

# Western European Politics, Pol UA 9510

NYU London: Spring 2020

## Instructor Information

- TBA

## Course Information

- Mondays and Wednesdays 10:45 – 12:00
  - Room 106, NYU London Campus

## Course Overview and Goals

The course offers an introduction to the politics of Britain, Ireland, France, and Germany. It compares the historical origins of their respective political systems and analyzes their institutions as manifestations of their social and political culture and traditions. The course treats each country's current politics and political trends and introduces the students to basic concepts of comparative political analysis in developing cross-cultural theory.

### **Upon Completion of this Course, students will be able to:**

- Acquire basic knowledge on the electoral/political systems and key political institutions of Britain, Ireland, France and Germany.
- Assess comparatively current trends in western European politics
- Understand key concepts in political science and comparative politics
- Discuss the challenges stemming from the crisis of welfarism, the rise of populism, the politics of climate change, as well as the impact of migration, financial crises and Brexit
- Apply theories, concepts, and methods to current political problems by making use of critical reasoning and the theoretical tools discussed in the course.
- Research independently using a range of (primary and secondary) sources and explain the use of relevant theories and concepts.
- Communicate effectively by making use of established academic conventions in the discipline of politics and articulate arguments through appropriate channels.

# Course Requirements

## Grading of Assignments

The grade for this course will be determined according to these assessment components:

<b>Assignments/ Activities</b>	<b>Description of Assignment</b>	<b>% of Final Grade</b>	<b>Due</b>
Class participation	Informed contributions to class discussions, short formal presentations, participation in group tasks	20%	
Essay 1	A 3-5 pp. paper on a specific topic connected to the course	20%	end of week 5 (session 10)
Essay 2	A 8-10pp. paper on a chosen topic	30%	end of week 10 (session 20)
Final Exam	2-hour exam at the end of the course.	30%	tbc

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class

## Grades

Letter grades for the entire course will be assigned as follows:

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>A</b>	A: 94% and higher A-: 90% to 93%	Outstanding. There is extensive evidence of originality and clarity of thought, and precision and style in expression.
<b>B</b>	B+ : 87% to 89% B : 84% - 86% B- : 80% to 83%	Very good. Well organized works with evidence of originality and clarity of expression. Writing may be particularly stylish, though with no loss of precision or control. A B-quality paper may be as original as an A-quality paper

Letter Grade	Percent	Description
		but lacking in structure and clarity.
<b>C</b>	C+ : 77% to 79% C : 74% - 76% C- : 70% to 73%	Good. It meets the basic requirements of the assignment. Overall thesis is apparent, but may not be consistently supported by structure. Argument may emerge only over time. Factually accurate evidence given to support case. Summarizes key concepts, historiography and/or methodologies, but may not synthesize and apply them consistently. Errors in understanding or gaps in content do not render the analysis incoherent but may prevent a higher mark.
<b>D</b>	D+: 67%-69% D: 65% - 66%	Poor. Indicates passable work. Some reading has been done but it is insufficient to enable a full answer. Overall argument and structure is incomplete. Points may be made without evidence. Demonstrates only a limited understanding of the topic and may include significant errors in fact or judgement. Key concepts mentioned but treated either superficially or in such a way as to suggest incomprehension. Significant errors of grammar, syntax and/or tone. Referencing insufficient and a bibliography may not be present.
<b>F</b>	65% and lower	Fail. Deficient in analysis and does not address the question. Evidence only of very limited reading. Overall argument is missing, or indiscernible because of an absence of structure. Points are not backed up with evidence. Very significant errors of fact or judgement demonstrate

Letter Grade	Percent	Description
		that the topic is not understood. Key concepts are not discussed. Poor expression and/or factual errors are prominent throughout.

## Course Materials

### Required Textbooks & Materials

- Tim Bale, *European Politics: A Comparative Introduction* (London: Macmillan, 2017)

### Optional Textbooks & Materials

Antony Wright, *British Politics: a very short Introduction* (Oxford: OUP, 2013)

Senia Paseta, *Modern Ireland: A Very short Introduction* (Oxford OUP, 2013)

Roberts, G. *German politics today* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016)

David Howarth and Georgios Varouxakis, *Contemporary France: An Introduction to French politics and society* (London: Routledge 2014).

### Resources

- **Access your course materials:** [NYU Classes](http://nyu.edu/its/classes) (nyu.edu/its/classes)
- **Databases, journal articles, and more:** [Bobst Library](http://library.nyu.edu) (library.nyu.edu)
- **NYUL Library Collection:** [Senate House Library](http://catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk) (catalogue.libraries.london.ac.uk)
- **Assistance with strengthening your writing:** [NYU Writing Center](http://nyu.mywconline.com) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- **Obtain 24/7 technology assistance:** [IT Help Desk](http://nyu.edu/it/servicedesk) (nyu.edu/it/servicedesk)

## Course Schedule

Session/ Date	Topic	Summary	Required Reading
Session 1 3 February	Introduction (1)	Introduction to the study of western European Politics: key themes and challenges	Tim Bale, <i>European Politics</i> , Introduction
Session 2 5 February	Introduction (2)	Introduction to the study of western European Politics: key themes and challenges	Tim Bale, <i>European Politics</i> , Ch 1.
Session 3: 10 February	Historical Overview (1)	The historical roots of western European politics: geopolitical divisions	Tony Judt, <i>Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945</i> , Introduction and Ch. 3

Session/ Date	Topic	Summary	Required Reading
Session 4: 12 February	Historical Overview (2)	The historical roots of western European politics: political ideologies	Jan Werner Müller, <i>Contesting Democracy</i> (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), Ch.4.
Session 5: 17 February	The place of London in European politics (1)	Activity 1: Locating the major sites housing exiled European governments in Central London during WWII.	Martin Conway “Legacies of Exile: The Exile Governments in London during the Second World War and the Politics of Postwar Europe” in Conway and Gotovich, <i>Europe in Exile</i> (Oxford: Berghahn, 2001), 255-274.
Session 6: 19 February	The place of London in European politics (2)	London and the evolution of Western European politics	Catherine R. Shenk, “The City and Financial Services: historical perspectives on the Brexit debate” in G. Kelly and N. Pearce (eds.), “Britain Beyond Brexit,” <i>The Political Quarterly</i> , Vol 90, Issue S2, 2019, pp. 32–43.
Session 7: 24 February	Political Systems in Europe (1)	Governments, Parliaments and Electoral Systems: an overview	Tim Bale, <i>European Politics</i> Ch.4 and Ch.5
Session 8: 26 February	Political Systems in Europe (2)	Activity 2: Supreme court visit	Antony Wright, <i>British Politics: a very short Introduction</i> (Oxford: OUP, 2013), Ch1-3.
Session 9: 2 March	Britain (1)	The evolution of the British political system	Antony Wright, <i>British Politics: a very short Introduction</i> (Oxford: OUP, 2013), Ch4-7.
Session 10: 4 March	Britain (2)	British politics today: key challenges	Lisa Nandy, “Back to the Future: The

Session/ Date	Topic	Summary	Required Reading
			pulling apart of our towns and cities”, <i>The Political Quarterly</i> (online pub: 8 January 2020)
Session 11: 9 March	Ireland (1)	The evolution of the Irish political system	Senia Paseta, <i>Modern Ireland: A Very short Introduction</i> (Oxford OUP, 2013), Ch.6-8.
Session 12: 11 March	Ireland (2)	Irish politics today: key challenges	Sean McGraw, <i>How parties win: shaping the Irish political arena</i> (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2015), Ch.2.
Session 13: 16 March	France (1)	The evolution of the French political system	Yves Mény, “Republicanism: A Transatlantic Misunderstanding” in Elgie, R., Grossman, E. and Mazur, A.G. eds, <i>The Oxford Handbook of French Politics</i> , (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016)
Session 14: 18 March	France (2)	French politics today: key challenges	Anja Durovic, “The French elections of 2017: shaking the disease?” <i>West European Politics</i> 42 (2019), 1487-1503. Didier Fassin and Anne-Claire Defossez, “The Yellow Vests

<b>Session/ Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Summary</b>	<b>Required Reading</b>
			Movement, an unidentified political object”, <i>IAS Newsletter</i> Spring 2019.
Session 15: 23 March	Germany (1)	The evolution of the German political system	Roberts, G. <i>German politics today</i> (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), Ch. 2, 4
Session 16: 25 March	Germany (2)	German politics today: key challenges	Roberts, G. <i>German politics today</i> , Ch. 10.
Session 17: 30 March	Electoral Systems in Europe (1)	Comparing and contrasting the European Electoral Systems	Tim Bale, <i>European Politics</i> , Ch.6
Session 18: 1 April	Electoral Systems in Europe (2)	Comparing and contrasting the European Electoral Systems	Amel Ahmed, “Reading History Forward: The origins of Electoral Systems in European Democracies”, <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> (43/8-9), 1059-1088
Session 19: 6 April	The decline of party politics and the populist challenge (1)	The decline of party politics in Europe	Peter Mair, <i>Ruling the Void: The Hollowing of Western Democracy</i> , <i>New Left Review</i> 42 (2006), 25-51
Session 20: 8 April	The decline of party politics and the populist challenge (2)	Is populism the answer to the crisis of political representation in Europe?	Paul Taggart, “Populism in Western Europe” in Cristóbal Rovira Kaltwasser, Paul Taggart, Paulina Ochoa Espejo, and Pierre

Session/ Date	Topic	Summary	Required Reading
			<p>Ostiguy, eds. <i>The Oxford Handbook of Populism</i>, (Oxford: OUP, 2017)</p> <p>“For A Left Populism: Interview with Chantal Mouffe”, <i>Red Pepper Magazine</i>, 22 September 2018.</p>
<p>Session 21 22 April</p>	<p>A decade of crises: from the economic crisis to the refugee crisis (1)</p>	<p>The politics of the 2008 economic crisis in Europe</p>	<p>Adam Tooze, <i>Crashed: How a Decade of Financial Crises Changed the World</i> (London: Penguin, 2018), Introduction.</p>
<p>Session 22 27 April</p>	<p>A decade of crises: from the economic crisis to the refugee crisis (2)</p>	<p>The effect of the 2008 economic crisis in Europe</p>	<p>Mai'a K. Davis Gross, <i>The Politics of Crisis in Europe</i>. (Oxford: UOP, 2017), Ch 6</p>
<p>Session 23: 27 April 16:30 [Venue change]</p>	<p>The Brexit Challenge (1)</p>	<p>Brexit's impact on Modern Britain</p>	<p>David Reynolds, <i>Island Stories: Britain and its history in the age of Brexit</i> (London: William Collins, 2019), Ch 2-3</p> <p>Fintan O'Toole, <i>Heroic Failure: Brexit and the Politics of Pain</i> (London: Apollo 2019), Ch.1 and Postscript.</p>



Session/ Date	Topic	Summary	Required Reading
Session 24: 29 April	The Brexit Challenge (2)	Brexit's impact on Western European politics	Wolfgang Streeck, "The EU is a doomed Empire", <i>Monde Diplomatique</i> , May 2019
Session 25: 4 May	The refugee question (1)	The politics of migration in Western Europe	Tim Bale, <i>European Politics</i> , Ch.10
Session 26: 6 May	The refugee question (2)	The impact of the Syrian refugee crisis in Europe	Tim Bale, <i>European Politics</i> , Ch.10
Session 27: 11 May	The European politics of climate change: a new way of doing politics? (1)	The current climate of European politics	Robert Ford and Will Jennings, "The Changing Cleavage Politics of Western Europe", <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i> , May 2020.
Session 28: 13 May	The European politics of climate change: a new way of doing politics? (2)	Activity 5: Extinction rebellion event (tbc)	Extinction Rebellion manifesto
Final Assessment: Exam			

## Co-Curricular Activities

- Walking tour in London – locating the sites of exiled European governments during WWII
- Supreme court visit [26 February]
- Tate Modern Visit [optional - tbc]
- London Migration Museum visit [optional - tbc]
- Extinction rebellion event [optional - tbc]

## Classroom Etiquette

- Mobile phones should be set on silent and not used in class except in emergencies
- Laptops must only be used for class related activities
- Rubbish must be disposed in the bins provided.

## NYUL Academic Policies

### Attendance and Tardiness

- Key information on NYU London's absence policy, how to report absences, and what kinds of absences can be excused can be found on our [website](http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html) (<http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html>)

### Assignments, Plagiarism, and Late Work

- You can find details on these topics and more on this section of our NYUL [website](https://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html) (<https://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html>) and on [the Policies and Procedures section of the NYU website](https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad/upperclassmen-semester-academic-year-study-away/academic-resources/policies-and-procedures.html) for students studying away at global sites (<https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad/upperclassmen-semester-academic-year-study-away/academic-resources/policies-and-procedures.html>).

### Classroom Conduct

Academic communities exist to facilitate the process of acquiring and exchanging knowledge and understanding, to enhance the personal and intellectual development of its members, and to advance the interests of society. Essential to this mission is that all members of the University Community are safe and free to engage in a civil process of teaching and learning through their experiences both inside and outside the classroom. Accordingly, no student should engage in any form of behaviour that interferes with the academic or educational process, compromises the personal safety or well-being of another, or disrupts the administration of University programs or services. Please refer to the [NYU Student Conduct Policy](#) for examples of disruptive behavior and guidelines for response and enforcement.

### Disability Disclosure Statement

Academic accommodations are available for students with disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities (212-998-4980 or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu)) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

### Instructor Bio

[Georgios \[George\] Giannakopoulos](#) studied political science and history in Greece and holds a PhD from Queen Mary University of London. He has held teaching and research positions at Queen Mary University of London, UCL, NYU (Remarque Institute), Durham University, City University of London, and King's college University of London. His research focuses on the history and politics of Modern Europe and Britain. He has published essays and research articles in academic journals and press outlets such as *History of European Ideas*, *Global*

*Intellectual History, Journal of Modern Greek Studies, Modern Intellectual History, Jacobin, and the Political Quarterly.*