The Politics of Western Europe
Political Science 240Z
Summer 2003

Heather Stoll
hstoll@stanford.edu
Class Meeting Time: T TH 10.30–11.50
Office: 317 Encina West
Office Phone: 650.736.1219
Office Hours: TH 1.00-2.30 or by appointment

1 Course Objectives

This course introduces students to the politics of Western Europe, beginning with a comparative study of national politics and then moving on to the supra-national level: the European Union. The course addresses two key questions. (1) At the national level, what factors explain the different political and economic outcomes we observe in Western European states? (2) At the supra-national level, what is the European Union and how will it affect these differences? To answer the first question, the course will examine topics such as social cleavages, political institutions (e.g., electoral systems, regime types, and federalism), party systems, and interest groups. The United Kingdom, Italy, France, Germany, and the Netherlands will be used as the primary case studies. To answer the second, the course will investigate both the development of European integration in historical perspective and the political institutions and processes of the EU. Important issues raised will include the democratic deficit and regulatory and distributive issues (such as the common agricultural policy). Current events will be emphasized throughout the course.

2 Course Requirements

Students are expected to attend lectures and to do the assigned weekly readings. There will be an in-class final on Saturday, 16 August (8.30 a.m. - 10.30 a.m.), as listed in the university time schedule. Note that lecture and readings will complement each other; in order to do well in the course, you will need to both attend lecture and do the readings. Course grades will be calculated as follows:
• A short (5–6 page) paper. The paper will be on either an assigned topic or, if you desire, a topic of your own choosing. (25%)

• Two homework assignments. (15% each)

• A midterm examination. (15%)

• A final examination. (30%)

3 Required Reading Materials

The following books are required. They are available for purchase at the Stanford Bookstore or may be checked out from the reserve desk at Green Library.


Readings on the syllabus marked [EJ] are available on-line through the Stanford library’s E-Journals resource page. Other readings, marked [R], are available from the Green Library reserve desk.

4 Syllabus

Note: topics correspond to class meetings.

Introduction: Variation in Political and Economic Outcomes across Europe


PART I: NATIONAL COMPARISONS

Party Families in Historical Perspective

Further (Recommended) Reading:

Party Systems

Further (Recommended) Reading:

Social Cleavages and Party Systems
Economist articles on immigration in Europe [R]

Further (Recommended) Reading:
Electoral Systems and Party Systems
(Assignment #1 Due)


Gallagher, Laver, and Mair. Chapter 11, p. 300-335.


Selection of Economist articles on recent elections in Europe [R]

Further (Recommended) Reading:


Political Regimes: Parliamentary Government


Political Regimes: Coalition Formation


Further (Recommended) Reading:


Political Regimes: Parliamentarism to Presidentialism


Further (Recommended) Reading:

**Federalism, Devolution, and Regionalism**
(Assignment #2 Due)
Inman, Robert P. and Daniel L. Rubinfeld. “Rethinking Federalism.” *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 11, no. 4: 43-64. [EJ]
Selection of Economist articles on Belgium, Spain, and the UK [R]

Further (Recommended) Reading:

**Interest Groups: Pluralism vs. Corporatism**
Economist special report on trade unions [R]

Further (Recommended) Reading:
Policy Outcomes: The Welfare State, etc.
Economist special report on the sustainability of the welfare state and the population implosion of Europe [R]

Further (Recommended) Reading:

Conclusion: Explaining Cross-National Variation

PART II: SUPRA-NATIONAL DEVELOPMENTS

History of European Integration
Further (Recommended) Reading:
Dinan. Chapters 2-7, p. 9-199

Institutions of the European Union I & II

The Democratic Deficit Debate
Selection of Economist commentaries by Charlemagne [R]
Further (Recommended) Reading:

**EU Policy Outcomes I: Regulatory Policies**

Further (Recommended) Reading:

**EU Policy Outcomes II: Distributive Policies**
(Paper Due)

**The Future of Europe?**
Economist article on Turkey’s role in Europe [R]

**Conclusion/Review**