current institutional arrangements, which will help us understand how the EU works. The next section focuses on the economic policies of the EU, especially the ongoing Euro crisis. The last section shifts to the future of the EU by looking into its enlargement process and the controversies surrounding the membership of the union.

This course fulfills the writing-in-the-discipline requirement of the Dept. of Political Science.

#### **Required Texts:**

Simon Hix. What's Wrong with the Europe Union and How to Fix It. Polity Press, ISBN-10: 0745642055. Available used through Amazon.com, Half.com and other sources.

A series of articles and book chapters are also required readings, and are/will be available on the class' Blackboard site. In addition to the readings, students are expected to keep up with events related to the European Union, through a variety of news sources, such as the BBC, Financial Times, and the EurActiv website.

#### **Course Requirements:**

Attendance and participation in class discussions:	5%
Participation in debates and/or political groups presentations	7%
Two Exams	28%
Three Papers:	60%

#### **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. Sign-up sheet will be passed towards the end of every class period. 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 forget to sign, even if you attended the class, you will lose credit. 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.

Debates: There will be **three** in-class debates on the dates noted below. During each debate a small group of students (in two teams) will represent the pro-s and con-s of each issue while the rest of the class will represent the views of one EU country. Participation in all debates is mandatory (i.e. you must not only do your part but you may not miss class except in a documented emergency). The instructor will assign roles in each debate after first soliciting volunteers. Additional instructions are provided on Blackboard.

Presentations on political groups in the European Parliament: those of you not planning to volunteer as part of the debate teams, are strongly encouraged to consider volunteering to prepare a presentation on one of the political groups in the European Parliament. If there are no volunteers by January 26, instructor will assign students randomly. Separate instructions are provided.

Exams: There will be **two** relatively short exams, consisting of short answer, multiple choice, identification, true/false, and/or fill-in the blank questions. The purpose of the exams is to ensure that students are keeping up with the readings. Study guides for the exams will be provided before each exam. Each exam will be worth 14% of the class grade, 28% total for both exams. Both exams will take place in class. There is no final cumulative exam in this class.

Make-up for the examinations: If a student cannot attend either of the exams, 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 a 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. Make-up exams will be substantially different than the in-class one(s). If any make-up exams are necessary, they will be given at a time that is convenient for both the student and the instructor.

Papers: Each student is required to produce three papers on topics related to the history, institutions, culture, identity, politics or policies of the European Union. Each paper will be around 2000 words. In addition to providing a paper copy, students will be required to submit each paper through the SafeAssign menu in Blackboard. Late papers will be penalized one letter grade per day. The papers that you will write for this class may not substantially duplicate a paper for another class or a thesis work.

**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).

**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 outside to take it.

**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.**

#### COURSE OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

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|---------------|---|
| <b>Jan 14</b> | <b>Introduction to class and syllabus. The History of the European Union I (1945-1980s)</b>   |
| <b>Jan 21</b> | <b>The History of the European Union I (1945-1980s) (continued). The History of the European Union II (1980s-2000)</b><br>Read: *Bache, George, Bulmer, ch 5-10, and ch 11-14.                |
| <b>Jan 26</b> | <b>Last day to volunteer for a presentation on an EP group</b>  |
| <b>Jan 28</b> | <b>The History of the European Union II (1980s-2000) (continued). The History of the European Union III (2000-present day)</b><br>Read: *Bache, George, Bulmer, ch 15, 16, 18                 |
| <b>Feb 4</b>  | <b>Institutions of the European Union: The Commission and The Council</b><br>Read: *Cini, Borrigan, ch. 8 & ch. 9   |
| <b>Feb 11</b> | <b>Institutions of the European Union: The European Parliament</b><br>Read: *Cini, Borrigan, ch. 10<br><br><b>Student presentations on EP groups. Last day to volunteer for first debate.</b> |
| <b>Feb 18</b> | <b>Institutions of the European Union: The Courts. Decision making process</b><br>Read: *Cini, Borrigan, ch. 11<br>Bache, George, Bulmer ch 19.   |
| <b>Feb 25</b> | <b>Debate on Democratic Deficit and Review for the First Exam</b><br>Read: Hix, <b>ENTIRE BOOK</b><br>* Cini and Borrigan, ch. 23   |
| <b>Mar 2</b>  | <b>First paper due; 2:00pm via SafeAssign, 3:00pm in BSB 1118 (paper copy)</b>  |
| <b>Mar 4</b>  | <b>EXAM I</b>   |

- Mar 11**                    **Economic Policy: Single Market and the EMU**  
Read: \*Wallace, Polack, and Young, ch 5 & ch 7
- Mar 18**                    **Economic Policy: EU budget and the Eurocrisis**  
Read: \*Wallace, Polack, and Young, ch 9; \*Lewis, ch 2; Finbow ch 3; Hubner ch 2; Hussain ch 8; Laursen ch 1.
- Last day to volunteer for second debate**
- Mar 25**                    **NO CLASS SPRING BREAK**
- Apr 1**                      **Economic Policy: catch up and debate on EMU**
- Apr 6**                      **Second paper due; 2:00pm via SafeAssign, 3:00pm in BSB 1118 (paper copy)**
- Apr 8**                      **EU Enlargement: Criteria, Process, and History**  
Read: \*Cini and Borragan, ch. 26  
\*Wallace, Polack and Young, ch. 17  
\*Preston 1997, chapters 1-5
- Last day to volunteer for third debate**
- Apr 15**                    **EU Enlargement: Future**  
Read: \*Solveig Richter (2012): Two at one blow? The EU and its quest for security and democracy by political conditionality in the Western Balkans, Democratization, 19:3, 507-534  
\* Geoffrey Pridham (2007): Change and Continuity in the European Union's Political Conditionality: Aims, Approach, and Priorities, Democratization, 14:3, 446-471  
\* Additional readings to be assigned
- Apr 22**                    **Debate on EU Enlargement and Review for Second Exam**
- Apr 29**                    **Second Exam**
- May 4**                      **Third paper due; 2:00pm via SafeAssign, 3:00pm in BSB 1118 (paper copy)**

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