

**PLSC 347: The European Union - Syllabus**

**John Felice Rome Center**

Fall 2019

Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10:30 a.m. - 11:45 a.m.

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**Course description:**

PLSC 347 is a course focusing on the politics and current institutions of the European Union (EU) and the historical process that led to it. Like an international organization, the EU was originally founded through a series of treaties between six West European nation states, represented by their governments, and the member states retain the final say on many issues. But much also has changed since the 1950s. Over time, more and more countries decided to join. A further 22 countries have since joined the EU, including a historic expansion in 2004 marking the re-unification of Europe after decades of division. The union reached its temporary size of 28 member countries with the accession of Croatia on 1 July, 2013, whereas the United Kingdom voted to leave in a referendum held on 23 June, 2016.

Meeting in the "European Council" or "Council of Ministers," national governments take binding decisions on an increasing number of issues by majority vote rather than unanimity, and they share executive powers with a supranational European institution, the European Commission. Is the EU thus a state in the making? How might we understand the current politics and policies of the European Union as well as the historical process that led to it? In this course, we will examine a range of theoretical perspectives that might help us explain the EU and the process of European integration. We will read the classics of integration theory, but also examine the EU comparatively as an instance of more common political phenomena, drawing on general theories of international relations, state formation, and comparative (domestic) politics. Empirically, assigned readings focus on the history and current institutions of the EU and cover a few key policy areas in general; for the research papers, student should conduct empirical analyses of a particular aspect of the process of European integration or analyses of EU politics in a specific issue area. PLSC 347 is an upper level undergraduate course.

**Learning outcomes:**

This course will address core questions of European integration from the origins of the European Union to its current economic crisis. The unifying theme is the question: How alike politically do countries have to be for economic integration to work? More specifically, we will ask: Are there fundamental tensions between economic integration and political integration? If so, how might they be managed? Does the EU have a "democratic deficit" or, on the contrary, has it strengthened democracy among its members, especially in the new members from post-communist Eastern Europe? What are the challenges of integrating post-communist countries into the EU? Last, what does the ongoing economic crisis reveal about the project of creating a single currency,

the Euro? In addressing these questions, the class will take an interdisciplinary approach.

At the end of this course and having completed the essential reading students should be able to: demonstrate a thorough understanding of the European Union, its institutional processes and policies and their impact on European, as well as non-European states and citizens; demonstrate an understanding of the main political processes of the EU; assess the present and future processes of European Integration in light of the main theories, models and concepts used in the EU studies demonstrate a critical understanding of the EU's key policies and their impact on the outside world.

**Course procedure:**

Students are expected to have completed their reading before the end of the semester. They are also expected to actively participate in all sessions, and their participation will be taken into consideration. Some sessions are in seminar format.

**Required Text:**

*Understanding the European Union*, 6th edition, by John McCormick (Palgrave Macmillan, March 2014)

**Recommended:**

*Towards an Imperfect Union*, Dalibor Rohac (Rowman & Littlefield, May 2016). **On reserve in the library**

**Evaluation:**

Class participation, attendance, and questions. Students will be expected to bring to class each Thursday one question related to the chapter from the McCormick text for that week. As you read the chapter[s], there should be something that either is of interest to you or that is not clear to you. The success of this class depends upon the quality of the dialogue in class. It is expected that students will attend every class and that they will be fully prepared to discuss the material assigned for that day. Class participation grades will reflect their attendance record, the frequency of their contributions to class discussions, and the quality of their questions, observations, and conclusions. **Class participation counts for 5 percent of the final grade.**

There will be a **term project worth 15 percent of the final grade.** Each student will also write a paper of approximately 3000 words (or about 12 double-spaced typewritten pages) analyzing a particular aspect of the process of European integration or EU politics in a specific issue area. Students *must* choose their topic in consultation with the instructor. The completed paper will be due by **November 26.**

**The following schedule will be strictly observed:**

1. Consultation with the instructor on your research idea (by **October 3**).
2. A typed project proposal, including the central questions, a plan for research, and a preliminary bibliography (due **October 25**).
3. A rough draft of the paper (due **November 15**).
4. A final draft (due **November 26**).

## Plagiarism:

Students of this university are called upon to know, to respect, and to practice a high standard of personal honesty. Plagiarism is a serious form of violation of this standard. Plagiarism is the appropriation for gain of ideas, language, or work of another without sufficient public acknowledgement that the material is not one's own. Plagiarism on the part of a student in academic work or dishonest examination behavior will result in failure and will be reported to the Office of the Associate Dean of Academic Affairs.

There will **multiple-choice quizzes worth 6 percent of the final grade**. Quizzes will relate to current *and previous* topics. A quiz may be given at the beginning of a class. There will be no make-up quizzes -- none even later during the same class period. Quizzes will be announced 1 week in advance.

Each student will write a book review of approximately 600 words. Students will have the ability to make their own choice as long as the book deals with world politics. This will be submitted no later than **November 21**. Each review should include a brief synopsis, followed by the reader's reaction. What was the author's point? What did the editor provide? What do you think of the book? What did you learn? What did you like about the book? What didn't you like about the book? How did the book relate to your understanding of democracy and government today? Why was the assignment worthwhile? Why wasn't the assignment worthwhile? This assignment must be word processed, spell checked and proof read. Failure to follow these directions will result in either a lowered grade or having the assignment returned ungraded to be resubmitted. Late assignments (including those returned for resubmission) may have points deducted for each day late.

**Reviews count for 4 percent of the final grade.**

## Examinations:

There will be two examinations (Midterm: essay, with some choice--2 of 5, e.g.; Final: 10 short answer essays). The **Midterm exam will count 30 per cent of the final grade**, the final exam will be worth **40 percent of the final grade**.

**Travel plans or other personal commitments may not interfere with examinations.**

The first exam will cover the first half of the class; the final exam will be cumulative.

In-class tests (mid-term exam, final exam, and quizzes) are **closed book/notes**. Quizzes may include multiple choice, true/false, or short answer questions. No exams are dropped or replaced.

**Caveat:** student may not miss any exams. Missed exams, without verifiable appropriate documentation, will be recorded as a zero. The final exam must be taken to receive credit in the course. Tests and exams are cumulative.

All graded material will have to be returned to the instructor in a timely manner for archiving.

## Grading:

94-100:        A

90-93:	A-
87-89:	B+
84-86:	B
80-83:	B-
77-79:	C+
74-76:	C
70-73:	C-
67-69:	D+
60-66:	D
59 or lower:	F

The minimum passing grade for a course taken under the Pass/Fail option will be C minus (C-)

I	Incomplete
W	Withdrawal
WF	Withdrawal Failure

<b>Percentage-Based Grading System:</b>	Class participation	5 %
	Quizzes	6 %
	Book review	4 %
	Term paper	15 %
	Midterm exam	30 %
	Final exam	40%

<b>Grading philosophy:</b>	<b>A</b>	Excellent. Indicates the highest level of achievement in the subject and an outstanding level of intellectual initiative.
	<b>B</b>	Good. Indicates a good level of achievement, intelligent understanding and application of subject matter.
	<b>C</b>	Satisfactory. Indicates academic work of an acceptable quality and an understanding of the subject matter.
	<b>D</b>	Poor. Minimum credit. Indicates the lowest passing grade, unsatisfactory work and only the minimum understanding and application.
	<b>F</b>	Failure. Indicates the lack of even the minimum understanding and application.

**Attendance Policy:** (please note that course attendance is based on prompt class attendance, preparation and active participation in class discussions)

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student.

- For all classes meeting once a week, students cannot incur more than one unexcused absence.
- For all classes meeting twice a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.
- For all classes meeting three times a week, students cannot incur more than two unexcused absences.

This course meets twice a week, thus a total of two unexcused absences will be permitted. **Unexcused absences beyond these will result in 1% lowering of the final course grade, for every absence after the “approved limit”.**

There are no make-up exams, tests, or quizzes unless students demonstrate in advance that a significant life-event prevents them from attending class or if they have a documented emergency. The following are *not* acceptable excuses: scheduled flights or trips, job interviews, picking up relatives at the airport, etc.

Attendance and punctuality are basic requirements for an effective course. Beyond that, each person's frequency and quality of contribution to the class discussion will be assessed and reflected in the class participation score. If students cannot attend a class it is a courtesy to inform me in advance if possible.

**Disagreement:**

Political attitudes and opinions tend to reflect one's social background and self-interest, and since we all have different backgrounds and interests there is no reason why we should be expected to agree. A student does not have to agree with the professor to get a grade in this class. It is both legitimate and desirable for you to disagree with me and independently and critically evaluate the material. I will exercise my academic freedom and say what I think is accurate about politics; you have the same right. Political Science is a way of thinking about politics, not a set of right answers and airing your disagreements is an excellent way to learn how to think. So please, if you feel I am wrong, challenge me. Former Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn had two bits of advice for the new members: *"Learn to disagree without being disagreeable"*, and *"Don't turn political differences into personal differences"*.

**Behavior:**

Civility and toleration are essential for an academic atmosphere conducive to learning. Incivility in the classroom will not be tolerated. Students should make sure to turn off cellular phones and other electronic devices before class. Students are not allowed to eat, drink, or smoke in the classrooms.

**Honor Code:**

Lying, cheating, attempted cheating, and plagiarism are violations of our honor code that, when identified, are investigated. Each incident will be examined to determine the degree of deception involved.

**Examinations:**

As stated above, travel plans or other personal commitments may not interfere with midterm and final examinations.

**Course outline**

**Week**

**Topic**

1. **September 3-5:** *What is the European Union? The E.U. and the international system; The dynamics of regional integration.*

2. **September 10-12:** *Explaining the E.U. today. Federalism vs. confederalism. The idea of Europe: Europe's changing identity.*
3. **September 17-19:** *Where is Europe? What is European? The evolution of Europe. Postwar Europe. First steps toward integration. The European Economic Community.*
4. **September 24-26:** *Focus on the single market. From Community to Union. To Lisbon and the Eurozone crisis.*
5. **October 1-3:** *The European institutions. A constitution for Europe. The European Council; The European Commission.*
6. **October 8:** *The Council of the E.U. The European Parliament. The European Court of Justice.*

**October 10: Midterm examination**

**October 11-20: Fall semester break**

7. **October 22-24-25 (Friday class day):** *The E.U. and its citizens. Public opinion and Europe. Euroscepticism. The people's Europe.*
8. **October 29-31:** *Participation and representation. European elections; Referenda; Interest groups.*
9. **November 5-7:** *The E.U. policy process. Compromise and bargaining; Political games; Multi-speed integration; Incrementalism. The E.U. budget.*
10. **November 12-14-15 (Friday class day):** *Economic policy. The single market; European business and the single market; The Eurozone.*
11. **November 19-21:** *Internal policies. Regional policy; Employment and social policy; Agriculture and fisheries; Justice and home affairs; Environmental policy.*
12. **November 26:** *External policy. Foreign policy; Security policy; Trade policy; Relations with the U.S.; Relations with the neighborhood; Development cooperation.*

**November 28-December 1: Thanksgiving recess**

13. **December 3-5:** *Relations with the U.S.; Relations with the neighborhood; Development cooperation.*

**Final examinations: December 7, 9-12**

**\* Please note that students must complete the reading assignments listed above by Thursday in the current week.**