Class code
Western European Comparative Politics
EURO – UA 9510-001 and POL – UA 9510.001

Instructor Details
Prof.PhDr. Lenka ROVNÁ, CSc.
Jean Monnet Chair Ad Personam

Rovna@fsv.cuni.cz

Rytířská 31, Praha 1
Monday and Wednesday after the class

Class Details
Western European Comparative Politics
Mondays and Wednesdays 10:30 – 11:50
Location to be confirmed.

Prerequisites
No

Class Description
The course West European Comparative Politics will concentrate on the analysis of the pursuits of democracy in Western Europe. Firstly, the conception of Europe will be explored in its historical perspective and different perceptions: territorial, political, spiritual, cultural etc. Secondly, the characterizing social cleavages of Europe will be introduced: territorial, economic, religious, national, ethnic etc. Furthermore, we will discuss how these cleavages get expressed in the formation of different social interests and lead to the organization of interests groups, political parties and NGOs. Thirdly, turning towards the institutional structures of West European parliamentary democracies, we will address the existence of political party systems, as well as the executive and legislative powers represented by government and parliament. Fourthly, we will explore the rules and outcomes of different electoral systems, which ensure regular rotation of political elites at power – however, under different principles. Finally, we will assess the enrichment of the classical models of government in Western Europe, which have in the last 20 years been supplemented by additional players participating in the decision making processes on different levels (local, regional, national and European) – leading to new political conceptualization of ‘governance’. Also, while European states remain core units of European integration, they are also influenced by the EU, leading to their Europeanization. The political systems of Great Britain, France and Germany as case studies will be examined. Special attention will be devoted to the emergence of the political system of the Czech Republic as a representative of new member states of the EU. The new challenges facing Western Europe, such as globalization, financial crisis, continuing European integration, regionalization, restructuring of social welfare systems and the issues of identity, will be discussed.

Lectures and discussions
Desired Outcomes

- understanding and analyzing the development of Western Europe after World War II
- understanding the creation of cleavages in West European societies and their expression in different interest groups, e.g. political parties
- analyzing processes of integration and disintegration in Europe
- analyzing diversity and unity in Europe
- understanding different political cultures in different countries of Western Europe but also identifying commonalities

Every student will be responsible for:

1) Class Participation

Each student will prepare for class by doing the designated readings and actively participating in class discussions.

2) Midterm exam

The midterm exam will cover material up to the exam and will consist of a mixture of short identification questions and essays.

3) Paper (May 6)

Each student will write an 8-page (double-spaced) comparative research paper. Each student will select two political parties belonging to the same party family (social-democratic, conservative, liberal, green etc.), however, from a different Western European country (you may for example compare British Labour and Swedish SAP). The paper will then compare the parties’ political views. How are the visions and policy prescriptions of these two parties similar or different? Why? How do their views fit the general values of their party family? You may narrow your comparison to a specific policy area.

Quotations and the complete list of sources are compulsory.

4) Final exam (May 20)

The final exam will be cumulative and will consist of short answer identification questions and essay questions.

Requirements for the class:

Midterm exam 20 %

Paper (8 pages) 30%

Final exam 20%

Participation in the class 30%

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.
**Assessment Expectations**

**Grade A:** Excellent work demonstrating a critical and observant approach to the subject, sound research and an ability to express thoughts cogently and persuasively

**Grade B:** Very good work.

**Grade C:** Satisfactory work

**Grade D:** Passable work

**Grade F:** Failure to achieve a passable standard

**Grade conversion**

A=94-100
A-=90-93
B+=87-89
B=84-86
B-=80-83
C+=77-79
C=74-76
C-=70-73
D+=67-69
D=65-66
F=below 65

**Grading Policy**

NYU Prague aims to have grading standards and results similar to those that prevail at Washington Square. At the College of Arts and Sciences, roughly 39% of all final grades are in the B+ to B- range, and 50% in the A/A- range.

We have therefore adopted the following grading guideline: in any non-Stern course, class teachers should try to ensure that no more than 50% of the class receives an A or A-.

A guideline is not a curve. A guideline is just that—it gives an ideal benchmark for the distribution of grades towards which we work.

**Attendance Policy**

Each unexcused absences will result in your final grade being reduced by 3%. Absences only for medical reasons will be excused. To obtain an excused absence, you are obliged to supply either a doctor’s note or corroboration of your illness by a member of the housing staff (either an RA or a Building Manager). Absences due to travel will not be excused.
**Required Text(s)**
- READER

**Internet Research Guidelines**

**Additional Required Equipment**

**Session 1**
- Introduction to the course, requirements
  - Monday, February 11

**Session 2**
- Europe: a continent in the making, History, Geography
  - Wednesday, February 13

**Session 3**
- Field Trip to the European Art Gallery, Sternberg Palace, Prague Castle
  - Friday, February 15
  - (make up for Monday classes)

**Session 4**
- Europe: a continent in the making, Politics
  - Monday, February 18

**Session 5**
- Cleavages in Western Europe, religious, ethnic, economic, social…,
  - Wednesday, February 20

**Session 6**
- Political Parties,
  - Monday, February 25

**Session 7**
- Inside Western European Political parties,
  - Wednesday, February 27
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>March 1</td>
<td>Field Trip to the Government of the Czech Republic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td>Economic Crisis and Europe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Krugman, Paul (2012) “European Crisis Realities”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Friday 22


Krugman Paul (2012), Austerity is so Wrong!, May 6, 2012 http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2012/05/06/paul-krugman-austerity-is-so-wrong-print.html

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 17</th>
<th>Revision of all materials covered during the term</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Monday, March 25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 18</th>
<th>Midterm Exam</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wednesday, March 27</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Spring Break</th>
<th>April 1 - 5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 19</th>
<th>Political System of Great Britain, Britain and Europe I,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Economist, BBC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Film THE QUEEN (in the library)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 20</th>
<th>Political System of Great Britain, Britain and Europe II,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Economist, BBC</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 21</th>
<th>Political System of France I,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Economist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 22</th>
<th>Political System of France II,</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Economist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Session 23</th>
<th>Political System of Germany, in: Gabriel A.Almond, Russel J.Dalton, G.Bingham Powell, Jr., Kaare</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
Monday, April 22


The Economist

Session 24


Wednesday, April 24

The Economist

Session 25

Political System of the Czech Republic in comparative perspective, East or West? Home is best., History, creation of a modern nation and society

Monday, April 29


Session 26

Political System of the Czech Republic in comparative perspective, East or West? Home is best., Political System from democracy to totalitarian regime and to democracy

Monday, May 6


Session 27

Political System of the Czech Republic in comparative perspective, East or West? Home is best., Czech Republic after 1989, current political development

Monday, May 13


Submission of an essay

Session 28

New Challenges for Europe, Towards a post-national polity?

Wednesday, May 15


Session 29

Final Exam

Wednesday, December 12

Classroom Etiquette

Required Co-curricular Activities

Suggested Co-curricular Activities

Participation at the lectures organized by NYU or Charles University Prague