

LAKEHEAD UNIVERSITY

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE

Political Science 4311, F2017 Selected Problems in Comparative Politics

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COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course objectives are: to familiarize students with selected problems of the European Union, as well as the institutions and domestic processes of its member countries; and to develop ability-based, problem-based skills of analysis. You will consider the following questions (among others):

- What problems exist in the domestic policy of the EU members?
- What solutions are proposed for them?
- What differences exist in those problems, and those solutions, in the members of the European Union, such as France, Czech Republic, Germany, Poland, and others?

You can find more information in the “Learner Outcomes” section below.

COURSE CONTENT

Using instructor-generated worksheets and your participation in role-play simulations, your own analysis of the various problems will allow you to answer the following questions:

- Who are the significant political actors in the policy making community, individuals or groups?
- How does the analyst distinguish between significant and insignificant actors?
- What influence do various actors have on a particular policy?
- What are the resources on which the political system rests? Which are scarce? Which are essential? How do political actors manage them?
- What factors favor which political actors? What is the impact on the outcome of the policy-making process?
- With respect to specific policies, who benefits? Who pays? How is that decided?
- Which of these actors can affect you/your team achieving your goal?
- What resources are available to solve the problems?
- Which are used?
- Did you have enough of each?
- What were the factors outside decision-makers control?

REQUIRED TEXT AND READINGS

These are:

- *Ten Core Worksheets*, by Laure Paquette, available on D2L;
- Extra material on reserve or on D2L or Zotero – see calendar for links;
- Official sources of information, such as the Gateway to the European Union, http://europa.eu/index_en.htm; and European Treaties, http://europa.eu/abc/treaties/index_en.htm.
- All available relevant materials, and supplementary and further supporting information found through your own research.

COURSE FORMAT

To support your learning the Course Content, you will be provided with:

- an opportunity to participate in two granting Topics, as applicants and as decision-makers, representing specific EU members;
- classroom instruction;
- access to research materials and instructor-prepared worksheets;
- individual written assignments
- a library research workshop
- oral presentations and discussion.

LEARNER OUTCOMES

In this course, you will learn:

- ***independent critical thinking*** through the use of research and written assignments;
- ***social awareness*** by requiring that you know the domestic political problems facing the members of the European Union; and
- ***leadership*** through participation in the role-play simulations, assessment of your peers' skills, and reflection on your own behavior.

At the end of this course, you will be able to:

- ***identify and describe*** a range of political tactics in several categories;
- ***identify and assess*** the main domestic issues of several countries;
- ***distinguish*** effective decision-making and program development from ineffective ones;
- ***identify*** different tactics ***and assess*** their effectiveness in a range of situations;
- ***apply*** these skills to understand how to improve the situation.

TYPICAL COURSE SCHEDULE

NOTE: THIS COURSE SCHEDULE MAY CHANGE BECAUSE OF HOLIDAY SCHEDULES, UNFORESEEN CIRCUMSTANCES OR OTHER REASONS WITHOUT NOTICE. Consult the course calendar available on D2L for details. A research workshop with the Paterson Library is part of the course.

Week 1	Intro to course; rules, expectations, criteria for role play simulation; discussion of grading criteria
Week 2	Lecture on approaches to comparative politics, Lecture and exercise on analysis; research workshop;
Week 3	Topic 1 (presentation, discussion, decision); analysis; introduction to assignment; teamwork/research
Week 4	Topic 2 (presentation, discussion, decision); analysis; introduction to assignment; teamwork/research; assignment due
Week 5	Topic 3 (presentation, discussion, decision); analysis; introduction to assignment; teamwork/research; assignment due
Week 6	Topic 4 (presentation, discussion, decision); analysis; introduction to assignment; teamwork/research; assignment due; deadline for mandatory research consultation with librarian
Week 7	Topic 1 (presentation, discussion, decision); analysis; introduction to assignment; teamwork/research ; assignment due
Week 8	Topic 2 (presentation, discussion, decision); analysis; introduction to assignment; teamwork/research ; assignment due
Week 9	Topic 3 (presentation, discussion, decision); analysis; introduction to assignment; teamwork/research ; assignment due
Week 10	Topic 4 (presentation, discussion, decision); analysis; introduction to assignment; teamwork/research ; assignment due
Week 11	Topic 5 (presentation, discussion, decision); analysis; introduction to assignment; teamwork/research ; assignment due
Week 12	End of class discussion

GRADING

COMPONENT	PERCENTAGE OF TOTAL MARK
Assignments	60
presentations and professionalism	40
Exam or Bonus Assignment	Up to +5% of final grade
TOTAL	100

Assignments may be due weekly. Materials and videos are available on Youtube and D2L. Worksheets must be: typed; in the proper format i.e. using the worksheet as specified in the D2L document, in 12 point font. The grade for each debate is for the team, and reflects the quality of research, cogency of arguments presented, and overall effectiveness of argumentation.

ASSESSMENT AND ROLE OF THE INSTRUCTOR

I believe that you learn only through what you yourself say, do, write or read, so I will use classroom time as much as possible to help you learn what you cannot learn any other way on your own.

My responsibilities on this course are to:

- design the course and course requirements;
- set clear expectations for you to meet;
- coach you during your course work (developing strategies, role plays);
- help you prepare for components listed in the “Grading” section above, as well as exams and classroom participation; and
- resolve any conflicts or answer any questions regarding student activities in the course.

My performance is assessed through:

- formal student evaluations done at the end of the course;
- informal short discussions from time to time during the class;
- interactions (talk and e-mail) with individual or groups of students; and
- ongoing monitoring of your performance and that of other students in the class in all your work.

I commit to:

- ongoing reflection on my practice as a teacher;
- creativity, innovation and experimentation in the classroom;
- taking chances and making mistakes while I try to find the best way for you to learn; and
- being accountable to you and other students regarding these commitments.

IF YOUR WORK IS LATE...

If there is no date stamp each page of any late assignment (available from the Department secretary or from the Lakehead University Security Services office), the applicable date/time penalties will be assessed based on when I receive the assignment.

Late penalties are as follows:

- 20 percentage points deducted for submissions up to 24 hours late;
- 40 percentage points deducted for between 24 and 48 hours late;
- 60 percentage points deducted for between 48 and 72 hours late ONLY if I have not completed grading for all assignments handed in. Once all assignments are handed in are graded, I will not accept late assignments.

Less participation in class work will result in a lower participation grade. However, if you are responsible for a significant task as part of group work, and you do not fulfill that task, you will fail the course.

CHEATING

When you registered at Lakehead University, you agreed to follow the University's *Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures* (you can find a version online here <http://policies.lakeheadu.ca/policy.php?pid=60>, but it's your responsibility to ensure if this is the most up-to-date version). Handing in any work under your name where you are not the author (either by yourself or part of a group) is considered academic fraud. Handing in the same piece of work, or a significant part of the same piece, for more than one course without the written permission of the professors or departments concerned is considered academic fraud. Any professor who discovers academic fraud and does not apply for sanctions under the Procedures is negligent in his/her professional obligations.