CPO 3103
Western European Politics
M, W, F, period 5 (11:45-12:35)
AND 034
Professor Schirmer
Office Hours: W 2:00 – 4:00, F 10:00 – 11:00 in AND 205
Email: schirmer@ufl.edu

The objective of the course is to familiarize students with the varieties of democratic political systems in Western Europe. This entails discussion of the institutional structures and workings of parliamentary systems, guided by the question how democracy is enacted in different constitutional frames. A second major focus is on political economy and the question of the role of the state in the running of the economy.

Throughout the course, we shall make implicit and explicit comparisons with the political and economic system of the United States. One reason for this is that it allows us to recognize what is similar and what is different in Western Europe. The main reason, however, is that public discourse commonly treats Europe and the United States as contrasting models of how to run advanced democratic societies, playing on familiar contrasts like ‘equality vs. freedom’, ‘soft vs. hard power’, and ‘welfare-state vs. liberalism.’ This calls, on the one hand, for general reflections of normative preferences and the quality of democracy and, on the other hand, scrutiny: As we will see, simple dichotomies of the type “social Europe vs. liberal US” flatten the differences that exist among European political systems and are, in some instances, outright misleading.

“Western Europe” as a geographical, political, and cultural category is – like all regional designations – ambiguous and historically malleable. We will hence start the course by embedding contemporary Western Europe in the broader historical trajectory that has shaped it.

Course Format:
The course alternates between lecture (questions and discussion welcome) and student presentations. You will find that the course plan is interspersed with a total of nine Real World topics. These topics will be introduced and presented by groups of students. Participation in one of the Real World groups is mandatory.
Readings:

Class readings are specified on a week-by-week basis in the course plan. The bulk of
the readings is drawn from the following two books:

- Gallagher, Laver, Mair: Representative Government in Modern Europe:
  Institutions, Parties, and Governments (Boston et al., McGraw Hill: 4th
  edition); and
- Tony Judt, Ill Fares the Land (New York: Penguin, 2010).

These books can be purchased at the usual outlets. In addition, purchase of the
following work is recommend:


Additional readings will be made available online.
Students are strongly encouraged to complete the readings in advance of class.

Class Requirements:

Students are expected to attend class regularly and complete their readings in a
timely manner.
Participation in one Real World-group is mandatory (sign-up will begin in the
second week of the term).
Students are further required to submit three response papers. These are 2-page
papers written in response to the week's topic. The form is open; they can be
written as summaries of the readings/lecture or as critical think pieces or
commentary. See the course plan for the due dates for the RPs.
An in-class midterm exam will be held Oct 12; the final exam will be scheduled
during exam period.

e-Learning:

We use Sakai primarily for announcements and the circulation of reading materials.
The gradebook will also be kept there.

Grading:

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
<td>25 %</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>25 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation (attendance and Real World presentation)</td>
<td>25 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Response Papers</td>
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### Course Plan

#### Week 1  Introduction

1/7  Course Topics  
1/9  Course Mechanics  
1/11  General Discussion (please come armed with questions and comments!)  
Reading:  Gallagher et al., Representative Government, chapter 1 (1-22).

#### Week 2  Which Western Europe?

1/14  Geographical Scopes  
1/16  So close, so far apart:  
1/18  Comparing Western Europe and the United States  
Readings:  Judt, Ill Fares the Land, Chapter One: The Way We Live Now (11-40), Kagan, Power and Weakness (Sakai), Rifkin, Worlds Apart (Sakai).

#### Part I – Western Europe Since 1900: A Historical Approach

#### Week 3  Mass Politics and Mass Destruction: 1900-1950

1/21  no class (MLK-Day)  
1/23  1900-1933  
1/25  The Abyss  

#### Week 4  Cold War and Prosperity: 1950-1989

1/28  Post-War Reconstruction and Economic Boom  
1/30  European Integration  
2/1  Real World: Cold War Berlin  
Readings:  James, Fall and Rise, 192-209, Judt, Ill Fares the Land, Chapter Two: The World We Have Lost (41-80); Perry Anderson, The New Old World, chapter 1: Origins, 3-46.

#### Week 5  After the Divide: 1989 to the Present

2/4  no class  
2/6  no class  
2/8  Transformations in Central and Eastern Europe  
## Part II – Varieties of Democracy

### Week 6  *After the Divide, cont., and Parliamentary Systems*

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>How 1989 Changed Western Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/13</td>
<td>Real World: Solidarity and the End of State-Socialism  <strong>1st Response</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>2/15</td>
<td>Parliamentary vs. Presidential Systems  <strong>Paper Due!</strong></td>
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Readings: Gallagher et al, Representative Government, chapters 2 and 3 (23-83).

### Week 7  *Parliamentary Systems, contd.*

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>2/18</td>
<td>Parliament and the Executive</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/20</td>
<td>The Making and Un-Making of Governments</td>
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<tr>
<td>2/22</td>
<td>Real World: An Untypical Case – The Monti-Government in Italy</td>
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### Week 8  *Midterm Exam Week*

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/25</td>
<td>Q &amp; A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2/27</td>
<td>Exam Preview</td>
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<td>3/1</td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
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### Week 9  *Spring Break*

### Week 10  *Party Systems*

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>3/11</td>
<td>Typologies of Party Systems</td>
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<td>3/13</td>
<td>“Families”  <strong>2nd Response Paper Due!</strong></td>
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Readings: Gallagher et al, Representative Government, chapters 7 and 8 (195-277).

### Week 11  *Elections and Electoral Systems*

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<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>3/18</td>
<td>Majority Voting and Proportional Voting</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/20</td>
<td>Causes and Consequences of Electoral Systems</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/22</td>
<td>Real World: The Best of Both Worlds? – STV in Ireland</td>
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### Week 11  *How People Vote: Cleavage Structures*

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
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<tr>
<td>3/25</td>
<td>What Cleavages Are (and how they used to be)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/27</td>
<td>Changes in Cleavage Structure</td>
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<tr>
<td>3/29</td>
<td>Real World: Pirates (Not of the Carribean)</td>
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Part III – A Gentler Society?

**Week 12**  
*Equality over Individualism? Welfare Regimes*

- 4/1  Three Types of Welfare Capitalism  
- 4/3  The Welfare State in Retreat?  
- 4/5  no class


**Week 13**  
*Different Kinds of Capitalist Economies*

- 4/8  The Varieties of Capitalism-Approach  
- 4/10  CMEs and LMEs – Corporatism and Liberalism  
- 4/12  The Consequences

Readings: Gallagher et al, Representative Government, chapter 13 (459-479)

Part IV – The EU, the Common Currency, and the Financial Crisis

**Week 14**  
*“... a market, competitive and free of distortions”*

- 4/15  The Logic of European Integration  
- 4/17  The Institutions of the EU  
- 4/19  Real World: The Sovereign Debt Crisis in Greece


**Week 15**  
*The Monetary Union and the Crisis*

- 4/22  The Euro and the ECB  
- 4/24  Plummeting Into Crisis  

3rd Response Paper Due!

Readings: t.b.a.