PSCI 218
WEST EUROPEAN POLITICS AND SOCIETY

This course provides an in-depth introduction to the politics of Western Europe since World War II, with a focus on the four leading nations: Britain, France, Germany, and Italy. In the postwar period, these nations developed vibrant economies and stable political systems that differ markedly from both the U.S. and one another other. This course examines the sources, manifestations, and limits of cross-national differences. It begins with a very brief look at European history and the aftermath of World War II, and several sessions devoted to understanding the “nuts and bolts” of European political and economic systems (parliamentary government, party families and ideologies, and coordinated market economies and welfare states). The second section of the course addresses the contrasting responses of West European nations to three basic challenges from the mid-1940s to mid-1970s: establishing a legitimate democratic order (the political challenge), balancing the interests of workers and employers (the social challenge), and promoting industrial development (the economic challenge). The next section of the course looks at political developments in the 1980s and 1990s—Thatcher and the subsequent New Labour experience in Britain, the Socialist years in France, reunification in Germany, the mani pulite scandal in Italy—with an eye to assessing whether West European politics is converging on a single model, or whether national differences are being reproduced in new ways. We close with an assessment of prospects for European politics in an age of economic austerity and political crisis.

Course Requirements
The course requirements are: i) readings averaging around 100-150 pages per week; ii) active participation in class discussions and activities; (iii) a paper; and (iv) a final exam. They will be weighted as follows to determine your grade for the course:

- Assignments & class participation (including headscarf debate assignment)—20%
- Midterm exam (in class on February 21. Closed-book, but you may bring one 8.5x11” sheet of paper with notes on both sides into the exam)—20%
- Analytic essay (8-10 pp. on an assigned topic, due April 4) —20%
- Final exam—40%

Make-up midterm and final examinations will not be offered unless in case of documented medical or family emergency. You are responsible for adjusting any other activities or commitments to accommodate the schedule of exams.

Academic integrity
Penn’s code of academic integrity can be found online at http://www.upenn.edu/academicintegrity/ai_codeofacademicintegrity.html. Students who are found to have violated the code by cheating or plagiarizing will receive a failing grade for
the course. Please read through the academic integrity code CAREFULLY to be sure that you understand the definitions of these terms. If you have any questions, please ask.

**Course Readings**

Most course readings will be available on Blackboard. In addition, the following books are available for purchase at Penn Book Center at 130 South 34th St:

  **Abbreviated GLM on the syllabus**

  **Abbreviated KK on the syllabus**


The readings for this course average around 100-150 pages per week. They are frontloaded in roughly the first half of the course, with the reading load lightening later in the semester.

The “Background reading” present factual overview material on the countries and political institutions we are studying, and/or recapitulate in laypersons’ terms themes that are covered in the scholarly works we read. You must know what is in these readings in order to do well in the course, but factual content will not be explicitly tested on the exams. If you have extensive background knowledge you may be able to get away with skimming some of these readings.

The scholarly selections often contain conflicting interpretations of both theory and history. It is important that you read actively and critically. There is no single accepted “truth” in many of the topics we explore (even my lectures are simply my own informed interpretations!) Your job is to learn to identify, and then to compare and evaluate, competing arguments. The exams and assignments will ask you to form your own opinions and arguments, drawing on facts presented in the readings and lecture.

The readings for this course complement lectures and class discussion. Neither can substitute for the other. You will learn the most for this class if you do the reading on each topic before coming to class. Readings reinforce the material from lecture, and reading difficult materials helps you become better readers. Study questions will be posted on the course Blackboard site to help guide you through the more difficult readings.

**Accommodations for students with disabilities**

Students with disabilities that have been certified by Penn’s Student Disability Services (http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/sds/) will be appropriately accommodated. SDS contacts us in the event that accommodations are necessary, but if you have additional needs or questions, please let me know as soon as possible.
SCHEDULE OF LECTURES AND REQUIRED READINGS

PART I: INTRODUCTION

SOURCES OF EUROPEAN IDENTITY AND THE POSTWAR SETTLEMENT
(Jan 12, 17, 19)

Introduction

Peter Baldwin, The Narcissism of Minor Differences: How America and Europe are Alike

Background reading:
KK pp. 1-9

The historical construction of modern Europe


Background reading:
GLM pp. 263-276.

Postwar challenges


*** Assignment due in recitation following Jan 19 lecture: Briefing an Article.

CRASH COURSE IN NUTS AND BOLTS
(Jan 24, 26, 31, Feb 2)

Governments and elections
[video] Søren Kragh-Jacobsen, “Count to 90,” Season 1, Episode 2 of Borgen (The Government), Warner DVD.

** This DVD is in PAL Region 2 format, and cannot be played by an ordinary American DVD player. It is on reserve at Rosengarten and can be viewed using one of the library’s multi-format DVD players located in Rosengarten and in the Vitale Digital Media Lab (Van Pelt Room 121, 1st floor West).

Background reading:
GLM Ch 2, 3, 11, 12, pp. 400-419
Ideologies and parties


Background reading:

Political economy

Philip Manow, “Electoral rules, class coalitions and welfare state regimes, or how to explain Esping-Andersen with Stein Rokkan.” *Socio-Economic Review* 7 (1, 2009), pp. 101-121.

Background reading:
GLM pp. 441-449


PART II: POST-WAR POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC SETTLEMENTS

CONSENSUS POLITICS IN BRITAIN
(Feb 7, 9)


Background Reading:
KK pp. 35-43, 51-66

*** Assignment due in recitation following lecture on Feb 9: Arguing with Evidence ***
MODERNIZATION FROM ABOVE IN FRANCE
(Feb 14, 16)


Background Reading
KK Ch 6, pp. 119-121, Ch 8

***FEB 21: IN-CLASS MIDTERM EXAM***

FROM THE “GERMAN QUESTION” TO THE “GERMAN MODEL”
(Feb 23, 28)


Background Reading:
KK Ch 11, 13, 14

ITALY’S PARTY STATE
(Mar 1)


Background Reading
KK Ch 16, 18, 19
PART III: UNSETTLING THE SETTLEMENTS: THE EVOLUTION OF POSTWAR NATIONAL MODELS

THE UNSETTLING
(Mar 13)


FRENCH STATISM IN TRANSITION
(Mar 15, 20, 22, 27)

Background reading: KK pp. 122-130, Ch 10

*** No class MARCH 22 -- Prepare for MARCH 27 IN-CLASS DEBATE.

Topic: Is the French government justified in banning the headscarf and/or veil?

THE THATCHER SOLUTION AND NEW LABOUR IN BRITAIN
(Mar 29, Apr 3, April 5)


Background Reading: KK Ch 2, 5
GERMANY'S RE-UNIFICATION  
(April 10)  
Background reading:  
KK Ch 15

MANI PULITE & ITALY'S SECOND REPUBLIC  
(April 12)  
[film] *Gomorrah* (2008), directed by Matteo Garrone, based on the book by Roberto Saviano. We will watch the first part of this together in class on March 29.  
Background reading:  
KK Ch 20

*** ANALYTIC ESSAY DUE APRIL 16 at 4:30 PM***

PART IV: SOVEREIGN DEBT AND DEMOCRATIC DEFICIT: EUROPEAN POLITICS IN CRISIS?

NEW POLITICS IN THE EUROZONE  
(April 17, 19, 24)  
Selections from Voxeu.org and other sources TBD  
Background reading:  
KK Conclusion, pp. 536-542.