

COURSE SYLLABUS
POL 3370.01
WESTERN EUROPEAN POLITICS
CREDIT HOURS: 3
SPRING, 2018

CLASS LOCATION: CHSS 232

CLASS MEETING TIMES: 9:00-9:50 MWF

INSTRUCTOR: DR. WILLIAM E. CARROLL

OFFICE LOCATION: CHSS 496D

INSTRUCTOR CONTACT INFORMATION: PHONE-41469; pol_wec@shsu.edu

OFFICE HOURS: 12:00-12:50 MWF

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The purpose of the course is to introduce the student to politics and government in Western Europe. Admittedly the separation into Western and Central/Eastern Europe is increasingly seen as inappropriate in light of developments since 1989 and accession to the EU since then of most of the former Communist countries in East/Central Europe. Until a new course is designed however, we will adhere to the traditional specialization, Western European Politics.

For reasons of convenience and ease of comprehension we will follow a topical approach. This allows us to apprehend Europe's differences from the U.S., when it comes to political culture and history, political parties and electoral systems, parliamentary forms of government, social movements. These differences are in fact where we will begin the course – and the text. There are also unique situations in each country – such as efforts at power sharing in Northern Ireland and Scottish devolution in the UK; (ongoing) reunification issues in Germany; and party realignment in Italy; regional autonomy in Spain; France's mixed presidential-parliamentary system; and Swiss use of referenda. Inevitably we will concentrate on the larger systems, Germany, France, Britain, and Italy, but also Spain and the Netherlands – and other countries and systems, such as Ireland, Greece and Portugal, Austria, Switzerland, the Scandinavian countries, as they illustrate interesting phenomena and as time permits.

By no means least, we will study the European Union (EU): how it has evolved from customs union to EEC to EC to EU; what its institutions are and how decisions are reached in the EU; the adoption of the Euro and the Euro crisis; the refugee crisis; the pressing issues posed by the addition of new members; the effects of Brexit; and ongoing issues of foreign and security policy.

Approach/method of instruction: Lecture and discussion. Lectures will introduce, summarize, and amplify the assigned readings, where necessary provide background to each of the topics covered. While some lectures will be rather formal, in outline fashion, usually my lecture style is more discursive. Questions and class discussion are always encouraged, and students should expect to hear diverse opinions and know they won't be punished in any way for their own opinions.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Factual knowledge: of governmental systems, political processes of European democracies and the European Union
- Critical thinking: about the different histories, ideologies, etc at the foundation of European democracy compared to American
- Analytical skills: learning to evaluate governmental performance in different systems and to do so comparatively

TEXTS

Hancock, Politics in Europe, 6th edition

Numerous publications are available on-line and in the library, including The Economist, The Financial Times, Le Monde, Deutsche Welle and scholarly journals.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

Class attendance is required, following general university regulations. Repeated absences result in grade penalty (see grading plan below). Makeup exams are available only for verified and excused absences, and are given at the instructor's discretion.

ASSIGNMENTS

There will be two out-of-class assignment apart from the exams: one will be a short country profile, the details of this assignment will be explained in class. In addition each student will have to keep a journal on a country of choice in Europe. The journal will be a (at least) twice weekly entry that includes selecting a relevant story from any legitimate news source of a story that covers a politically, economically, or culturally relevant event or official statement, identifying the source, then in summary manner recounting the story, and providing commentary and analysis. It will be turned in for feedback after two weeks and again after three weeks. The journal is due on the Wednesday of the next to last class week. There is also the opportunity – this one is optional – of writing a research paper, which would be discussed with me regarding topic and requirements.

EXAMS

There will be four exams. Their format will be a combination of short identifications and essay. Dates of exams will be announced in class.

GRADING PLAN

Exams will constitute 40% of the final grade. The shorter written assignment, the country profile, will be 10% of the final grade; while the journal will be 40%. Attendance and participation will constitute the remaining 10% of the final grade.

All students are expected to engage in all academic pursuits in a manner that is above reproach. Students are expected to maintain complete honesty and integrity in the academic experiences both in and out of the classroom. Any student found guilty of dishonesty in any phase of academic work will be subject to disciplinary action. The University and its official representatives may initiate disciplinary proceedings against a student accused of any form of dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating on an examination or other academic work which is to be submitted, plagiarism, collusion, and the abuse of resource materials. Violation of this policy will result in a grade of 0 on an exam where there is cheating (for example, looking over at another student's exam during the exam, looking at any notes or cribs during the exam, etc.).

CLASSROOM RULES OF CONDUCT

Students will refrain from behavior in the classroom that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and, thus, impedes the mission of the university. Cellular telephones and pagers must be turned off before the class begins. Students are prohibited from eating in class, using tobacco products, making offensive remarks, reading newspapers, sleeping, talking at inappropriate times, wearing inappropriate clothing, or engaging in any other form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result in a directive to leave the class. Students who are especially disruptive also may be reported to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action in accordance with university policy.

VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM

Unannounced visitors to class must present a current, official SHSU identification card to be permitted in the classroom. They must not present a disruption to the class by their attendance. If the visitor is not a registered student, it is at the instructor's discretion whether or not the visitor will be allowed to remain in the classroom.

COURSE OUTLINE

A. Overview and Introduction:

1. How does Europe differ from the U.S.? How is Europe relevant?
2. Types of European democracies

Hancock: Introduction; Notes

B. History, Political Culture, Parliamentary and Party Politics in Britain

C. History, Political Culture, Presidential and Party Politics in France

Hancock: Parts 1 and 2; Notes and Handouts

First Exam

D. History, Political Culture, Parliamentary and Party Politics in Germany

E. History, Political Culture, Parliamentary and Party Politics in Italy

Hancock: Parts 3 and 4: Notes and Handouts

Second Exam

F. History, Political Culture, Parliamentary and Party Politics in Spain

G. Netherlands; Switzerland; Scandinavia

Hancock: Part 5; Notes and Handouts

Third Exam

H. European Union: History, Institutions, Policies, Issues of Expansion and Cooperation

Hancock: Part 8; Notes and Handouts

Final Exam

STUDY TIPS

Students are strongly advised to take class notes. It also helps to keep up with the reading as we are addressing each topic rather than leave it until the night before the exam. Questions are always encouraged, either in class or out of class. Another tip is to find classmates to study with, compare notes, etc.

INSTRUCTOR EVALUATIONS

Students will be asked to complete a course/instructor evaluation toward the end of the term.

Student Absences on Religious Holidays:

“A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). This request must be made in the first fifteen days of the semester or the first seven days of a summer session in which the absence(s) will occur. The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable timeframe in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.”

Students with Disabilities:

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for *students with disabilities*. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodations can be made until you register with the Counseling Center.

All items in syllabus are subject to revision at discretion of professor; however, any changes would be dictated by mutual questions of convenience, announcing of exam dates, elaboration of requirements and readings, etc.