

PSC 520 Syllabus
Topics in Major Political Systems: Western Europe
Fall Semester, 2005
Munroe Eagles
423 Park Hall (645-2251, ext. 423)
Office Hours: TU 2-4 pm; and by arrangement

This seminar follows the tradition of "area studies" in comparative politics. This tradition involves developing and testing theory about political life through comparisons using systems which share a relatively common history, geography, and demography. Since the iron curtain separating west and east in Europe has crumbled, courses in European politics have encouraged comparisons between these areas. While this is undoubtedly a healthy and welcome development, there remain significant advantages to focusing comparisons on the more than two-dozen advanced industrial societies that constitute Western Europe. Readings and discussions in this seminar will sample some of the efforts that scholars have made to understand political developments in this important region. We will consider a variety of topics, including executive-legislative relations in parliamentary systems, judicial politics, challenges to the administrative state, citizenship, economic policy-making, making, the sources of good governance, developments in political parties, and the progress of supranational integration represented by the European Union.

The goals of the seminar are threefold. The first is to acquaint you with some of the 'classic' and more recent literature on comparative Western European politics. Secondly, the seminar will introduce and give you a chance to discuss some of the more significant developments in the politics of this important region. Last but not least, it will provide you with an opportunity to make use of this fascinating political laboratory in the design and execution of a piece of your own political analysis.

I presuppose a basic familiarity with the institutions and processes of at least some of the major states in Europe (particularly the UK, France, Italy, Germany and also the EU). If you lack this background, kindly pick up a copy of any general undergraduate text on European politics and read the relevant sections for these countries. Hancock et al., *Politics in Western Europe* (third edition, 2003) or Howard Wiarda, *European Politics in the Age of Globalization, 2001* are reasonable options here.

READINGS:

The following texts are required readings for the seminar. All are available in paperback editions in the bookstore.

Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution*, Oxford University Press, (originally published 1867; reprinted 2001). Paperback available in bookstore, or available free of charge at: www.bibliomania.com/2/1/328/2415/frameset.html

Fillipo Sabetti, *The Search for Good Government: Understanding the Paradox of Italian Democracy*, Kingston and Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000

Peter A. Hall, *Governing the Economy: The Politics of State Intervention in Britain and France*, NY: Oxford University Press, 1986.

Alec Stone Sweet, *Governing With Judges: Constitutional Politics in Europe*, NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 2000.

Ezra Suleiman, *Dismantling the Democratic State*, Princeton UP, 2005.

Carolyn Warner, *Confessions of an Interest Group*, Princeton University Press, 2000.

Anthony Heath, Roger M. Jowell, and John Curtice, *The Rise of New Labour: Party Policies and Voter Choices*, NY: Oxford University Press, 2001.

Charles Pattie, Patrick Seyd, and Paul Whiteley, *Citizenship in Britain: Values, Participation, and Democracy*, NY: Cambridge UP, 2004.

Joel S. Fetzer and J. Christopher Soper, *Muslims and the State*, NY: Cambridge UP, 2004.

Henry Milner, *Civic Literacy: How Informed Citizens Make Democracy Work*, Univ. Press of New England, 2002.

Loukas Tsoukalis, *What Kind of Europe?* NY: Oxford UP, expanded edition, 2005.

SEMINAR REQUIREMENTS/GRADES

Each student will assume primary responsibility for presenting one of the required readings. This will involve summarizing key issues, concepts, and arguments, and presenting a critique (and/or a critical appreciation) of the strengths and weaknesses of the work. Handouts and visual aids are encouraged. Students will also design (due October 19th -2-3 pages) and execute (due December 9th) a piece of empirical analysis based (in whole or in part) on the politics of Western European countries. Participation grades for the seminar will be assigned on the basis of each student's performance in leading a weekly discussion, in their level of preparedness, engagement and involvement in seminars led by others, and in presenting the results of their research essay. In addition, students will take a final examination that will be distributed sometime after the last day of class, December 7th (format and dates to be determined).

Final grades will be assigned according to according to the following basis:

Seminar participation	20%
Research Design (due 10/19 th)	5%
Research Paper (due 12/9 th)	50%
Final Examination (format/date TBA)	25%
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	100%

WEEKLY TOPICS / READINGS:

- 1. Wednesday, August 31st - Introduction & Organizational Issues**
No required reading.
- 2. Wednesday, Septmber 7th - Parliamentary Systems of Representation**
Required Reading: Walter Bagehot, *The English Constitution* (all)
- 3. Wednesday, September 14th - The Judiciary and Judicial Review**
Required Reading: Alec Stone Sweet, *Governing with Judges* (all)
- 4. Wednesday, September 21^s – The Bureaucracy**
Required Reading: Ezra Suleiman, *Dismantling the Democratic State* (all)
- 5. Wednesday, September 28th - Economic Policy Making**
Required Reading: Peter A. Hall, *Governing the Economy* (all)
- 6. Wednesdayday, October 5th – Political Institutions and Good Government**
Required Reading: Fillipo Sabetti, *The Search for Good Government: Understanding the Paradox of Italian Democracy*, (all)
- 7. Wednesday, October 12th – Citizenship**
Required Reading: Charles Pattie, Patrick Seyd, and Paul Whiteley, *Citizenship in Britain: Values, Participation, and Democracy* (all)
- 8. Wednesday, October 19th – Parties and Voters**
Required Reading: Anthony Heath, Roger M. Jowell, and John Curtice, *The Rise of New Labour: Party Policies and Voter Choices*, (all)

**** RESEARCH DESIGNS DUE IN CLASS ****

9. **Wednesday, October 26th – Interest Groups**
Required Reading: Carolyn Warner, *Confessions of an Interest Group*,
(all)
10. **Wednesday, November 2nd – Political Minorities**
Required Reading: Joel S. Fetzer and J. Christopher Soper, *Muslims
and the State*, NY: Cambridge UP, 2004. (all)
11. **Wednesday, November 9th – Civic Literacy**
Required Reading: Henry Milner, *Civic Literacy* (all)
12. **Wednesday, November 16th - European Integration**
Required Reading: Loukas Tsoukalis, *What Kind of Europe?* NY: Oxford UP.
(all)
- ** No meeting Wednesday, November 23rd – Thanksgiving Break **
13. **Monday, November 30th - Student Presentations of Research Essays**
14. **Monday, December 7th – Paper Presentations**
- ** RESEARCH PAPERS DUE DECEMBER 9th **