
PSC 2380-001

Spring 2021

European Politics

Day/Time: M/W/F 12:40-1:30pm

<https://elearning.villanova.edu/>

Room: Vasey 109 ([Zoom link](#))

Instructor: Ryan Weldzius, Ph.D.

Office: SAC 257

Office Hours: Th 4–7pm. [Appointment sign-up](#)

Office hours [Zoom link](#)

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COURSE DESCRIPTION:

In November 2016, the election of Donald Trump shocked much of the Western world. Trump's election, however, seemed to follow a trend across Europe in the years after the 2008 global financial crisis: the rise of (mostly right-wing) populist parties asserting an aggressive antiglobalization stance. Just months before Trump's election, the UK surprised the world with a vote to leave the European Union (EU)—the divorce became official on January 31, 2020, and just last month the UK and EU finalized a trade deal in the waning days of 2020. A year prior to the Brexit vote, the French eurosceptic party National Front became the third strongest party in local elections with approximately 25% of the votes and the left-leaning anti-austerity party Podemos made strides in Spanish elections. This all followed a sovereign debt crisis that spawned stringent austerity measures and years of anemic growth throughout the eurozone periphery, as well as a historical migration crisis originating after the Arab Spring and an endless civil war in Syria. The recently agreed upon coronavirus relief package provides hope for a stronger fiscal union, but the negotiations also revealed new cleavages on the continent, potentially strengthening the populists' standing.

In this course, we will seek to understand the origins of these populist movements/parties in contemporary Europe. We will begin by exploring the historical rationale for establishing the EU, evaluate the institutions created by this union, and consider how these institutions affect the political economy of European integration (past, present, and future). We will then dig into the recent literature on the causes of these populist parties and you will each write an analytical essay on the rise of a populist party of your choosing.

Core Topics

1. History of European integration
2. European institutions
3. Rise of populism and eurosceptic parties

Course goals

1. Sharpen analytical skills
2. Understand the interplay of politics and economics
3. Analyze the rise of populist parties in Europe

LEARNING METHODOLOGY:

The course will be split into two sections. The first will focus on the history and theories of European integration. The second will explore the contemporary rise of populist parties (i.e., after the 2008 global financial crisis).

Course modality: hybrid

Our classes will be a mixture of in-person lectures and online activities. Our first two weeks will be held online in order to ensure a safe return to campus. Weeks 3, 7, 8, and 12 will also be online due to group assignments that would not allow for proper social distancing (Weeks 3, 12), as well as a mid-semester break (Weeks 7, 8). Weeks that will be online are highlighted in yellow on the course schedule below. The remaining eight weeks will be in person.

Class attendance and participation (20%)

Our in-person classroom sessions will combine a mix of lecture and discussion. Class slides will be made available after each session. Class attendance and participation will count towards 20% of your final grade, which includes several groups projects. This can be the difference between an A- and B+, so be sure to attend class and participate as much as possible.

Covid-19 protocol:

- You must wear a face covering in the classroom at all times.
- There will be **no** eating or drinking in the classroom (if you need to drink coffee or water, please excuse yourself to the hallway).
- You must socially distance at all times.
- You may not move chairs/desks/tables from their marked area.

Weekly Quizzes (20%)

Nearly every week we will have a short online quiz. These 10 quizzes will be worth 20% of your final grade. I will drop your lowest quiz grade. These are meant to track your progress and keep you on pace with the readings and learning objectives.

Midterm Essay (20%)

A short analytical essay due Week 7.

Final Essay (40%)

You will write an analytical essay about a populist party of your choosing. In Week 10 you will choose your populist party, in Week 11 you will submit your argument about the rise of your chosen party followed by your outline of the paper along with a sample of sources in Week 12 (together worth 5%), and you will present your preliminary research (asynchronously via video recording) during Week 14 (10%). Several classmates will view your presentation and offer you feedback on how you can improve your project before submitting your final draft (25%) on Tuesday, May 11 by 12pm.

READINGS:

The course readings will be drawn from one textbook on the European Union, a scholarly text on the history of austerity, and several scholarly research articles. All readings (not from the assigned books) will be made available on the course webpage or links will be available on the syllabus.

- John McCormick. *Understanding the European Union: A Concise Introduction*. Palgrave, 7th edition, 2017.
- Mark Blyth. *Austerity: The History of a Dangerous Idea*. Oxford University Press, 2013. (Online version available through Falvey Library [here](#))

GRADES:

Grade values. Please familiarize yourself with the CLAS grade values found in the [CLAS Academic Handbook](#).

Academic Integrity. University standards on plagiarism apply to all work. Please familiarize yourself with these regulations.

Grade Appeals. You will be graded on your academic performance through multiple low-stake assessments. If you believe you received an incorrect grade, you may formally appeal it to me. The appeal will consist of a one-page typed explanation that identifies the problem and presents a reasoned argument for the proposed change. Due to FERPA rules and procedures, I will not discuss grades over email.

Electronic Devices. The use of laptops or tablets is allowed. Phones are not allowed in class. I strongly recommend that all students attempt to take notes on paper. To understand why, see this [article](#), which overviews the empirical evidence showing that students who take notes with pen and paper perform better on exams.

SCHEDULE: The weekly schedule is subject to change.

WEEK 1 [ONLINE] - Introduction

Class 1: (25-Jan-21) Introduction

Read: the syllabus (see why, [here](#)).

Class 2: (27-Jan-21) What is the European Union?

Read: McCormick, Ch. 1 (1–23).

Class 3: (29-Jan-21) The EU in crisis?

Read: Timothy Garton Ash. The crisis of Europe: How the Union came together and why it's falling apart. *Foreign Affairs*, 91:2, 2012.

Quiz 0: not graded, given at beginning of class.

WEEK 2 [ONLINE] - Origins of the European Union

Class 4: (1-Feb-21) The evolution of the EU

Read: McCormick, Ch. 3 (48–72).

– Why did countries opt to give up elements of sovereignty?

Class 5: (3-Feb-21) EU enlargement

Read: Christina J Schneider. *Conflict, Negotiation and European Union Enlargement*. Cambridge University Press, 2009, Ch. 1 (pp. 1–8 only), Ch. 2 (p. 12–32).

– What is Dr. Schneider's argument?

– What puzzle is she addressing?

Class 6: (5-Feb-21) Status of EU accession countries

Read: list of EU candidate countries [here](#).

– In five groups, discuss the likelihood of these countries acceding to the EU given Dr. Schneider's argument on the distributional gains/losses from accession. I will assign each group a different candidate country.

- One student should volunteer to take notes on a shared google doc; another student should volunteer to be spokesperson.

Quiz 1: covers classes 3–5.

WEEK 3 [ONLINE] - Functioning of the EU

Class 7: (8-Feb-21) The European Institutions

Read: McCormick, Ch. 4 (73–95).

- What is the function of each institution

Class 8: (10-Feb-21) The EU Policy Process: Schulhaus Rock

Read: McCormick, Ch. 6 (120–144).

- What are the voting rules for “legislation”?
- How does a bill become a law?

Class 9: (12-Feb-21)

Read about the EU’s Single Digital Market Strategy. What are the complaints against it since it was agreed upon? Which states have passed national laws to comply with directive? Are companies beginning to comply (in the EU, and perhaps elsewhere)?

- During class: I will put you into small groups to discuss the Copyright in the Digital Single Market directive and the questions above.
- One student should volunteer to take notes on a shared google doc; another student should volunteer to be spokesperson.

Quiz 2: covers classes 6–8.

WEEK 4 [in person] - Economic integration via the single market

Class 10: (15-Feb-21) The Single Market

Read: McCormick, Ch. 7 (145–158 only).

- What are the benefits of the single market? What are the costs?

Class 11: (17-Feb-21) Working Break

Film screening in class: *A History of the European Council* [[link](#)]

Class 12: (19-Feb-21) The causes of market integration

Read: Geoffrey Garrett. The causes of globalization. *Comparative Political Studies*, 33(6-7):941–991, 2000.

- How does this relate to European integration?

Quiz 3: covers classes 9–11.

WEEK 5 [in person] - Economic integration via monetary union

Class 13: (22-Feb-21) Intro to the Eurozone

Read: McCormick, Ch. 7 (158–168 only).

- What are the benefits of the single currency? What are the costs?

Class 14: (24-Feb-21) Politics of monetary integration

Read: Jeffry A Frieden. Real sources of European currency policy: Sectoral interests and European monetary integration. *International Organization*, pages 831–860, 2002.

- What groups/countries did monetary union benefit?

Class 15: (26-Feb-21) Role of the European Central Bank

Read: Council on Foreign Relations Backgrounder [\[link\]](#)

Quiz 4: covers classes 12–14.

WEEK 6 [in person] - Legal economic integration and the Brussels Effect

Class 16: (1-Mar-21) - Internal Policy

Read: McCormick, Ch. 8 (169–193).

- How does internal EU policy impact deeper integration?

Class 17: (3-Mar-21) - Domestic politics and the ECJ

Read: Lauren Peritz. Obstructing integration: Domestic politics and the European Court of Justice. *European Union Politics*, 19(3):427–457, 2018.

- Do ECJ rulings increase trade?

- How do veto players affect compliance?

Class 18: (5-Mar-21) - The Brussels Effect

Read: Anu Bradford. *The Brussels effect: How the European Union rules the world*. Oxford University Press, 2020, Ch. 1 (pp. 7–24).

Quiz 5: covers classes 15–17.

WEEK 7 [ONLINE] - MIDTERM

Class 19: (8-Mar-21)

- Review of first half of class.

Class 20: (10-Mar-21)

- No class. Open office hours to discuss midterm essays.

Class 21: (12-Mar-21)

- **Due: Midterm essay:** Submit on Blackboard by 5pm.

WEEK 8 - NO CLASS MEETINGS

- I recommend starting to read the Blyth book during your break – we will not read all of it (although I recommend you read the parts not assigned if you have time). *Austerity* is one of the best books on the topic, which is bound to be of import in both US and EU politics in the near future as both deal with the debt from COVID-19 economic relief, automatic stabilizers, and decreased tax revenue.
- Watch documentary on the European Union: [to be assigned](#).

WEEK 9 [in person] - Explaining the rise of populism: 2008 Global Financial Crisis

Class 22: (22-Mar-21) Specialization, Monetary Union, and Economic Crises

Read: Lauren Peritz, Ryan Weldzius, Ronald Rogowski, and Thomas Flaherty. Enduring the great recession: Economic integration in the European Union. *The Review of International Organizations*, pages 1–29, 2020.

- According to Krugman, how does European integration make regions more susceptible to crises?
- How does monetary union constrain governments?
- Why do highly-specialized regions in the eurozone do better during crisis?

Class 23: (24-Mar-21) A primer on austerity

Read: Blyth, Ch. 1.

- What is Blyth's argument?

Class 24: (26-Mar-21) Europe, too big to bail

Read: Blyth, Ch. 3.

- Why was Europe too big to bail?
- How did the crisis extend from the US to Europe?

Quiz 6: covers classes 22–23.

WEEK 10 [in person] - Explaining the rise of populism: Austerity

Class 25: (29-Mar-21)

Read: Blyth, Part 2 (pp. 178–226).

- What are the lessons for the Eurozone that Blyth mentions?

In class: I will post the populist parties from which you will choose for your final paper.

Class 26: (31-Mar-21)

Read: Cas Mudde. Europe's populist surge: A long time in the making. *Foreign Aff.*, 95:25–30, 2016.

- How does Mudde define populism?

In class: rank-order voting on the populist party you would like to research for final paper. Discussion about final paper – how to write an argument/research question and the format of your paper.

Class 27: (02-Apr-21) No Class; Easter Break

WEEK 11 [in person] - Explaining the rise of populism: Immigration

Class 28: (5-Apr-21) Attitudes towards immigration

Read: Jens Hainmueller and Daniel J Hopkins. Public attitudes toward immigration. *Annual review of political science*, 17:225–249, 2014.

- What do the authors/literature argue about attitudes towards immigration?

Due: post your argument about the rise of your populist party to the course Blackboard page by 12pm. It should be one sentence only.

Class 29: (7-Apr-21) Socio-demographic shifts

Read: Robert Ford and Will Jennings. The changing cleavage politics of Western Europe. *Annual review of political science*, 23:295–314, 2020.

- What socio-economic shifts are generating new political cleavages?
- Will deeper integration exacerbate these shifts or ameliorate?

Class 30: (9-Apr-21) Immigration and redistribution

Read: Brian Burgoon. Immigration, integration, and support for redistribution in Europe. *World Pol.*, 66:365, 2014.

- What is Burgoon’s argument?
- How does this relate to Blyth’s book on austerity?

Quiz 8: covers classes 27–29.

WEEK 12 [ONLINE] - Explaining the rise of populism: Economic grievance?

Class 31: (12-Apr-21) Economics or Culture?

Read: Ronald F Inglehart and Pippa Norris. Trump, Brexit, and the rise of populism: Economic have-nots and cultural backlash. 2016.

- What is the argument of the authors?
- How does this help explain the rise of your party?

Due: submit by 12pm an outline of your paper and a sample of sources (2-4).

Class 32: (14-Apr-21) The case of Brexit.

Read: Italo Colantone and Piero Stanig. Global competition and Brexit. *The American Political Science Review*, 112(2):201–218, 2018.

- How are the findings from this paper different or similar to Inglehart and Norris?

- What is the China shock?

Group project: in small groups, discuss which argument you find most convincing for why Brexit occurred, Inglehart and Norris or Colantone and Stanig. One student should volunteer to take notes on a shared Google doc, and another student should volunteer to be spokesperson.

Class 33: (16-Apr-21) Partisanship and cognitive dissonance

Read: Miriam Sorace and Sara Binzer Hobolt. A tale of two peoples: motivated reasoning in the aftermath of the Brexit vote. *Political Science Research and Methods*, pages 1–18, 2020.

Quiz 9: covers classes 30–32.

WEEK 13 [in person] - Exit and (Dis)integration

Class 34: (19-Apr-21)

Read: Stefanie Walter. The mass politics of international disintegration. *CIS Working Paper*, (105), 2020.

- Is there a contagion effect of one exit on future exits?

Class 35: (21-Apr-21)

Read: Kai Gehring. Overcoming history through exit or integration: Deep-rooted sources of support for the European Union. *American Political Science Review*, 115(1):199–217, 2021.

- What is the puzzle Gehring finds and how does he address it?

Class 36: (23-Apr-21)

OPEN

WEEK 14 [in person] - Course conclusion and presentations

Class 37: (26-Apr-21) Course Summary

Quiz 10: covers classes 33–36.

Course summary.

In class: Review of how to draft your final paper. Take questions on presentations.

Class 38: (28-Apr-21) **ONLINE** Viewing of presentations

Class presentations (asynchronous).

- Watch the video presentation of the two other students researching your populist party. Leave comments and one suggestion for how they can improve their paper (Is there an area that was not clear to you? Did you find something that may be of help to them?)
- Watch three other presentations on three different parties. Leave similar feedback, keeping in mind that you will have less information than your classmate, so focus your comments on areas that may not be very clear.

Class 39: (30-Apr-21) Final thoughts on paper.

In class: Final thoughts on the class, on the video presentations, and open for questions on your final papers.

Class 40: (3-May-21) No Class

Final term paper due by 11:00am on Monday, May 10, 2021.

LEARNING SUPPORT, ACADEMIC INTEGRITY, AND ABSENCES:

Office of Disabilities (ODS) and Learning Support Services (LSS): It is the policy of Villanova to make reasonable academic accommodations for qualified individuals with disabilities. Go to the Learning Support Services website ([link](#)) for registration guidelines and instructions. For physical access or temporarily disabling conditions, please contact the Office of Disability Services at (610) 519-4095 or email stephen.mcwilliams@villanova.edu. Registration is needed in order to receive accommodations.

Classroom Behavior: All students will respect each other in class and outside of class; this is a zero tolerance policy.

Academic Integrity: All students are expected to uphold Villanova's Academic Integrity Policy and Code. Any incident of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for disciplinary action. For the College's statement on Academic Integrity, you should consult the [Student Guide to Policies and Procedures](#). You may view the University's Academic Integrity Policy and Code, as well as other useful information related to writing papers, at the [Academic Integrity Gateway](#) web site.

Absences for Religious Holidays: Villanova University makes every reasonable effort to allow members of the community to observe their religious holidays, consistent with the University's obligations, responsibilities, and policies. Students who expect to miss a class or assignment due to the observance of a religious holiday should discuss the matter with their professors as soon as possible, normally at least two weeks in advance. Absence from classes or examinations for religious reasons does not relieve students from responsibility for any part of the course work required during the absence. See the [Provost's policies on religious holidays](#).