PSc 2330.10

Comparative Government and Politics: Western Europe

COURSE AND CONTACT INFORMATION

Course: PSc 2330. Comparative Government and Politics: Western Europe

Semester: Fall 2011
Time: TR 2:20 PM to 3:35 PM
Location: 1957 E St, NW

INSTRUCTOR

Name: Harvey Feigenbaum
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Teaching Assistant

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is meant to be both an introduction to political life in Western Europe and an introduction to the comparative method of political investigation. European societies demonstrate important similarities of political development as well as significant differences that help us understand the deeper processes at work in all advanced industrial societies. By examining the constellation of forces and experience which characterize political life in Britain, France, and Germany, the participant in this course should be led not only to the discovery of richly varied societies, but to a sensitivity to certain common problems in a troubled world.

COURSE PREREQUISITE(S)

Introductory sequence to political science. PSc 001 or its equivalent

TEXTS

The required texts for this course have been made available for purchase at the bookstore in the Marvin Center. They are:
LEARNING OUTCOMES:

As a result of completing this course, students will be able to:
1. develop analytical skill relative to comparing hypotheses in political science
2. write expository essays with attention to evidence and logical rigor
3. analyze contemporary events in Western Europe in light of their historical and political contexts.

GRADING

Written Requirements and Grades

Written requirements will consist of a midterm exam and a final short paper. The midterm will count 50% of the total grade. The final short paper will also count 50% of the total grade. If you wish, you may do an extra book review, with a change in the weights of grades as indicated under the “Extra Assignment Option” below. Students may also elect to do a term paper which can be substituted for the midterm or final paper grade, as indicated below.

Term Paper Option

Students who worry about their performance on exams may elect to do a term paper for extra credit. The term paper should be about 5000 words (twenty double-spaced pages). Those who do the term paper may substitute the grade on their term paper for either their midterm or final short paper grades. You must, however, do the midterm exam and final short paper, whether or not you elect to do the term paper. Your final grade will be the average of the two highest grades. In the event that the averaged grades produce a borderline result, the final short paper will have a slightly higher weight.

If you choose to do the term paper, you must clear the topic with the instructor. You must inform the instructor of your topic by October 11, 2011, at the latest, but the sooner the better. The term paper is due by December 8, 2011.

The term paper will be the analysis of an issue of public policy in any country in Western Europe. (For example: health care in Sweden, or higher education policy in France). The paper will include a review of the literature on the policy in question, a description of the
policy chosen, an analysis of why the policy came about the form that it did, including an examination of which domestic groups were influential in shaping the policy. The paper will include primary and secondary resources. Students doing the term paper option will be expected to meet with the instructor from time to time during office hours or by appointment.

**Extra Assignment Option**

In the past some students have expressed concern that there are only two required written assignments in this class: the midterm exam and final paper. For those students who wish, they may do an extra assignment: a book review of five to eight double spaced pages. Students wishing to pursue this option will propose the review of a scholarly book which covers some aspect of politics in one or more countries in Western Europe (scholarly books are carefully documented with foot or endnotes and are usually, though not always, published by a university press). The proposal for this book review is due at the same time as the proposal for a term paper on October 11, 2011; but students may elect to do either the term paper, the book review, or both.

Those choosing the book review should include 1) a summary of the book 2) a discussion of how the book relates to the other aspects of this course and 3) an appraisal the value of the book as a contribution to your understanding of politics in Western Europe. The proposed book must be approved by the instructor. Your book review proposal should include the title and author of the book, the publisher, the date of publication, and the number of pages. The proposal should also include a sentence or two explaining what the book is about. **Students may not choose a book that they have already read for another class.** The book review is due December 8, 2011.

Should you elect to do the book review, your grade will be calculated as follows: Book review= 10%, Midterm= 45%, Final paper = 45%.

**CLASS POLICIES**

Students are expected to attend all classes. Make up exams will only be given to students who have missed the regularly scheduled exam due to major illness or force majeure.

University Policy on Religious Holidays:
1. Students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance;
2. Faculty should extend to these students the courtesy of absence without penalty on such occasions, including permission to make up examinations;
3. Faculty who intend to observe a religious holiday should arrange at the beginning of the semester to reschedule missed classes or to make other provisions for their course-related activities

[NOTE: for other university policies on teaching, see http://www.gwu.edu/~academic/Teaching/main.htm ]
ACADEMIC INTEGRITY
I personally support the GW Code of Academic Integrity. It states:: “Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information.” For the remainder of the code, see: http://www.gwu.edu/~ntegrity/code.html

SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS OUTSIDE THE CLASSROOM
DISABILITY SUPPORT SERVICES (DSS)
Any student who may need an accommodation based on the potential impact of a disability should contact the Disability Support Services office at 202-994-8250 in the Marvin Center, Suite 242, to establish eligibility and to coordinate reasonable accommodations. For additional information please refer to: http://gwired.gwu.edu/dss/

UNIVERSITY COUNSELING CENTER (UCC) 202-994-5300
The University Counseling Center (UCC) offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include:
- crisis and emergency mental health consultations
- confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals
  http://gwired.gwu.edu/counsel/CounselingServices/AcademicSupportServices

SECURITY
In the case of an emergency, if at all possible, the class should shelter in place. If the building that the class is in is affected, follow the evacuation procedures for the building. After evacuation, seek shelter at a predetermined rendezvous location.

Topics and Reading Assignments

8/30 Introduction, no readings

9/1 British Political Development
Kesselman et al., Part 2, chaps 1,2,
Moore, chap 1, “England”

9/6 British Political Culture
Kesselman, et al., Part I: Introduction

9/8 French Political Development
Moore, chap 2: “France”,
Kesselman, et al., Part 3, chaps 6, 7, 10

9/13 French Political Culture
Begin reading Gaspard, *A Small City in France*

9/15 German Political Development
   Tom Kemp, *Industrialization of Western Europe*, chap 4 (Blackboard)
   Moore, chaps 8, 9
   Kesselman et al., Part 4, chaps 11, 12, 15

9/20 “Seminar”: we will discuss together all the readings up to this point, including chapters 7, 8, and 9 of Moore.

9/22 The British Legislature
    Kesselman, et al., Part 2, chaps 3, 4

9/27 The British Executive
    Kesselman et al., Part 2, chap 5

9/29 The French Legislature(s)
    Kesselman, et al., Part 3, chaps 9,

10/4 The French Executive
    Kesselman et al., Part 3, chap. 8, 10

10/6 The German Legislature
    Kesselman, et al. Part 4, chap. 14

10/11 The German Executive
    Kesselman et al., chap. 13, 15
    Term paper, book review proposals due

10/13 TBA

10/18 MIDTERM EXAM

10/20 The British Party System
    Review Kesselman et al., Part 2, chap. 1, 4, 5
    Recommended: Samuel Beer, *Modern British Politics*

10/25 The French Party System
    Review Kesselman et al., Part 3, chap 6, 9, 10

10/27 The German Party System
    Review Kesselman, et al. Part 4, chap 14

11/1 The European Union
11/3 The European Constitution and the Treaty of Lisbon
“The European Constitution” on Blackboard

11/8 The European Welfare State: Background
Gerschenkron, “Economic Backwardness in Historical Perspective” (Blackboard)
Review: Chris Pierson, “Orgins and Development of the Welfare State” (Blackboard)

11/10 Immigration and Racism
Finish reading Gaspard, A Small City in France
Kesselman et al., chaps 10, 15, 20

11/15 Seminar

11/17 Cultural Diversity and Americanization
Feigenbaum, “Digital Entertainment Jumps the Border,” Scientific American, March 2003 (Blackboard)
Feigenbaum, “America’s Cultural Challenge Abroad” Political Science Quarterly, Spring 2011 (Blackboard)

11/22 TBA

11/24 Thanksgiving

11/29 The European Union and Cultural Protection
Feigenbaum, “Recent Evolution of EU Audiovisual Policy” (Blackboard)

12/6 Official make-up day

12/8 Review Session and distribution of Final Short Paper topics