

West European Politics

Dr. Laura Brunell, London Centre, Fall 2007

The most significant social and political change occurring in Europe over the past generation has been its increasing racial, ethnic, and cultural diversity. Yet, simultaneously the increasing political and economic integration of Europe through the European Union has blurred national divisions and created the opportunity to unite Europeans as never before. The intersection of these two social and political phenomena is the focus of this course. We have the unique opportunity of studying these issues from the vantage point of one of the world's most diverse cities. We will explore London's ethnic communities and avail ourselves of experts on immigration and diversity from politics and the world of NGOs.

The course uses the cases of the United Kingdom, France, Germany, Italy, and Sweden to develop our understanding of European political cultures and national identities, as well as specific European institutions such as parliamentary democracy, statism, multi-party democracy, the European social model, and immigration policies. An introduction to the European Union, the world's most developed case of regional economic integration and supranational government, will be presented at the end of the course.

Grade Breakdown and Explanation of Assignments

Participation: 10%
Paper: 20%

Political Ideology Test: 10%
Midterm Exam: 20%

Journal: 20%
Final Exam: 20%

Participation: Students are expected to attend all classes and to come to class prepared to discuss that day's topic, which means having read the assigned material or visited the websites listed on the syllabus.

Political Ideology Test: Students are not graded on their political ideology; the point is to take the quiz at politicalcompass.org in order to develop their understanding of European political ideologies.

Journal: Students will create 8 "journal" entries (they may be produced on your computer or hand written and turned in – best not to put them all in a notebook as you may not get them back in time to write new entries). The purpose of the journal is to record your reflections on and experiences with diversity in the UK and Europe. Observe social interactions among members of various groups and between yourself and members of different racial, ethnic, and cultural groups. Explore ethnic neighborhoods and the neighborhood where you live. What patterns of work, living, social interaction do you observe? How would you describe your neighborhood: segregated or integrated by race or class, etc. Please include the experiences of your host families, their impressions of race relations and the impact of greater cultural diversity on the UK and Europe. If they themselves are from non-European origin, what has their experience of residing in the UK or becoming "British" been like? If they are white/of European descent, how do they feel the UK's great ethnic diversity has affected them, if at all? What do they feel are the pros and cons of more immigration, European integration, etc. As you travel around Europe, and I do hope you will have the occasion to travel outside of the UK at least a little, also reflect on similarities/differences you observe in these patterns in other countries as well as similarities or differences with the US. You will turn in 8 entries total – sometimes once a week, sometimes at longer intervals.

Paper: Each student will choose a minority group to be the subject of his/her paper. In the paper, you will report on the group's numbers and status in the UK and in one other European country. You will need to present the UK's and the other country's model of incorporation as presented in the course/Geddes book and then analyze the group's experience in these terms in each country. See the IOM's website <http://www.iom.int/jahia/Jahia/pid/1380>, and site for the UK office <http://www.iomlondon.org/>, especially its publications page <http://www.iomlondon.org/publications.htm>. Finally, you will each interview at least one member of your group residing in the UK. List of questions will be provided.

Midterm and Final: will be a combination of short answer and essay questions. Review sheets will be distributed about a week before each exam and gone over in the session immediately preceding the exam.

Week-by-Week Schedule

Week One

Orientation. Distribution of Readings for Discussion on Monday, October 9

Week Two

Monday, September 10: Introduction to the Course and Course Themes, Explanation of Assignments. Europe Defined: Europe at the New Millennium. Discussion of Readings (distributed at Orientation).

Reading: Essays by Havel and Judt

Tuesday, September 11: Neighborhood Walk.

Week Three

Monday, September 17: The European Social Model and Migration and Immigration in Europe.

Reading: Reid, Chapter 6, "The European Social Model" and Geddes, Chapter 1, "Analysing the Politics of Migration and Immigration in Europe"

Tuesday, September 18: Journal Entry One Due

Introduction to the British System: Political Culture, the Parliamentary System, Parties and the Current Government.

Reading: Hancock, UK, Chpts. 1.1, 1.2 (stop at section on Civil Service), and 1.3

Week Four

Monday, September 24: British System (Cont'd) and Maintaining 'Fortress Britain'.

Reading: Geddes, Chapter 2 "Maintaining 'Fortress Britain'"

Tuesday, September 25: Journal Entry Two Due

Wednesday, September 26: Brick Lane neighborhood walk and lunch

Week Five

Monday, October 1: Visit the London Central Mosque

Tuesday, October 2: Journal Entry Three Due; Review for Midterm

Week Six

Monday, October 8: Guest Speakers from Muslim Council, Minority Members of Greater London Assembly

Tuesday, October 9: Midterm Exam

Week Seven October 14 – October 20 Mid-Term Break

Week Eight

Monday, October 22: France: Political Culture, Statism, Presidentialism.

Reading: Hancock, France, Chpt. 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 (stop at section on Interest Groups)

Assignment: Go to www.politicalcompass.org and take their ideology test; bring your own graph to class

Tuesday, October 23: Journal Entry Four Due

France: The Republican Approach to Diversity.

Reading: Geddes, Chapter 3 "France: Still the One and Indivisible Republic?"

Week Nine

Monday October 29: Excursion to Housing Estate

Tuesday, October 30: Journal Entry Five Due.

Introduction to Germany: Context, Political Culture, Institutions, Parties, Corporatism.

Reading: Hancock, Germany, Chpts. 3.1, 3.2, 3.3

Week Ten

Monday, November 5: Germany: Normalizing Diversity

Reading: Geddes, Chapter 4 "Germany: Normalised Immigration Politics?"

Tuesday, November 6: Journal Entry Six Due.

Italy: Political Culture, History, Political Institutions

Reading: Hancock, Italy, Chpt. 4.1, 4.2, 4.3

Week Eleven

Monday, November 12: Diversity in Southern Europe

Reading: Geddes, Chapter 7, "Southern Europe: Immigration Politics in Newer Immigration Countries"

Tuesday, November 13: Journal Entry Seven Due.

Sweden: Political Culture, History and Evolution of The Scandinavian Model

Reading: Hancock, Sweden, Chpt. 5.1 and 5.2, 5.3 (Sections on Political Parties and Interest Groups only)

Week Twelve

Monday, November 19: Multiculturalism in Sweden and the Netherlands

Reading: Geddes, Chapter 5 "Multicultural Dilemmas in the Netherlands and Sweden"

Tuesday, November 20: Last Journal Entry Due.

The European Union: visit the following sites on the Institutions of the European Union:

Council of the European Union: http://www.europa.eu.int/institutions/council/index_en.htm

European Parliament: http://www.europa.eu.int/institutions/parliament/index_en.htm

European Commission: http://www.europa.eu.int/institutions/comm/index_en.htm

Ombudsman: http://www.europa.eu.int/institutions/ombudsman/index_en.htm

A European Constitution: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/4596005.stm>

Reading: T.R. Reid, Chapter Two, "The Invention of Peace and the Pursuit of Prosperity" and Appendix A, "The States of Europe", Appendix B

Week Thirteen

Monday, November 26: The Future of Europe

Reading: Geddes, Chapter 9 "Assessing the European Politics of Migration" and T.R. Reid, Chapter 8 "Generation E and the Ties that Bind the New Europe".

Projects due, sharing about what you learned from your projects.

Tuesday, November 27: Review for Final Exam

Week Fourteen

Monday, December 3: Final Exam

Tuesday, December 4: Farewell luncheon