Politics in Europe

POL 387 H1S

Winter 2021-22

Thursdays, 2-4 p.m.
(At least) Weeks 1-3: online synchronous delivery
Followed by in-person teaching: Room SS1083

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Office hours: Thursdays, 10.00-11.30 a.m. (at least initially online via Zoom; please contact me via Email to set up a Zoom meeting)

Course Description

Taking the multi-level political system of Europe as its point of departure, this course examines in detail key political and economic challenges that both the European Union and its member states are currently facing. More specifically, we will examine: the “organization” of political leadership in an increasingly diverse political landscape; the implications of Brexit as well as the prospect of further disintegration in the future; the challenge presented by populism to the legitimacy of national political systems and the political system of the EU; European responses to climate change and the global health crisis; and European state’s interactions with key regional and global players; among other things.

Learning Objectives

This course is designed to help students:

1. Survey the academic literature on key challenges that “Europe” is currently facing.
2. Acknowledge the multi-facetted nature of the challenges that European states have to address in different domains of action (diplomacy, economy, military).
3. Understand how Europe’s multi-level system of governance strengthens or impedes responses to current challenges.
4. Develop writing skills by composing academic essays with attention to logical rigor.
**Teaching Format**

Students are expected to read the materials before each class according to the schedule outlined below. I will devote part of the class to summarize the most relevant concepts and ideas included in the material and to explain the connections between them. Having said that, I will not cover the materials in their entirety, which is why you have to read them beforehand. In addition, we will also address several of the discussion questions that you provide for each session (see below on “class participation”).

You are expected to attend all classes. If you have to miss class, it is key to communicate with me prior to class and provide appropriate documentation (see information on absence declaration below). It is important for you to show up on time so we can start and finish class in a timely manner without interruptions.

**Assignments and Assignment Submission Policy**

1. **Class participation (25% of the final grade)**

   Class participation consists of two components:

   **Weekly Online Discussion Questions (20%)**

   You are required to submit one discussion question (100-120 words per question) for each class (except for sessions 1 and 12) through Quercus under “assignments” (by 2 p.m. on Wednesday before each class). These questions will help you think through the readings. You should identify and put into a question a “puzzling” development, action, etc. that defies easy explanation.

   **Contributions to Seminar Discussions (5%)**

   In-class discussion contributions are important for your success in this course. Make sure to do the readings and appear well prepared for every class, as we will discuss and analyze the readings and put them into broader perspective. The quality of your responses, which requires you to speak up in class, will be evaluated for your participation grade.

2. **Three written assignments (75% of the final grade)**

   **First Assignment (25%): due by February 14, 8 p.m.**

   **Response paper** (6-8 double-spaced pages plus cover sheet and bibliography): Response papers should critique all readings for a given session. Do not provide extensive summaries of the readings. Instead, evaluate specific arguments and positions, strengths and weaknesses of these arguments, methods and evidence, and/or the implications of the readings. NB: You may choose any session from sessions 2-5.

   **Second Assignment (25%): due by March 14, 8 p.m.**

   **Commentary** (6-8 double-spaced pages plus cover sheet and bibliography): Two weeks before the submission deadline I will upload a few newspaper articles related to topics covered in sessions 6-8. You will then have two weeks to submit a comment on one of the articles. It is mandatory to use at least four readings from the syllabus (from sessions 6-8), 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.
Third Assignment (25%): due by April 8, 8 p.m.

Commentary (6-8 double-spaced pages plus cover sheet and bibliography): Two weeks before the submission deadline I will upload a few newspaper articles related to topics covered in sessions 9-11. You will then have two weeks to submit a comment on one of the articles. It is mandatory to use at least four readings from the syllabus (from sessions 9-11), 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.

Submission of Assignments

Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to the University’s plagiarism detection tool for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the tool’s reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of this tool are described on the Centre for Teaching Support & Innovation web site (https://uoft.me/pdt-faq).

The Faculty of Arts and Science deadline to drop S section code courses is March 14, 2022.

Course Resources and Technology

Quercus

This course uses Quercus for assignments, announcements, readings and discussions. Please be sure to have access to Quercus and check it regularly.

Zoom (at least weeks 1-3)

Please create a Zoom account with your university email address (https://utoronto.zoom.us), as only authenticated users will be able to join class sessions and office hours. See Quercus for the link to the course’s Zoom meetings.

Please note that the Zoom sessions will not be recorded.

Class Policies

Communication and office hours

Please send emails from your university email accounts. I will try my best to respond to email within 48 hours.

You are very much encouraged to see me during office hours for substantive questions regarding course material and assignments. If you prefer a virtual office hour, please send me an email so that I can share Zoom meeting details.
Recordings of seminars are prohibited

Students may not create audio or video recordings of Zoom seminars. The unauthorized use of any form of device and/or software to audiotape, photograph, video-record or otherwise reproduce seminars or teaching materials is prohibited. Students creating and/or sharing unauthorized audio or video recordings of Zoom seminars violate the instructor’s intellectual property rights protected by the Canadian Copyright Act. Students violating this agreement will be subject to disciplinary actions under the Code of Student Conduct.

Late work

You are expected to submit assignments on time. To receive special consideration, it is key to communicate with me well before deadlines and provide me with appropriate documentation. Late assignments will be subject to a late penalty of 5% per day (including weekends) of the total marks for the assignment. Assignments submitted five calendar days beyond the due date will be assigned a grade of zero.

Classroom technology policy

Please stay away from your cellphones at all times and use laptops/tablets for class purposes only.

Absence declaration

For 2021-22, the Verification of Illness (or “doctor’s note”) is not required. Students who are absent from academic participation for any reason (e.g., COVID, cold, flu and other illness or injury, family situation) and who require consideration for missed academic work have been asked to record their absence through the ACORN online absence declaration. The absence declaration is considered sufficient documentation to indicate an absence and no additional information or documentation should be required when seeking consideration from an instructor. Students should also advise their instructor of their absence. Instructors can contact their Undergraduate Administrators if they have questions or would like confirmation for a particular student.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university, and to ensuring that a degree from the University of Toronto is a strong signal of each student’s individual academic achievement. As a result, the University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. The University of Toronto’s Code of Behavior on Academic Matters (www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/policies/behaveac.htm) outlines the behaviors that constitute academic dishonesty and the processes for addressing academic offences. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated and dealt with accordingly.

Religious Holidays

The University has a general policy of accommodating absences for reasons of religious obligation, strongly articulated on the Provost’s webpage (see https://www.viceprovoststudents.utoronto.ca/policies-guidelines/accommodation-religious/).

Please notify me if you plan on missing class in order to observe a religious holiday. If an assignment falls on that day, we will work together to find an alternative time for you to complete or submit the assignment. It is key to inform me well before your planned absence.
Accessibility

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 the AccessAbility Resource Centre as soon as possible.

AccessAbility staff (located at 445 Spadina Ave.) are available by appointment to assess specific needs, provide referrals and arrange appropriate accommodations. Please call 416-978-8060 or email accessibility.services@utoronto.ca. The sooner you let us know your needs the quicker we can assist you in achieving your learning goals in this course.

Notice of Collection

The University of Toronto respects your privacy. The information on medical certificates is collected pursuant to section 2(14) of the University of Toronto Act, 1971. It is collected for the purpose of administering accommodations for academic purposes based on medical grounds. The department will maintain a record of all medical certificates received. At all times it will be protected in accordance with the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act. If you have questions, please refer to www.utoronto.ca/privacy or contact the University’s Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Office at 416-946-5835. Address: Room 201, McMurrich Bldg., 12 Queen’s Park Crescent, Toronto, ON, M5S 1A1.
Course Schedule

Session 1 (January 13)
Introduction and Overview

No readings for this session.

Session 2 (January 20)
Political Leadership in Europe


Session 3 (January 27)
Brexit


**Session 4 (February 3)**

*Populism*


**Session 5 (February 10)**

*The “Migration Crisis”*


**Session 6 (February 17)**

*The Covid-19 Pandemic*


**February 24: Reading Week**

→ No class
**Session 7 (March 3)**

**The Eurozone Crisis**


**Session 8 (March 10)**

**Climate Change**


**Session 9 (March 17)**

**The EU and Russia**


Session 10 (March 24)

The EU and the United States


March 31

➡ No class: make-up “session 12”

Session 11 (April 7)

The EU and China


Session 12 (date: tbd)

Summary and Outlook