

# European Politics

**When:** Tuesday only from 11.30 am – 12.15pm  
**Office Hours:** T/W/Th 1 – 3pm or by appointment  
**Office:** North Gravely Hall 116

**Instructor:** Dr. Malliga Och  
**Contact:** ochmall@isu.edu

## Welcome to class!

European countries such as Germany, France, Italy, Great Britain, and Spain share many characteristics with the United States: they are free market economies, democracies, and follow the rule of law. Yet European countries also differ remarkably from the United States in terms of political culture, norms and values, the type of electoral, political and party systems, and approaches to social issues such as terrorism, refugees, welfare programs, or the global economy. Throughout the semester, we will explore how European countries differ from the US. Specifically, students will address the following questions:

1. **Who governs European countries?**
2. **What issues do European countries care about?**

**Become a country expert!** Each student will pick a European country and provide weekly country-specific news (critical news analysis), exploring the week's topic in relation to one's country, and giving a final presentation comparing one's country to the United States.

## What are the learning objectives for this class?

1. Demonstrate a basic knowledge about a specific European country [reports]
2. Apply and analyze key concepts of European politics [critical news analysis]
3. Gain professional presentation skills [presentation]

## What do I need to complete this course?

There is only one required textbook: Markus M.L. Crepaz (2017) *European Democracies*. Additional readings will be posted on Moodle.

Additional resources to help you through the semester:

Parliaments and Government Database	<a href="http://www.parlgov.org/">http://www.parlgov.org/</a>
Interparliamentary Union	<a href="http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/mod-general.asp">http://archive.ipu.org/parline-e/mod-general.asp</a>
European Election Database	<a href="http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/">http://www.nsd.uib.no/european_election_database/</a>
CIA Factbook	<a href="https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html">https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/index.html</a>
Pew Research Center – Global Attitudes and Trends	<a href="http://www.pewglobal.org/">http://www.pewglobal.org/</a>
The Electoral Knowledge Project	<a href="http://aceproject.org/">http://aceproject.org/</a>

## How do I earn my grade?

Rather than a traditional course that grades each student on a scale from 0 to 100%, you will actively be involved in your learning. Instead of a midterm and a final, there will be a variety of assignments and each student can choose how much to do in order to get the grade she or he wishes. This will allow students to direct their learning in this course in the manner that best suits their learning objectives. Essentially, the grade you earn is completely up to you!

For each graded assignment in this course, you must satisfactorily complete the assignment to receive credit. The threshold for satisfactory completion depends on the type of assignment. Each graded assignment includes a detailed description of the minimum specifications (or tasks) for satisfactory completion.

## How do I know how well I did on an assignment?

For each assignment in this course, you will have explicit specifications, or tasks, related to that assignment. In order to receive credit for completing the assignment, you must satisfy all the specifications for that assignment. *Grades are awarded as pass or fail – there is no partial credit.*

If you ever find yourself doing an activity in this class and you're not sure what it is supposed to accomplish, don't hesitate to let me know. I read each word of your work and appreciate a good effort and independent thinking. You can reach out to me (email, phone, in person) to make sure you understand what I'm asking for in each assignment. Asking for clarification or help is a good solid effort and documentation of your learning. Don't be afraid to ask!

*What if I my work did not meet the requirements for a pass?*

Assignments: If you failed an assignment, you have a chance to revise and resubmit assignments **without penalty** during closed week. No late submissions possible for revise and resubmit assignments.

Presentation: You cannot make up presentation unless in case of illness or family emergency. Documentation before the presentation date is required. There are no exceptions.

Attendance: If you miss more than 2 classes but otherwise fulfill all requirements for an A or B, you can have the attendance requirement waved IF you have a serious health or family emergency. Please contact me immediately and provide documentation of the emergency.

## What if I do not submit my assignment on time?

You will have a chance to make up for missed assignments during final week. You need to write a short essay for every missed assignment during final week. No revise and resubmit possible on late assignments.

However, submitting assignments late in any of the Modules will **reduce your final grade by half a letter grade**. This means if you fulfill all requirements for a B but you missed ONE assignment, you will receive a B-. If you missed two assignments, you will receive a C+ and so on.

If you have no missing assignments, you will receive a bonus of half a letter grade. So, if you fulfill the requirements for a B and all your assignments are handed in on time, you will receive a B+.

### How do I determine my final grade?

Satisfactory completion of assignments helps you earn your preferred final grade in the course. Below are the exact requirements you need to meet for each letter grade.

**Important:** You can only do the presentation if you complete all the requirements for a D by October 30<sup>th</sup>.

**Note:** You must fulfill the minimum requirements in each cell of a column in order to earn that final grade. If you do not meet the minimum requirements for a D in this course, you will receive an F.

Assignments	Minimum Grade Requirements			
	D	C	B	A
<b>Module 1: Country Reports</b>	complete 1 out of 4 country reports on time	complete 2 out of 4 country reports on time	complete 3 out of 4 country reports on time	complete 4 out of 4 country reports on time
<b>Module 2: critical news analysis</b>	complete 1 out of 4 news analyses on time	complete 2 out of 4 news analyses on time	complete 3 out of 4 news analyses on time	complete 4 out of 4 news analyses on time
<b>Module 3: Presentation</b>		Complete presentation with a grade of 70% or higher	Complete presentation with a grade of 80% or higher	Complete presentation with a grade of 90% or higher
<b>Attendance</b>			Attend 9 out of 12 classes	Attend 10 out of 12 classes

### Module 1 - Demonstrate a basic knowledge about a specific European country (country reports)

During week 4-7, you will need to submit a weekly country report on Moodle to demonstrate your knowledge of the basic concepts we discussed in class that week. I will provide prompts for each week that you need to answer. The quiz will open after class and close the following Sunday at noon.

Due dates are as follows:

September 16<sup>th</sup> Political Parties  
September 23<sup>rd</sup> Electoral Systems  
September 30<sup>th</sup> Political Systems  
October 7<sup>th</sup> Courts

### Module 2 – Apply and analyze key concepts of European politics (critical news analysis)

During week 8-11, you will need to submit a critical news analysis each week on the topic of the week. Please submit the news analysis on Moodle by the dates specified below. To receive a passing grade on this assignment, you will need to do the following:

1. Find a news article that discusses the topic of the week in Europe in general or a specific European country. Watch this video on how to google like a pro: <https://youtu.be/LTJygQwYV84>
2. Summarize the article. A summary must include:
  - a. Article is from a major national European newspaper
  - b. Source of the news article including the publication date and link to the article (1 sentence)
  - c. Country where the event occurred (1 sentence)
  - d. Description of the event (2 sentences)
  - e. Explanation how the article fits with the week's topic (2-3 sentences)
  - f. State whether you think the same issue exists in the United States **and** why (3 sentences)

Due date and topic for each news analysis:

October 14 <sup>th</sup>	Social Movements
October 21 <sup>st</sup>	Immigration and the welfare state
October 28 <sup>th</sup>	Political Culture
November 4 <sup>th</sup>	Nationalism and Ethnicity

### Module 3 – Gain professional presentation skills (presentation)

In order to pass the class with a C or higher, each student needs to give a 20 minutes presentation. The date of each presentation will be determined by the luck of the draw. Exceptions are only made for major health crises or family emergencies.

You can email me a draft of your presentation for feedback one week before your assigned date.

I will grade your presentation on content and on a series of professional requirements about presentation style and presentation layout (available on Moodle).

The content requirement for the presentation are the following and are posted on Moodle:

- ✓ Title Slide
- ✓ Introduction of your country: location, geographical size (compare to US), population size (compare to US), GDP (compare to US), language spoken, national dish, national holiday, flag, national animal, national flower
- ✓ Play the national anthem
- ✓ A fun fact about your country that you learned during your research
- ✓ What is the political system of your country? How does it compare to the US?
- ✓ Political Parties: what are the main parties in your countries? What does each stand for? Which party is the closest to the Democrats and the GOP in the USA respectively and why?
- ✓ Elections: what is the electoral system? When was the last national election? What was the outcome of the national election? When is the next national election?
- ✓ What is the Court system? What is the highest court? What is an interesting case that the Supreme Court of your country has decided in the past 10 years?
- ✓ What is the biggest difference between your country and the USA in your opinion?

## What is the course schedule?

Date	Readings
Week 1 August 21	Welcome
Week 2 August 28	<p>No class</p> <p>There will be no class on August 28<sup>th</sup>. Instead you need to complete the following assignment available on Moodle:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. List your top 3 countries you would like to focus on</li><li>2. Write 3 sentences for each country on why you would like to focus on that particular country</li><li>3. List the languages you speak</li><li>4. List the countries where you have travelled to in Europe</li><li>5. List a major national newspaper (English version) for each of your top three countries, for example, in Thailand, one possible newspaper would be the English version of the Bangkok Post</li></ol> <p><b>If you do not complete the assignment by September 2<sup>nd</sup> at noon, I will assign a country to you. No exception.</b></p>
Week 3 September 4	<p>Comparing the US and Europe</p> <p>Read: chapter 1 Read: <a href="#">5 ways Americans and Europeans are different</a></p>
Week 4 September 11	<p>Political Parties</p> <p>Read: chapter 2 Explore: <a href="#">Manifesto Project</a></p>
Week 5 September 18	<p>Electoral Systems</p> <p>Read: chapter 3 Explore: <a href="#">IDEA Electoral System Design Database</a> Explore: <a href="#">Parties and Elections in Europe</a></p>
Week 6 September 25	<p>Political Systems</p> <p>Read: chapter 4 Explore: <a href="#">The World Factbook</a></p>
Week 7 October 2	<p>Courts</p> <p>Read: chapter 5 Explore: <a href="#">Guide to International and Foreign Law Research</a> Explore: <a href="#">Strength of Legal Rights Index</a></p>

<p>Week 8 October 9</p>	<p>Issues: Social Movements</p> <p>Read: chapter 7</p> <p>Explore: <a href="#">Women's Rights</a></p> <p>Explore: <a href="#">LGBT Rights</a></p>
<p>Week 9 October 16</p>	<p>Issues: Immigration and the welfare state</p> <p>Read: chapter 8</p> <p>Read: <a href="#">Why doesn't the US have a European Style Welfare State</a></p>
<p>Week 10 October 23</p>	<p>Issues: Political Culture</p> <p>Read: Chapter 9</p> <p>Explore: <a href="#">World Value Survey</a></p>
<p>Week 11 October 30</p>	<p>Issues: Nationalism and Ethnicity</p> <p>Read: Chapter 3</p> <p>Explore: <a href="#">Minority Rights Group International</a></p>
<p>Week 12 November 6</p>	<p>Student presentation</p>
<p>Week 13 November 13</p>	<p>Student presentation</p>
<p>Week 14 November 20</p>	<p>Thanksgiving</p>
<p>Week 15 November 27</p>	<p>Student presentation</p>
<p>Week 16 December 4</p>	<p>Chance to revise and resubmit failed assignments</p>
<p>December 11</p>	<p>Chance to make up missed assignments – missed assignment module opens at 8 am and closes at 23:55 of December 11</p>

## What are the guidelines for this course?

In order to make sure our course runs smoothly, we need to have some policies and ground rules in place for how we will interact with each other.

*How do I communicate with the instructor? How will he communicate with me?*

You can email me at any time (ochmall@isu.edu) or visit during my office hours. I am happy to help you with any of the assignments or just discuss your thoughts on human rights! If you cannot make it to office hours, please email me to set up an appointment.

I will respond to any email inquiries within 24 hours during regular business hours.

Moodle is of central importance in this class. It is on Moodle where you submit your assignments, where I post readings and where I announce important information. Please make sure to receive Moodle notifications for the course and check into Moodle at least twice a week.

*What if Moodle is acting up?*

If Moodle is acting up (and it sure will), please contact the IT help desk at 282-HELP. Make sure to always save a copy of your assignment in case Moodle 'eats it' – it has happened before. If this is the case, first call Moodle for troubleshooting. If they cannot fix the problem, please email me your assignment by the deadline. If you notice a problem after the deadline has passed, email me immediately to alert me to the problem. I strongly suggest taking a screenshot of Moodle when you submit your assignment to prove that you did submit it on time.

*What if I need an accommodation?*

All students with a disability and requiring special accommodations to participate in and to complete this course must contact the Disability Resource Center (Rendezvous Building) for verification of eligibility and for determination of specific accommodations. More information here: <http://www2.isu.edu/disabilityservices/>

*What if I need help with assignments and writing?*

If you would like assistance with your writing, from brainstorming to a second set of eyes to check spelling and grammar, please use the Writing Center. Trained writing consultants can help you with all stages of your writing process. More information here: <http://www2.isu.edu/success/writing/>

*What are the expectations for academic integrity?*

For purposes of this course, plagiarism is understood to refer to: A) Direct quotes without adequate source citation. B) Paraphrase or précis without adequate source citation. All material: fact, theory, or hypothesis, derived from the works of others must be properly cited. Source citations must include: author, title of the work being cited, pages being referred to, and date of publication. For journal articles, proper citation includes the above **plus**: journal title, volume number, and pages in the journal occupied by the article. Models for proper citation format may be found in: Turabian, Kate L., *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations*, University of Chicago Press, 1973. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offense which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even the revocation of a degree.