BRITAIN AND THE EUROPEAN UNION

Instructor: Dr. Andreas Staab          Fall 2014

Course number: POL S 110

Course Content
The course provides a comprehensive examination of the processes of European integration, and offers a critical analysis of EU policies in their broader historical, political and economic contexts. This analysis is undertaken in light of the peculiar and often problematic relationship between Britain and the EU.
The course is therefore divided into three parts: Part I gives an insight into the main historical currents and key institutional mechanisms. Part II analyses the main policies, which continue to shape the integration processes of the EU including the Single Market (SEM), Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), Cohesion, as well as the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP). In Part III the course focuses on the EU’s external policies which have an effect on non-EU countries, as well as future member states, ranging from External Trade to enlargement and the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).
The course plays particular reference to the UK’s position on these policies and the benefits (and costs) arising from EU integration in these fields which at the moment culminate in a political debate on a potential referendum on leaving the EU altogether.

Course Objectives
The course does not require any previous knowledge on European affairs or British Politics, or indeed a background in economics, politics, history or any other social science. Through taking this course students will gain a thorough understanding not only of the EU and its key actors and activities, but also of the extent to which its policies shape member states, such as the UK.

Instructional Methodology
The course places a high emphasis on pro-active teaching methods (such as court-room and summit simulations, SWOT analyses, or group discussions) with the pedagogic aim of processing recently acquired information (such as lectures or the studying of books and articles) in a conducive, pro-active manner. As such, student presentations (see Method of Evaluation below) often form the basis of intense group discussions and analyses. In addition to standard lectures, the course also integrates a number of TV documentaries.

Study Visits
Outside of the class room the course also aims to integrate a number of study visits. We will rely to some extent on the nearby London School of Economics; one of the world’s top universities, which regularly invites public speakers of extremely high caliber, while also organizing topical debates and panel discussions on matters that are closely related to this course. Students are expected to attend at least two public lectures of their choice. Please visit www.lse.ac.uk/publicevents.
Method of Evaluation (Grading)

1. Presentations, Class Participation, LSE Write ups: 25%
2. Take-Home Exam: 25%
3. Final Exam: 50%

1. Presentations, Class Participation
Over the course of the semester, students are required to give one (or two; depending on class size) presentation(s) per term. Presentations should be **no longer than 25 minutes** and should provide the seminar group with a discussion base. Hence, presentations ought to cover key factual points, but should also give some ‘food for thought’. In addition the presentations should also highlight one internet source of your choice and should offer fellow students advice on the suitability of this source (informative, accurate, good/bad points, etc.)

In addition, students are also asked to attend two public lectures of their choice at the nearby London School of Economics (directions to the venue will be given in class). Public lectures usually take place in the evening (from around 6.30 to 8.00) and cover a broad range of issues. For a calendar of events, please consult [www.lse.ac.uk/publicevents](http://www.lse.ac.uk/publicevents). Students have to produce a 500-word write up of the lecture which should integrate a summary of the main arguments, but also (and more importantly) a personal reflection.

2. Take Home Exam
This first essay will be handed out after the completion of Part I. Proper referencing, footnotes and a bibliography (at least five sources per essay should be consulted) are expected. There is a strict space limit of **1000 words** per essay.

3. Final Exam
On our final day, we will be writing our in-class exam which covers topics addressed in Part II and III. Students are allowed to use their course notes. However, books, articles, and laptops/computers are not permitted.

4. Grading System
Students can achieve a combined maximum of 25 points for ‘presentations and class participation’, as well as 25 points each for the first take home exam, the presentation write up and the final (in class) exam, bringing the total number of points to 100. The final number of points translates into the following grade:

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<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A plus</td>
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<td>C plus:</td>
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**Course Readings**
- Updates on this book can be accessed at [www.epicseminars.com](http://www.epicseminars.com). Click on ‘The European Union Explained’.

This book does not represent an in-depth analysis of the EU, but is instead designed as an accessible introduction for those readers who do not possess any knowledge of European affairs. As such, students are strongly advised to regard the book as elaborate lecture notes, which necessitate the use of additional, academic sources, including the ones listed below. The contents of this book correspond to the outline of this course.

**Other Reference Texts:**
For a more detailed analysis, students are strongly advised to consult additional sources (such as the ones listed below). Practically all academic books are organised along the same structural lines. There may be a section on history, some chapters on institutions, and some on policies. It is therefore very easy to read up and research the individual sessions of our course.

5. H. Wallace (ed). *Policy Making in the EU*. Oxford University Press. 2010

**Essential Reference Sources:**
- Official Web Site of the EU: [http://europa.eu.int](http://europa.eu.int)
- The Financial Times: [www.ft.com](http://www.ft.com)
- The Economist: [www.economist.co.uk](http://www.economist.co.uk)
- The Guardian: [www.guardian.co.uk](http://www.guardian.co.uk) One of the biggest dailies with a comprehensive archive
- [www.euractiv.com](http://www.euractiv.com) an internet portal sponsored by the Commission on a large range of topics.

**Part I: Understanding the European Union**

Sep 2 and 9 Historical Analysis of European Integration: From Paris to Nice
Sep 16 Institutional Mechanisms in the European Union: Parliament and Courts
Sep 23 Institutional Mechanisms in the EU: Commission and the Councils
Sep 30 The Single Market, Competition and State Aid

**Please note:** Take Home Exam will be handed out

Oct 7: **no class:** session moved to Friday, November 14: 10.00 – 1.00
Oct 14 Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)

**Please note:** Take Home Exam due

**Part II. Common Policies**

Oct 21 **no class:** mid term break
Oct 28 **no class:** compensation for two LSE study visits
Nov 4       Cohesion

Please note: LSE reports due

Nov 11      Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), Part 1
Nov 14      Friday: Economic and Monetary Union (EMU), Part 2
Nov 18      EMU and the Sovereign Debt Crises

• Part III. External Policies

Nov 25      Enlargement
Dec 2       External Trade
Dec 9       Common Foreign and Security Policy

Dec 16      Final Exam

Guidelines to Topics
Below please find a list of the key questions and challenges surrounding each individual topic. Where appropriate, the presentation topics are also mentioned

• Historical Analysis of European Integration: From Paris to Nice

Issues:
1. What is Europe
2. Is there anything that divides Europeans?
3. Is there anything that Europeans have in common?
4. What are the key issues facing the EU in the next ten years?
5. How similar/different is the EU from other political systems?

• EU Institutional Mechanisms:

Issues:
1. How similar/different is the EU from other political systems?
2. What are the powers of the Commission, the Council (of Ministers), the European Council and the European Parliament?
3. Can the ECJ influence the direction of European integration?
4. Is the Commission a ‘government’, a ‘bureaucracy’ or a ‘regulatory agency’?
5. How has growing Euroscepticism affected the EU’s institutional landscape?

• The Single Market and Competition

Issues:
1. How is market regulation different to redistribution?
2. Has the Single Market resulted in the erosion of national differences and idiosyncrasies? Has Europe lost its cultural variety?
3. Is EU competition policy free market or interventionist?

Presentation: The EU should concentrate foremost on completing the Single Market and refrain from political integration.

• The Common Agricultural Policy

Issues:
1. What explains the establishment of the CAP and why it is so difficult to reform?
2. Why are farmers more influential than consumers in the EU policy process?
3. What implications did the 2004 enlargement have for the CAP?

Presentation: The CAP should be abolished
• Cohesion and Redistribution

Issues:
1. Is EU cohesion policy simply a 'side-payment' to buy support for European integration?
2. Has EU cohesion reduced economic disparities in the EU?
3. How important are regions and sub-national interests in shaping EU cohesion policies?

Presentation: The EU’s financial support through the cohesion policy is merely a drop in the ocean and cannot make a substantial contribution to a region’s economic development.

• The Euro:

Issues:
1. What are the economic and political costs and benefits of EMU?
2. What explains the adoption of the EMU project?
3. How can ‘asymmetric shocks’ be dealt with in EMU?

Presentation: Should Britain join the Euro?

• The Sovereign debt crisis in the Eurozone

Issues:
1. Which countries struggle with unsustainable public debt?
2. What has the EU done to help these countries?
3. Has this help been sufficient?
4. What were the structural flaws in the Maast5rciht Treaty’s Stability Pact that allowed this crisis to happen?
5. Will the Euro break up?

Presentation: Has EMU been a step too far for European Integration?

• Enlargement

Issues:
1. What impact has the fourth enlargement had on the working and agenda of the EU?
2. What explains the agenda and speed of EU enlargement?
3. What are the costs and benefits of eastern enlargement for the EU?

Presentation: Should Turkey be invited to join the European Union?

• External Trade

Issues:
1. Is the EU’s common commercial policy protectionist or free trade?
2. What explains the making of EU trade policy?
3. What impact does the EU have in the international trading system?
4. Is the EU better off competing or collaborating with the US in economic matters?

Presentation: The proposed free trade zone between the US and the EU: A marriage made in heaven?

• Common Foreign Policy

Issues:
1. Who represents the EU abroad?
2. In global politics, does the EU pursue more than an economic agenda?
3. What are the instruments, which the EU employs to pursue its common foreign policy?
4. Is the CFSP effective?
5. In the future, is the EU equipped to avoid a human disaster in Europe along the lines of the violent break up of Yugoslavia?

Presentation: The EU is an economic giant without any political teeth