

**Political Science 3343F**  
**European Union: The Politics of Integration**  
**Fall 2025**

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SSC 7225

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Office hours: Thursday 3-4:30 pm, or by appointment

**Course Description:** European integration has been far from merely economic in character. It has been driven substantially by politics, and suffused with politics at all levels and stages. This course will survey the sources in history of European integration, the main theories accounting for its emergence in the aftermath of the Second World War, and the institutions that have resulted from these developments. How these institutions have changed over time, and whether these changes tend in a state-like and/or democratic direction, will also be addressed. Institutional development will not be assumed, however, and so we will pay close attention to the complexity of change in the post-WWII era, and therefore also to the prospects for stagnation, reversal or advancement in response to the recent financial crisis in Europe. Furthermore, the course will examine how policy is made and implemented within the European Union, and the kinds of policy that have been generated by the EU over the years. Broadly speaking, we will try to determine whether the EU is primarily a neo-liberal phenomenon emphasizing the release of market energies, a budding social democracy, or something in between. We will pay particular attention to monetary integration, asking whether the euro works, and whether it is likely to survive the serious challenges it has faced in recent years. We will also examine the refugee crisis in the context of the development of the EU's common border and external policies, and raise the question of whether Brexit suggests that enlargement is not a one-way street.

**Learning Outcomes:**

Participants will:

- (a) acquire a detailed and theoretically informed understanding of the historical development of the European integration project and its relationship to such key events as the Second World War, the Cold War, and German reunification;
- (b) gain an understanding of the major institutions associated with European integration, their degree of novelty and the degree to which they are capable of successful interaction;
- (c) become capable of linking integration with key policies, such as the common agricultural policy, the construction of the single market, and the currency union;
- (d) learn to critically assess the character and implications of the integration process, including the strengths and weaknesses of an intergovernmental/supranational hybrid and the prospects for its persistence over time.

**Prerequisite:**

Political Science 2231E or 2531F/G or 2245E or 2545F/G or International Relations 2701E or 2702E or 2704F/G.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

**Course Format:**

This course will take place in person, in weekly class meetings. I have found that teaching the EU, given that it is quite complex and highly innovative, requires a significant amount of lecture time. The required readings make their contribution, certainly, and our textbook is excellent, but they can only do so much. The material still needs to be clarified, organized, contextualized, extended, and poked and prodded in numerous ways. The EU, as a largely unfamiliar set of arrangements, simply calls for this kind of treatment. But a proper introduction to the EU also requires time for student questions, comments, and critiques. I want to hear what students have to say, and to take advantage of the opportunity to do it in person. And to promote participation, I will offer some discussion questions in advance on a weekly basis.

**\*\*Attendance is required for success in this course.**

**\*\*Electronic devices will be permissible only for the purpose of note-taking and any other class-related activities. Disruptive use of these devices will not be permitted.**

**\*\*In all assignments, students are expected to submit their own original work for evaluation. All assignments are subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software, Turnitin. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Academic offenses such as plagiarism will be taken very seriously. The use of AI tools such as ChatGPT in submissions for this course will also be considered an academic offence.**

**Course Requirements and Evaluation:**

- (a) two short in-class written commentaries (30 minutes each, 10% each)
- (b) a 7-8-page policy analysis (30%)
- (c) a two-hour final exam (40%)
- (d) consistent and well-informed participation (10%)

**Short In-Class Written Commentaries:** Students will be asked to respond in writing, during class time, to one of two questions presented to them in each of weeks three and six. The questions will be tied in with specific assigned readings, in particular the two non-textbook readings in each of the relevant weeks. Students will have half an hour to produce their answers, after which we will collectively discuss the questions.

**Research Paper:** This assignment will require students to identify an area of EU policy, and to answer the following questions: What has the EU has done well and badly in this policy domain, and how would you characterize its overall performance? What, in your view, should be the fullest extent to which this policy area becomes developed at the EU level (policy activity, decision-making mode, etc.)? And what is your best estimation of what this policy area will look

like in 15-20 years? Students will be expected to combine class materials with at least six high-quality sources in order to produce a well-informed analysis of these issues. A fuller description of this assignment will appear on the OWL site. The paper will be due **December 3, 11:59 pm, with flexibility to December 5, 11:59 pm.**

**Final Exam:** Students will write a two-hour exam, with an essay format, based on questions which will reflect the course as a whole. The exam will take place as determined by the registrar.

**Participation:** Students will be expected to participate regularly and constructively in our weekly sessions. Participation will be evaluated based on the following considerations: relevance, responsiveness to the material laid out in assigned readings and lecture segments, and insightfulness. Keep in mind that a well-informed and helpful question can be an important element in course participation. I will provide questions in advance to guide your preparation and enhance the discussion. Please do take note that our discussion segments will play an important role in preparing you for all other graded course components.

**Required Textbook:**

Amy Verdun, Achim Hurrelmann, and Emmanuel Brunet-Jailly, eds., *European Union Governance and Policy-Making: A Canadian Perspective* (University of Toronto Press, 2023 [2nd Edition]). Western's bookstore has copies of this textbook available for purchase, and provides access to the link for the digital options.

## **Course Readings**

**Week One: Introduction** (September 10)

No required readings.

**Week Two: Integration History – a First Look** (September 17)

Verdun et al., chapters 1 and 2.

Tony Judt, *Postwar: A History of Europe Since 1945* (Penguin, 2005), pp. 153-64.

**Week Three: Theoretical Reflections** (September 24)

Verdun et al., chapter 6.

Mark Gilbert, "Narrating the Process: Questioning the Progressive Story of European Integration." *Journal of Common Market Studies* vol. 46, no. 3 (2008).

Andrew Glencross, "Altiero Spinelli and the Idea of the US Constitution as a Model for Europe: The Promises and Pitfalls of an Analogy." *Journal of Common Market Studies* vol. 47, no. 3 (2009).

**Week Four: Institutions and Identity** (October 1)

Verdun et al., chapter 3.

Sergio Fabbrini, "Constructing and De-constructing the European Identity: The Contradictory Logic of the EU's Institutional System." *Comparative European Politics* vol. 17 (2019).

**Week Five: The Democratic Deficit?** (October 8)

Verdun et al., chapter 15.

Anna Elomäki, Johanna Kantola, Petra Ahrens, Valentine Berthet, Barbara Gaweda, Cherry Miller, "The Role of National Delegations in the Politics of the European Parliament." *West European Politics* vol. 47, no. 6 (2024).

Oliver Treib, "Euroscepticism is Here to Stay: What Cleavage Theory Can Teach Us About the 2019 European Parliament Elections." *Journal of European Public Policy* vol. 28, no. 2 (February 2021).

### **Week Six: The European Judiciary (October 15)**

Verdun et al., chapter 4.

Karen J. Alter and R. Daniel Kelemen, "Understanding the European Court's Political Power," and Jeremy Rabkin, "A Strange Institution," in Hubert Zimmermann and Andreas Dur, eds., *Key Controversies in European Integration* (Third Edition; Palgrave, 2021), pp. 50-66.

Juan A. Mayoral and Aida Torres Perez, "On Judicial Mobilization: Entrepreneurship for Policy Change at Times of Crisis." *Journal of European Integration* vol. 40, no. 6 (2018).

### **Week Seven: Policy-Making Processes and the Common Agricultural Policy (October 22)**

Verdun et al., chapters 5 and 10.

### **Week Eight: Economic and Monetary Integration and the Financial Crisis (October 29)**

Verdun et al., chapter 7.

Paul Krugman, "Eurotrashed." *The New York Times Magazine* (January 12, 2011).

Erik Jones, R. Daniel Kelemen, and Sophie Meunier, "Failing Forward? The Euro Crisis and the Incomplete Nature of European Integration." *Comparative Political Studies* vol. 49, no. 7 (2016).

### **\*\*Break Week: No session on November 5, no required readings**

### **Week Nine: Regional, Environmental, and Social Policy (November 12)**

Verdun et al., chapters 11, 16, and 17.

### **Week Ten: The Politics of Migration, Enlargement, and Brexit**

(November 19)

Verdun et al., chapters 8 and 13.

Michael Keating, "Brexit and the Nations." John Erik Fossum and Christopher Lord, eds., *Handbook on the European Union and Brexit* (Edward Elgar, 2023).

### **Week Eleven: External Trade and Foreign, Security, and Defence Policy (November 26)**

Verdun et al., chapters 9, 12, and 18.

### **Week Twelve: 'Polycrisis,' Populism, and Democratic Backsliding (December 3)**

Jan Hupkens, Christine Neuhold, and Sophie Vanhoonacker, "One Crisis is Not Like Another: Exploring Different Shades of Crisis in the EU." *Politics and Governance* vol. 11, no. 4 (2023).

Philip Rathgeb and Jonathan Hopkin, 2025. "How the Eurozone Shapes Populism: A Comparative Political Economy Approach." *Journal of European Public Policy* vol. 32, no. 5.

R. Daniel Kelemen, "Will the European Union Escape its Autocracy Trap?" *Journal of European Public Policy* vol. 32, no. 2 (2025).