

POL377H1F
TOPICS IN COMPARATIVE POLITICS
(Introduction to the Politics and Society of Northern Europe)
Fall 2017

Wednesday, 6-8pm
Room: LA341

Instructor: Francisco Beltran

Room 204N
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1. Office hours:

Wednesday and Thursday, 4-6pm, or by appointment.

2. Course description:

This course is intended as an overview of basic political institutions and social aspects of the Nordic region: Norway, Sweden, Finland, Denmark and Iceland, and other Nordic territories. It will explain why the Nordic model seems to be so successful and stable in a period of sweeping worldwide changes, while also presenting some of the social and political challenges these countries currently face. After a brief historical introduction, we will look at the political system, and parties in Northern Europe, the welfare state, and the key role equality and social trust play in the Nordic societies. The last part of the course will present the main accomplishments and challenges in the economic, migration and environmental fields, as well as looking at the international relations of the Nordic countries.

3. Intended learning outcomes:

- To understand the nature of the political systems, the process of policy making, and key social trends in the Nordic countries.

- To become familiar with the main social and political actors and institutions, as well as with current social and political developments in the Nordic region.
- To prepare the students for further studies in the politics and society of the Nordic countries.

4. Lectures, communication, and attendance:

Students are required to attend every class meeting. Accommodation of absences for religious or medical reasons is possible but should be discussed with the instructor. In any case, missing more than two or three classes might imply zero points in the participation component of the final grade.

Students are expected to read the materials before each class, according to the schedule outlined in section 6 below. The instructor will devote part of the class to summarize the most relevant concepts and ideas included in the materials, to explain the connections between them, and to respond to any doubts. This lecture part, however, will not cover the materials in their entirety, and that is why students should have read them beforehand. The rest of the session will be devoted to a discussion on the topics covered that day. **Students are expected to participate in these discussions and debates.**

This course has a Blackboard site. The instructor will use it to communicate important information regarding the course, including assignments' grades, as well as to upload essential readings and materials. Students are expected to check out the Blackboard site regularly (ie. every other day).

Email is the preferred way of communication between the instructor and the students. Students can expect a reply to their messages in the following 24 hours, weekends excepted.

The Faculty of Arts and Science **deadline to cancel the course** without academic penalty is November 6, 2017.

5. Assessment and assignment submission policy:

The course assessment is based on participation in class, a term test and two written assignments. Term work requirements consist of:

(1) Participation in class discussions (10% of the final grade).

Expectations: Attending students are expected to participate in the class discussions on a regular basis. An intervention during a discussion or debate may consist in giving a reasoned opinion, posing questions to the rest of the class, or both. You have to show you have read and understood the material. What I value is engaging, provocative interventions, questions, answers or thoughts that establish links among the readings, the questions and/or current events. At the bare minimum, you have to show you have read the material. Rambling or talking at length off-topic, or showing you have not worked on the material, will accrue you no points.

(2) Term test, in class (30% of the final grade).

The test will be 50 minutes long, with two short questions, one page long each, to choose from a list of four options. For the test, students have to study all the materials covered in class until October 18 (included).

Students who cannot make it to the term test must have strong, valid reasons, supported with the appropriate documentation, to request a make-up test at a later date. The request must be submitted to the instructor before the scheduled test date, and never afterwards.

The grades for the test will be available on blackboard approximately one week after.

The mid-term test will take place on October 25.

(3) Assignment 1: response paper (20% of the final grade).

The response paper is a 5 page-long comment, including bibliography, double spaced, on one of the newspaper articles the instructor will upload on blackboard.

Requirements: Three weeks before the submission deadline the instructor will upload a few newspaper articles related to topics we will have already seen in class. You will then have three weeks to submit a 5 page-long comment -double spaced, including bibliography- on one of them. It is mandatory to use at least the

relevant references on the topic from the syllabus, though you can and are encouraged to include other references as well. In your comment, you will have to explain the connections between the references and the article.

Assignment 1 is due by November 22.

(4) Assignment 2: a research paper (40% of the final grade).

Requirements: Length: 12 pages, including bibliography, double spaced. It is compulsory to use in the paper the relevant literature from the list of readings in this syllabus.

The structure of the research paper might vary depending on the chosen topic or issue, etc, but at the bare minimum it has to present and explain clearly an institution, policy, issue or aspect of the Nordic political systems or societies, **among those covered in the last six sessions, from October 25 to December 6.** Regarding the structure, the paper has to include a one page introduction stating what the student intends to do and explaining why the issue is relevant; two pages with literature review, that is, what other authors have said about the issue, topic or problem you are researching; an argumentation or exposition, based on relevant literature (this is the main part of the paper); and a conclusion.

The research paper, its requirements and what the instructor expects will be explained in detail in the first class (along with the other assignments), and on meetings during office hours.

The paper is due by December 6.

All these assignments must be completed to receive credit for the course.

Students should discuss the idea for the research paper with the instructor, in person and well before the submission deadline. The instructor will be available to discuss the assignments as the students are working on them during the term. Waiting until the last week or days before the submission deadline to discuss the assignments is strongly discouraged. Email is not a valid means to discuss the research paper.

Students are required to submit an electronic copy of the assignments by the deadline. No hard copy is required. **Students are also strongly advised to use Turnitin to submit the assignments,** a tool integrated in Blackboard.

“Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection for possible plagiarism. In doing so, students

will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site".

That said, the use of Turnitin is voluntary. If you prefer not to use this tool, come talk to me regarding alternative means of submitting the assignments.

When submitting assignments via Turnitin, students **must double-check the file was uploaded properly and on time**. Corrupted files will not be considered as submitted, and will be given a zero grade. Computer issues are never a valid reason for not submitting an assignment, or submitting it late, so remember to back up your work.

Students should submit via Blackboard a signed copy of the *Academic Integrity Checklist* (the form is at the end of the syllabus and on Blackboard) by October 18. Otherwise the assignments will not be graded.

Late delivery of assignments carries a penalty of 3% of the assignment's grade per day, with a limit of seven days. This means assignments delivered eight or more days after the deadline will not be accepted.

6. Course overview:

The following is a list of the classes held during the term, with their respective dates, readings, and the assignments' due dates.

Students should read the materials before each class. Some materials are at Course Reserves (CR) at the Roberts Library. The rest will be available from the course Blackboard site (BB), either as a link to the source or a pdf document.

The list of readings might be complemented with specific materials (journal and newspaper articles, statistics) for each session. These additional materials will be available from Blackboard as well.

Sep. 13: Introduction and overview

Readings:

No readings for this session.

Sep. 20: Research workshop at the Robarts Library

Readings:

No readings for this session.

Sep. 27: Historical and social overview

Readings:

Allardt, Erik, "A political sociology of the Nordic countries", *European Review*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2000, pp. 129-141 (BB).

Bischoff, Carina, and Marlene Wind, "Denmark", in Donatella M. Viola, ed., *The Routledge Handbook of European Elections*, Oxon, Routledge, 2015, pp. 267-269 (electronic resource, BB).

Raunio, Tapio, "Finland", in Donatella M. Viola, ed., *The Routledge Handbook of European Elections*, Oxon, Routledge, 2015, pp. 396-398 (electronic resource, BB).

Bischoff, Carina, and Marlene Wind, "Sweden", in Donatella M. Viola, ed., *The Routledge Handbook of European Elections*, Oxon, Routledge, 2015, pp. 414-416 (electronic resource, BB).

Oct. 4: Political systems and parties

Readings:

Bergman, Torbjörn, and Kaare Strøm, "Nordic Europe in comparative perspective", in Torbjörn Bergman and Kaare Strøm, eds., *The Madisonian Turn. Political Parties and Parliamentary Democracy in Nordic Europe*, Ann Arbor, The University of Michigan Press, 2013, pp. 35-54 (R).

Bischoff, Carina, and Marlene Wind, "Denmark", in Donatella M. Viola, ed., *The Routledge Handbook of European Elections*, Oxon, Routledge, 2015, pp. 269-273 (electronic resource, BB).

Raunio, Tapio, "Finland", in Donatella M. Viola, ed., *The Routledge Handbook of European Elections*, Oxon, Routledge, 2015, pp. 398-400 (electronic resource, BB).

Bischoff, Carina, and Marlene Wind, "Sweden", in Donatella M. Viola, ed., *The Routledge Handbook of European Elections*, Oxon, Routledge, 2015, pp. 416-418 (electronic resource, BB).

Oct. 11: The Nordic welfare state

Readings:

Kuhnle, Stein, and Matti Alestalo, "The modern Scandinavian welfare state", in Peter Nedergaard and Anders Wivel, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Scandinavian Politics*, pp. 13-24 (R).

Kangas, Olli, and Jon Kvist, "Nordic welfare states", in Bent Greve, ed., *The Routledge Handbook of the Welfare State*, Oxon, Routledge, 2012, pp. 148-160 (electronic source, BB).

Oct. 18: Equality and the logic of the welfare state

Readings:

Bäckman, Olof, and Kenneth Nelson, "The egalitarian paradise?", in Peter Nedergaard and Anders Wivel, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Scandinavian Politics*, pp. 25-35 (R).

Rothstein, Bo, "The moral, economic, and political logic of the Swedish welfare state", in Jon Pierre, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Swedish Politics*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2016, pp. 69-83 (BB).

Academic Integrity Checklist due.

Oct. 25: Social trust and the media

Readings:

Fønnesbæk Andersen, Rasmus, and Peter Thisted Dinesen, "Social capital in the Scandinavian countries", in Peter Nedergaard and Anders Wivel, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Scandinavian Politics*, Oxon, Routledge, 2018, pp. 161-173 (R).

Allern, Sigurd, "The role of media in Scandinavian politics", in Peter Nedergaard and Anders Wivel, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Scandinavian Politics*, Oxon, Routledge, 2018, pp. 174-186 (R).

Term test, in-class.

Nov. 1: Globalization and the Nordic model

Readings:

Andersson, Jenny, "A model of welfare capitalism. Perspectives on the Swedish model, then and now", in Jon Pierre, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of Swedish Politics*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2016, pp. 563-577 (BB).

Steinmo, Sven, "Bucking the Trend? The Welfare State and the Global Economy: The Swedish Case Up Close", *New Political Economy*, Vol. 8, No. 1, 2003, pp. 31-48 (BB).

Response paper articles available.

Nov. 15: Environmental policies

Readings:

Hoff, Jens, "The green 'heavyweights'. The climate policies of the Nordic countries", in Peter Nedergaard and Anders Wivel, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Scandinavian Politics*, pp. 49-65 (R).

Brandal, Nik, et al., *The Nordic Model of Social Democracy*, pp. 127-143 (electronic resource, BB).

Nov. 22: Migration policy in Scandinavia

Readings:

Kjeldstadli, Knut, "Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland", in Klaus J. Bade et al., eds., *The Encyclopedia of European Migration and Minorities*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2012, pp. 5-12 (electronic copy, BB).

Önnudóttir, Eva H., and Ólafur Th. Hardarson, "Public opinion and politics in Scandinavia", in Peter Nedergaard and Anders Wivel, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Scandinavian Politics*, pp. 124-146 (R).

Response paper due.

Nov. 29: Multiculturalism and social integration

Readings:

Borevi, Karin, "The political dynamics of multiculturalism in Sweden", in Raymond Taras, ed., *Challenging Multiculturalism. European Models of Diversity*, Edinburgh, Edinburgh University Press, 2013, pp. 138-169 (BB).

Holtug, Nils, "Danish multiculturalism, where art thou?", in Raymond Taras, ed., *Challenging Multiculturalism*, pp. 190-215 (BB).

Dec. 6: Nordic international relations

Readings:

Marcussen, Martin, "Scandinavian models of diplomacy", in Peter Nedergaard and Anders Wivel, eds., *The Routledge Handbook of Scandinavian Politics*, pp. 240-253 (R).

Brandal, Nik, et al., *The Nordic Model of Social Democracy*, pp. 109-123 (electronic resource, BB).

Research paper due.

7. Academic integrity:

Academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship at the University of Toronto. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that the U of T degree that you earn will be valued as a true indication of your individual academic achievement, and will continue to receive the respect and recognition it deserves.

Familiarize yourself with the University of Toronto's *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* (www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm). It is the rule book for academic behaviour at the U of T, and you are expected to know the rules. Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Copying material word-for-word from a source (including lecture and study group notes) and not placing the words within quotation marks.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Including references to sources that you did not use.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment including
 - working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work,
 - having someone rewrite or add material to your work while "editing".
- Lending your work to a classmate who submits it as his/her own without your permission.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone.
- Looking at someone else's answers
- Letting someone else look at your answers.
- Misrepresenting your identity.
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation:

- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including doctor's notes.
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

To remind you of these expectations, and help you avoid accidental offences, I will ask you to include a signed Academic Integrity Checklist with every assignment (see checklist at the end of this document). If you do not include the statement, your work will not be graded.

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the *Code*. The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on your transcript. If you have any questions about what is or is not permitted in this course, please do not hesitate to contact me. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from me, or from other available campus resources like the U of T Writing Website (<http://www.writing.utoronto.ca>). If you are experiencing personal challenges that are having an impact on your academic work, please speak to me or seek the advice of your college registrar.

Also, it is worth checking the Academic Integrity Section on the Faculty of Arts and Science site: www.artsci.utoronto.ca/osai/students/academic-integrity-basics

8. Accommodations for Disability:

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability/health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or Accessibility Services at 416-978-8060, accessibility.utoronto.ca.

9. Religious Accommodations:

The University has a general policy of accommodating absences for reasons of religious obligation, strongly articulated on the Provost's webpage (www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/publicationsandpolicies/guidelines/religiousobservances.htm). Students are expected to give reasonable advance notice of their absence.

Academic Integrity Checklist

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Instructor: Francisco Beltran

I, _____, affirm that the written assignments listed in the syllabus represent entirely my own efforts.

I confirm that:

- I have acknowledged the use of another's ideas with accurate citations.
- If I used the words of another (e.g., author, instructor, information source), I have acknowledged this with quotation marks (or appropriate indentation) and proper citation.
- When paraphrasing the work of others, I put the idea into my own words and did not just change a few words or rearrange the sentence structure
- I have checked my work against my notes to be sure I have correctly referenced all direct quotes or borrowed ideas.
- My bibliography includes only the sources used to complete this assignment.
- This is the first time I have submitted these assignments (in whole or in part) for credit.
- Any proofreading by another was limited to indicating areas of concern which I then corrected myself.
- This is the final version of my assignments and not a draft.
- I have kept my work to myself and did not share answers/content with others, unless otherwise directed by my instructor.
- I understand the consequences of violating the University's academic integrity policies as outlined in the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*.

By signing this form I agree that the statements above are true.

If I do not agree with the statements above, I will not submit my assignments and will consult the course instructor immediately.

Student name: _____ Signature: _____

Date: _____