

PSI 2213- Comparative European Politics Syllabus

Instructor: Dr. Deniz Bingöl HALL, dbingol-hall@mcdaniel.edu
Class Meetings: TBD
Office Hours: by appointment

Course Description:

This course explores the history, institutions, and processes of European politics from a comparative politics perspective. Each week explores an aspect of European politics from a theoretical perspective and complements this with empirical discussions of different European country examples over time with the aid of interactive tasks and individual country assignments allocated to each week. The course also integrates current affairs as European political institutions and policies evolve rapidly. Substantial aspects of European politics such as constitutions, political parties and electoral systems are discussed and in the final section of the course, some of the current debates in European politics such as immigration, economic austerity, the rise of populism and Euroscepticism are presented.

Course Objectives:

The main objectives of this course are to

- 1- familiarize students with important theories of comparative politics;
- 2- engage students in discussions about the current political processes and policy areas in a diverse set of European countries;
- 3- induce participants to gain knowledge of select European countries;
- 4- improve written and oral communications skills through active engagement in research and debates about politics in Europe.

Learning Outcomes:

By completing this course, students will be able to

- 1- acquire a good knowledge of the diversity of European national political systems and the main institutions and policy areas in European politics
- 2- become familiar with key literature on European comparative politics and European integration
- 3- understand the relationship between developments at the European, national and subnational levels of politics
- 4- understand the nature of European integration and the current challenges that the EU as political, economic, social and cultural project is facing
- 5- understand contemporary issues and debates in European politics and think critically about the interdependency of different ecologies in European political systems
- 6- acquire good analytical skills as well as writing and oral presentation skills

“Adopt a Country”

Students will be asked to “adopt a country”- that is choosing any 28 EU member country but cannot be his/her home country (some exceptions can be made for selections outside of the EU-

28). Students will be asked to become a country expert of this adopted country, respond to the interactive tasks assigned to their chosen week and to contribute with material and information about their adopted country during rest of the course. Students should start acquiring knowledge about their adopted country from the first week of classes and should continue acquiring more knowledge about their adopted country throughout the course. The course paper will feature a comparison of an aspect of the adopted country and at least one other European country.

One of the best places to find out information about the adopted countries is online, especially news sites, country reports by reputable international organizations and research institutions, Wikipedia or other online sources. By the end of the course the students should have a very good knowledge of the political system of their adopted country and will be able to regard their adopted country's institutions in a comparative manner.

Course Requirements:

- 1- Participation (10%)
- 2- Midterm Exam (30%)
- 3- Student Presentations (10%)
- 4- Comparative Paper, Outline and Bibliography (5%)
- 5- Comparative Paper, Final Draft (15%)
- 6- Final Exam (30%)

Participation: Students are expected to actively engage with the course material, reflect on the readings during the class in a civil and respectful manner and discuss current events in relations to the class material and. Each class will start with *overview of the current events* relating to that week. In order to take part, students need to consult news sources print or online and are expected to offer some background of the event, to relate to concepts learned in class and lastly, offer opinions and participate/ lead discussion in class.

Attendance to class alone will not be enough to guarantee the participation points, 10% of the final grade; regular and informed participation is expected. In addition, the instructor may also give pop-up (unannounced) quizzes and assess them as part of the participation grade.

Student Presentations: Each student will pick a week to present throughout the semester where she will be researching and presenting on her adopted country focusing on that week's topic. For instance, the student's adopted country could be Italy and she may pick to present on the topic of Immigration. Each presentation should be approximately 15 minutes which will be followed by a class discussion comparing political institutions and policies in other European countries.

Comparative Paper: The paper should be a comparison of the adopted country with at least another European country where students will be asked to focus on one of the course headings i.e. comparison of political parties and social movements in the adopted country and other countries. The paper should involve research beyond the immediate course materials but can be informed of the course readings. Please consult with the instructor about the paper topics and outline in advance. The recommended length for the comparative paper should be a minimum of 3000 words and maximum of 4000 words, properly cited, grammar and spelling checked and submitted as a Microsoft Word document, 12 font pt. and single spaced.

Comparative Paper Outline and Bibliography: Students are required to submit a detailed outline of the comparative paper along with a bibliography (a list of the sources which can be a journal article, a book chapter, newspaper or periodical article as well as reputable and academic online sources). Please consult with the instructor about what would be considered an appropriate academic source. The Outline and Bibliography will be sent via e-mail **before the first day of class on Week 5.**

For every day past submission deadline, there will be 25% point deduction.

Comparative Paper Final Draft will be sent via e-mail to the Instructor before the last day of classes, Friday, May 15, 2020, 17.00 hrs. For every day past submission deadline, there will be 25% point deduction.

Course Materials:

This course has one textbook. Gallagher, Michael, Michael Laver, and Peter Mair. Representative Government in Modern Europe. McGraw Hill. (2011).

There are also assigned articles on Weeks 13 and 14 which will be made available electronically by the instructor on the McDaniel Blackboard.

Course Policies and Rules of Conduct:

- Make-up exams will be given under extraordinary circumstances. If such circumstances arise for the final exam, please contact the instructor via email immediately. The instructor reserves the right to request documentation to support your emergency claim and absence.
- Late assignments will not be accepted unless under extreme circumstances. Again, the instructor reserves the right to request documentation to support your emergency claim and absence. Late assignments are due to grade reduction, which will be decided by the instructor. Papers should be submitted both as electronic and hard copies.
- In classroom following rules of conduct need to be adhered to:
 - o Students are expected to arrive on time;
 - o If a student needs to leave early, the instructor needs to be notified in advance;
 - o Students should not walk in and out of classroom at will;
 - o Electronic devices should not be interruptive and need to be silenced;
 - o Class discussion need to remain respectful;

Academic Integrity and Plagiarism

Cheating and plagiarism are prohibited at McDaniel. They undermine the academic integrity upon which this institution is built upon. Plagiarism is misusing or presenting other's work as one's own. One must therefore always acknowledge any idea that is not one's own and reference all work at all possible circumstances. Please consult the McDaniel's "Honor Code" for further information.

Course Schedule

Week 1 - Introduction to European Politics

Readings: Representative Government in Modern Europe (RGiME), Chapter 1, *Introduction*

Week 2 Constitutions and Judicial Systems

Readings: RGiME, Chapter 4, *Constitutions, Judges and Politics*

Interactive Task: *“Constitutions and the judiciary together can act as a significant constraint upon elected representatives.” Find out about the constitution in your adopted country and about the major changes the constitution went through over time?*

Week 3 The Executive

Readings: RGiME, Chapter 2, *The Executive*

Interactive Task: *In your adopted country, what makes up the “Executive?” How is the executive elected or selected and how is she/he removed from office?*

Week 4 Parliaments

Readings: RGiME, Chapter 3, *Parliaments*

Interactive Task: *Does your adopted country have a consensus or a majoritarian model of parliament? (a hint is how the MPs are seated...) How “strong and independent” is your adopted country’s legislature in contrast to its executive?*

Week 5 Political Parties

Readings: RGiME, Chapter 8, *Party Families*

Interactive Task: *Political parties are rapidly changing in today’s Europe and around the world. What new parties emerged in the last 5 years in your adopted country and how well do they do in the elections with respect to the older parties?*

Week 6 Party Systems and Cleavages

Readings: RGiME, Chapter 9, *Cleavage Structures and Electoral Change*

Interactive Task: *What are the most important cleavages in your adopted country historically? Have they persisted over time or have they been changing? Which political parties or social movements represent either sides of these cleavages?*

Week 7 Midterm Exams

Week 8 Electoral Systems

Readings: RGiME, Chapter 11, *Elections, Electoral Systems and Referendums*

Interactive Task: *There are many elections other than those where one selects members of the legislative or the executive. One example is a “referendum.” In the last 5 years, were there any referendums in your adopted country and what was/were the referendum (s) about?*

Week 9 Government Formation

Readings: RGiME, Chapter 12, *Making and Breaking Governments*

Interactive Task: *How long does an average government last in your adopted country (from one regular election to the next one or changes every 6 months?) Why did these changes occur?*

April 6- 13, 2020- Easter Holiday: No classes

Week 10 Federalism and Local Governments

Readings: RGiME, Chapter 6, *Central, Regional and Local Governance*

Interactive Task: *Almost every European country has more than one level of local government, some have two, others have three. How many levels of government does your adopted country have? What are they called? How much power do local governments have and what type of policies are left only to the central government in country's capitol?*

Week 11 European Integration

Readings: RGiME, Chapter 5, *The European Union and Representative Government*

Interactive Task: *When did your adopted country become a member to the EC or the EU? How "integrated" is your adopted country to the European Union?*

Week 12 Interest Groups, Policy Networks and Social Movements

Readings: RGiME, Chapter 13, *Politics Outside the Parliament*

Interactive Task: *Pick an interest group or social movement in your adopted country. How did it emerge? Whose interests does it represent, who are the members of this interest group or social movement?*

Week 13 Contemporary Debates in European Politics: Immigration and Economic Crisis

Readings: Ilaria Giglio, (2016) "Migration, Austerity and Crisis at the Periphery of Europe." Othering and Belonging. (Summer).

Daniel Trilling. (2018) "Five Myths about the Refugee Crisis," The Guardian. (5 June).

Interactive Task: *Where do the migrants in your adopted country come from? What are the policies and policy stances regarding immigration in your adopted country, amongst its political parties, interest groups, regional governments, social movements, NGOs, etc...?*

Week 14 Contemporary Debates in European Politics: Euroscepticism and Populism

Readings: Cas Mudde, (2016) "Europe's Populist Surge: A Long Time in the Making.2 Foreign Affairs. (November).

Catherine de Vries and Erica Edwards (2009) "Taking Europe to its Extremes: Extremist Parties and Public Euroscepticism." Party Politics. (Vol.15 No. 1), pp. 5- 28.

Interactive Task: *How popular is the European Union in your adopted country? Why?*

Final Exams