POLI 659: Interdisciplinary Seminar in European Studies

POLI 659
Prof. Maria Popova
Fall 2018
McTavish 3438, Room 301
Leacock 429
Hours: Thursdays, 1:30-2:30pm
Thursdays 3-5:25pm
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Course Description
This course presents graduate students with the opportunity to explore cutting-edge research in contemporary European studies. It is built around the Jean Monnet Centre Montreal fall speaker series at McGill, for which students will read guest presenters’ work ahead of time and serve as discussants. Students in this course will also develop their own research papers. Although this is the core course for the European Studies Option, any graduate student with an interest in European studies is welcome to enroll.

This year our speaker series and seminar theme is European (Dis)Integration. We have a diverse lineup of speakers, who will present research both on the forces that bring Europe closer together and those that pull it apart. Specific topics include integration of national minorities, the migration crisis, European foreign policy, Grexit and Brexit, threats to the rule of law and democratic backsliding, and party system development.

Course Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
<th>Date Due</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Seminar Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Weekly Reviews</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Start of class each day we have readings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Discussant Presentation</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>Once during the semester</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper Proposal</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>October 25</td>
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<tr>
<td>Research Paper</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>December 14</td>
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</tbody>
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Readings
Readings are either downloadable and hyperlinked (be sure you are on the McGill network or VPN first) or will be distributed via email at least one week in advance of class. Given the course structure, individual readings may occasionally be added or changed in consultation with the guest speakers as the semester progresses. In no case, however, will readings be altered less than one week in advance of class, nor will students be asked to read more than five papers per class.

Participation
You should participate actively and regularly in class discussions. This means that you should attend all classes, pay attention, and ask thoughtful questions. You may miss one
class session during the semester without penalty (unless you are scheduled to be a discussant on that day); further absences will affect your participation grade.

**Weekly Reviews**

For every week in which we have readings, you will hand in a short written review that briefly answers the following questions for each assigned reading:

The written review should include concise answers (one paragraph max!) to the following five questions for each assigned reading:

1) What is the main point you learned from this reading?
2) What methodology is used to support the argument?
3) How does this reading relate to other reading(s) we have done, either this week or in previous weeks?
4) What is confusing/hard to understand in this reading?
5) What is obviously right or obviously wrong in this reading?

These reviews are due in class each week, beginning on September 14 (Week 2). You do not need to do a review for the week that you are a discussant. They will be graded either “check,” “check-minus,” or “check-plus.” To earn a check, you must answer all five questions for each reading and the answers must reflect a solid understanding of the readings. On rare occasions, especially thoughtful sets of answers may receive a check plus. Thoughtful does not mean long – stick to the requested lengths and observe the rules of grammar (e.g., avoid paragraph-long sentences!).

To receive an A for this part of the course, your reviews must average at least a check (i.e., one check-plus will offset a check-minus); your final weekly review mark will fall by a half grade for each check-minus that is not offset by a check-plus (e.g., one check-minus results in an A-, etc.). These reviews are meant to encourage you to think about the readings before you come to class. You may turn in one review late during the semester without penalty (although it must be handed in before the subsequent week’s class). Further late or missing reviews will each lower your final weekly review mark by half a grade (i.e., A to A-) and cannot be offset by check-plus reviews.

**Discussant Presentation**

You will serve as the discussant for a speaker once during the semester; we will choose dates in early September. Your presentation should last from 6-8 minutes. Think of this as if you were a discussant at a conference. What is the key takeaway from the speaker’s paper/presentation? What are its strengths and weaknesses? How does it relate to other literatures and issues? What important questions does it raise? Where could it go from here? If you miss class or arrive unprepared on your assigned date, you will not receive credit for this assignment. Being a good discussant is an important and underappreciated skill. Here are two websites discussing how to do it well:

http://chrisblattman.com/2010/02/22/the-discussants-art/
http://sites.utexas.edu/ecoadvising/files/2012/05/ESP-Tips-on-being-a-good-discussant1.pdf
**Research Paper Proposals**

Research paper proposals should be submitted via email to the instructor no later than October 25th at 2pm; in addition, you should bring four hard copies to class at 3pm on October 25th. Your proposal should be 500-1,000 words long (not including bibliography), single-spaced and in 12-point font. It should describe both the proposed topic and argument (i.e., thesis) of the paper, and briefly summarize the ways in which you plan to support your argument. In addition, please attach a preliminary bibliography with at least 10 scholarly sources to your proposal.  

**PhD students:** Students writing comprehensive exams or theses on European topics may arrange with the instructor to complete a relevant alternative assignment of similar length (e.g., practice exam questions, a thesis proposal/chapter, etc.). If you are interested in pursuing a non-standard assignment, please discuss this option with me well in advance of the deadline.

**Research Paper**

The research paper must be 7,500-10,000 words long (excluding the bibliography) on a topic approved by the instructor. The papers are due by December 14, although I encourage you to submit them earlier if possible. To pass the course you must receive a B- or higher on the research paper or approved alternative assignment.

**Grading Scale**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Grade Points</th>
<th>Grade Range</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
<td>&gt;3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>3.51-3.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.16-3.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>2.86-3.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>2.51-2.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>2.16-2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>1.86-2.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1.0-1.85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>0.0</td>
<td>&lt;1.0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

This course uses the standard 4.0 system for grading. An A on an assignment is worth 4 points, an A- is worth 3.7 points, etc. To calculate your final grade, I will first multiply the grade points you have earned on each assignment by the relative weight of that assignment (e.g. 0.4 for the research paper) and then add all of the scores together to get your final grade-point average. That average will determine your final letter grade for the course (refer the grade range column). For example, if your overall grade-point average is a 3.4, you would earn a B+ in the course.

**McGill Policy on Plagiarism**

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the
Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures (for more information see www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/).

L’université McGill attache une haute importance à l’honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l’on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon le Code de conduite de l’étudiant et des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site www.mcgill.ca/students/srr/honest/.

McGill Policy on Language
In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded.

Conformément à la Charte des droits de l’étudiant de l’Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté.
Course Schedule

Week One (September 6) – Introduction

Week Two (September 13) – European Crises

Guest speaker: Eleni Tsingou (Copenhagen Business School)

Talk Title: Europe’s Fast-And Slow-Burning Crises

Readings:


Week Three (September 20) – Europe and the Rule of Law

Guest speaker: Maria Popova

Talk Title: Prosecuting High-Level Corruption in Eastern Europe

Readings:


**Week Four (September 27) – Minority Rights in Europe**

*Guest Speakers:* Jennie Schulze (Duquesne University)

*Talk Title:* Strategic Framing and the Case of Stateless Children: How Europe and Russia Influence Policymaking toward Russian-speakers in Estonia and Latvia

*Readings:*


**Week Five (October 4) – European Foreign Policy**

*Guest Speaker:* Marko Mihkelson

*Talk Title:* TBA

*Readings:* TBA

**Week Six (October 11) – Europe’s Crisis of Legitimacy**

*Guest Speaker:* Vivien Schmidt (Boston University)

*Talk Title:* Europe's Crisis of Legitimacy: Governing by Rules and Ruling by Numbers in the Eurozone
Readings: TBA

Week Seven (October 18) – European foreign policy

Guest Speaker: Sophie Meunier (Princeton University)


Readings:


Week Eight (October 25) – Discussion of Research Paper Proposals

Week Nine (November 1) – The Greek Crisis

Guest Speaker: Frederic Merand (Universite de Montreal)

Talk Title: TBA

Readings: TBA

Week Ten (November 8) – European Elections and National Party Systems

Guest Speaker: Elias Dinas (Oxford)

Talk Title: Do European Parliament elections impact national party system fragmentation?

Readings:

**Week Eleven (November 15) Radical Right**

*Guest Speaker:* Lenka Bustikova (Arizona State University)

*Talk Title:* The Established and the Ascendant: Radical Right Mobilization in Eastern Europe

*Readings:*


**Week Twelve (November 22) – EU Citizenship**

*Guest Speaker:* Willem Maas (York University)

*Talk Title:* EU Citizenship and Free Movement after Brexit

*Readings:* TBA

**Week Thirteen (November 29)**

*Guest Speaker:* Kathy Thelen (MIT)

*Talk Title:* TBA

*Readings:* TBA