POLS 4210: European Union Politics

Fall 2018
TR 10:30-11:45am & Merrill-Cazier Library 411

Instructor
Steffen Blings
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Office Hours:
TR 1:30-2:30pm
Old Main 324C

Course Description
The European Union is a unique supranational institution binding together 28 member states in a political and economic union. In this class we will make use of the toolkit of the social sciences to shed light on the development of this union. Specifically, the class will address the institutions of the European Union, its policy-making process, as well as political conflict in and about the European Union. In the process we will explore and discuss questions like: does the European Union have a common foreign policy and does it constitute a “normative power?” What is the Common Agricultural Policy and are the resources dedicated to it well invested? How can citizens impact decision-making in the EU and is there a “democratic deficit” in the union? We will engage these questions through, among other things, simulations of EU decision-making and writing a policy memo suggesting institutional reforms of the EU.

Learning Goals
This class will encourage you to develop and demonstrate competency in the following areas and skills:

- Gaining an overview of the European Union including its politics, institutions, and policy-making process
- Employing the toolkit of the social sciences to think critically about European Union Politics
- Drawing on social scientific concepts and theories to analyze current events
Learning how to write a policy recommendation, including effective strategies to summarize and evaluate information, as well as to present advice

Course Requirements

Attendance and participation

Because attendance and participation are essential in the learning process, students are expected to attend all classes and participate actively during class sessions. Please come to class prepared to engage thoughtfully, listen attentively, and interact with your peers respectfully. Debating politics can be a divisive topic, but differences in opinion and background provide an opportunity for intellectual growth. We all stand to benefit from being aware of and welcoming these differences. Furthermore, we can only have a successful discussion if the classroom is a comfortable space for all participants. Confrontational or disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated. If for any reason you feel uncomfortable contributing in class, please visit my office hours so that we can discuss strategies for increasing your class participation.

Readings

The readings for this class combine two textbooks with additional material from scientific books and journal articles. Please purchase both textbooks listed below. All other readings will be made available online.


It is expected that you will complete all assigned reading before the class for which they are assigned. Please bring the readings and your notes on them with you to class (either in hard copy format or electronically).

Assignments and Grading

There are four major course requirements, which are described in more detail below and account for 900 of the 1000 points that can be earned towards your grade in this course. The remaining 100 points of the
final grade are constituted by attendance of and active participation in the two EU simulations and their preparations (October 18 & 23/November 29 & December 4).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Learning Objectives</th>
<th>Grade Weight</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Current Event Memo</td>
<td>Connecting Concepts to Current Events</td>
<td>100 points</td>
<td>sign up in week 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussion Memo</td>
<td>Formulating Arguments</td>
<td>100 points</td>
<td>sign up in week 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Midterm</td>
<td>Demonstrating Knowledge of Course Material, Applying Theories</td>
<td>200 points</td>
<td>October 16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Policy Memo</td>
<td>Summarizing &amp; Evaluating Information, Presenting Advice</td>
<td>200 points</td>
<td>November 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Take-home Exam</td>
<td>Research, Argumentation, Analysis, Citing Correctly</td>
<td>300 points</td>
<td>December 11 by 11:20am</td>
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</tbody>
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Over the course of the semester each student will write two 1-page memos and in 1-2 minutes present the memo's contents at the beginning of the relevant class meeting. The first is a “Current Events Memo.” We will begin some classes by looking back at the material covered in the previous lecture through analyzing a current event. The associated memos should identify a current event covered in a newspaper article and explain how the concepts and/or theories we have covered in the previous lecture help us to analyze that event. These memos should not merely summarize the readings or lecture but critically analyze the current event and connect it to the concepts and theoretical approaches from the class. Please post a link to the newspaper article you have chosen by noon the day before class on Canvas.

The second type of memo is a “Discussion Memo.” These memos will kick off those classes in which we addressing larger discussion questions based on Zimmermann and Dürr's book. In those memos you should identify and argue for your position on the discussion question on which the class you have signed up for is focused. I will circulate a sign-up sheet for both types of memos in week 2. The memos are due via email at 5pm the day before the relevant class meeting.

In this course you will also complete an in-class midterm exam on October 16 based on the material covered up to that point and write a policy memo suggesting institutional reforms for the EU (due on November 29). The final assignment is a take-home exam due on December 11 by 11:20am.

Written assignments should be double-spaced, using font size 12 and 1-inch margins. Unless otherwise notified in advance, all assignments should be handed in in hard copy. If you are submitting an assignment
via e-mail it must be in Microsoft Word or PDF format. Do not consider an e-mailed assignment turned in until you have received written confirmation from me. Late assignments will be docked by one letter grade for each 24 hours or portion thereof after the due date they are turned in. If you feel that you will not be able to submit an assignment on time due to illness or emergency please let me know as early as possible.

In order to facilitate peer editing and review, as well as to learn from and about each other’s academic interests, writing styles, and techniques more generally, all writing assignments done for this class may be shared with and read by all members of the class.

Other Course Information

Email policy

Feel free to email me with questions or to set up an appointment. Longer discussions and all conversations about grades must take place in person. I will guarantee a response to emails within 48 hours during the week. However, do not wait until the last minute. While I typically check emails several times a day, there is no guarantee that I will receive, read and be able to respond to last minute requests or questions.

Note to students with disabilities

USU welcomes students with disabilities. If you have, or suspect you may have, a physical, mental health, or learning disability that may require accommodations in this course, please contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) as early in the semester as possible (University Inn # 101, 435-797-2444, drc@usu.edu). All disability related accommodations must be approved by the DRC. Once approved, the DRC will coordinate with faculty to provide accommodations.

Academic integrity

Each student in this course is expected to abide by USU’s Student Code. All the work you submit in this course must originate with you in form and content with all contributory sources fully and specifically acknowledged. It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the Student Code and the rules for properly acknowledging the work and ideas of others. You can find information on how to cite sources and avoid plagiarism here: https://usu.instructure.com/courses/152916. During examinations, you must do your own work. Talking or discussion is not permitted during the examinations, nor may you copy
from others or collaborate in any way. Any violation of the rules for academic integrity will be punished in accordance with USU’s policies.

Course Schedule

- **Week 1: Introduction to the Class**
  - Tuesday, August 28
    * No required reading
  - Thursday, August 30
    * No required reading

- **Week 2: Europe: Origins & Development**
  - Tuesday, September 4
    * McCormick (2017), chapters 1-2
  - Thursday, September 6
    * McCormick (2017), chapter 3

- **Week 3: European Institutions**
  - Tuesday, September 11
    * McCormick (2017), chapter 4
  - Thursday, September 13
    * Zimmermann and Dürr (2016), chapters 2 & 5

- **Week 4: Citizens & the EU**
  - Tuesday, September 18
    * McCormick (2017), chapter 5
  - Thursday, September 20
    * Zimmermann and Dürr (2016), chapters 4 & 7

- **Week 5: Civil Society & the EU**
  - Tuesday, September 25
    * Ayoub (2016), chapter 3
  - Thursday, September 27
    * Zimmermann and Dürr (2016), chapters 3 & 6

- **Week 6: Policy-Making in the European Union**
  - Tuesday, October 2
    * McCormick (2017), chapter 6
  - Thursday, October 4
    * Zimmermann and Dürr (2016), chapter 8
• Week 7: Economic Policies
  – Tuesday, October 9
    * McCormick (2017), chapter 7
  – Thursday, October 11
    * Zimmermann and Dürr (2016), chapter 9 & 10

• Week 8: In-class Midterm & Simulation I Preparation
  – Tuesday, October 16
    * **In-class Midterm**
  – Thursday, October 18
    * No required reading

• Week 9: Simulation I & Internal Policies I
  – Tuesday, October 23
    * No required reading
  – Thursday, October 25
    * McCormick (2017), chapter 8

• Week 10: Internal Policies II & External Policies I
  – Tuesday, October 30
    * Zimmermann and Dürr (2016), chapter 11
  – Thursday, November 1
    * McCormick (2017), chapter 9

• Week 11: External Policies II
  – Tuesday, November 6
    * Zimmermann and Dürr (2016), chapters 12 & 14
  – Thursday, November 8
    * Zimmermann and Dürr (2016), chapters 13 & 15

• Week 12: Contemporary Issues I: Brexit
  – Tuesday, November 13
  – Thursday, November 15
    * Zimmermann and Dürr (2016), chapter 16

• Week 13: Contemporary Issues II: Populism & Politicization of the EU
  – Tuesday, November 20
    * Kriesi (2014)
  – Thursday, November 22
    * NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Break
• Week 14: Contemporary Issues II continued & Simulation II Preparation
  – Tuesday, November 27
    * Otjes and Katsanidou (2017)
  – Thursday, November 29
    * Policy Memo due
    * No required reading

• Week 15: Simulation II & The European Union: A (Preliminary) Conclusion
  – Tuesday, December 4
    * No required reading
  – Thursday, December 6
    * McCormick (2017), Conclusions
    * Zimmermann and Dürr (2016), chapter 1

• Take-Home Exam due: December 11 by 11:20am

Course Readings


