CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN POLITICS

POSC 235
DR LALANDE
SPRING 2005

Class: Tuesday and Thursday 12:50 – 2:00

Office: Comenius 103
Office hours: Tuesdays, Thursdays 10:30 - 12:30, Wednesdays and Fridays 1:00-2:30 or by appointment
Tel: 610-861-1399
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Textbooks:

J. Richard Piper: The Major Nation-States in the European Union
Desmond Dinan: Ever Closer Union

Books on reserve in the library:

Wistricht, Ernest: The United States of Europe

Other readings:

One magazine: The Economist

Course objective:

The objective of the course is to introduce students to the full scope of political changes that have occurred in Europe since the end of WWII. The gradual development of the European Union and its various enlargements will constitute the framework of this course. Through the study of this development, students will hopefully become aware that the complexity of the political relationships between the European states is largely due to the variety of their historical cultural, social and economic differences. By studying this difficult process of political integration, students will gain significant appreciation of the variety of the forces in presence, of the necessity to preserve those differences and of the need to channel their effects.
Course schedule:

January 11
Introduction to the course. What is Europe? Geographic, political and cultural definition of Europe. The notion of sovereignty and the impact of culture in politics. Research the main characteristics of the largest European countries in terms of geography, population, size of the economy, political regimes and social contexts. Research the main features of France, Germany, and Italy. Definition of a few terms: Read The Major Nation-States in the EU, chapter 1 pp.1-5.

13
More general comments on European countries. Research main characteristics of the largest European countries in terms of geography, population, size of the economy and political regime. The division of Europe after WWII. Two conflicting ideologies: capitalism versus communism. Europe caught in the middle. Start of the Cold War and the necessity for French-German reconciliation. The first attempt at forming a Union: the European Coal and Steel Company. Its creation and its institutions. Research main features of Luxemburg, Belgium, The Netherlands, and The United Kingdom.. Read Ever Closer Union, chapter 1 pp. 9-25.

18

20
France: some political, social and cultural notions – a centralized, national socio-political system in sharp contrast with Germany. The United Kingdom: more political, social and cultural notions. A sociopolitical system based on economic liberalism, in contrast with France and West Germany. Comparison of the three countries: three free market economies, three democratic systems, and yet three very different sociopolitical structures. The creation and the launching of the EEC and Euratom. Read The Major Nation-States in the EU chapter 2 pp. 12-19.

25
The 1960’s – the Six during the decade. The reconciliation between France and West Germany. De Gaulle comes to power in France, Konrad Adenauer is chancellor of Germany, their relationship sets the tone for years to come. De Gaulle clashes with the British and the Americans. Political differences and cultural differences – two different plans for the future of Western Europe. De Gaulle also clashes with
some of his EEC partners. France’s attempt to assume political leadership of the EEC triggers the first institutional crisis. Problems outside Europe – the de-colonization period. Research main characteristics of Ireland and Denmark. A few words on the de-colonization period. Read Ever Closer Union, chapter 2, pp. 37-55. The Major Nation-States in the EU, chapter 2, pp. 19-21.

27 The relationship between the EEC and the UK remains difficult. The end of the decade is marked by unrest in the West, tension in the East and crackdown in Prague. Western European hopes are crushed by Soviet determination. Continuing tension with the U.S. and the U.K. on the part of France. More institutional problems divide the EEC on the sovereignty and cooperation issues. Research main characteristics of Greece, Spain, Portugal. Also, read The Emerging European Union, Chapter 3, pp. 27-37.

February 1 Violent ethnic and linguistic conflicts trigger a political and social crisis in Belgium. Foreign policy and the country’s relationship with the East (Ostpolitik) create another political and social crisis in West Germany. The early 1970’s, the first enlargement of the EEC. The Anglo-Saxons bring their own traditions, ideologies and values that translate into lasting consequences for the Community. The EEC takes on a new nature. Research main characteristics of recent Union members: Austria, Sweden, and Finland. Read Ever Closer Union, chapter 3, pp. 57-67.

3 Meanwhile the oil crisis puts the brakes on economic growth and brings years of stagnation and inflation. The EEC tries to get its house organized economically but political nationalisms and cultural differences come in the way: some ideas but no momentum. A look at Ireland and Denmark. Research main characteristics of some soon-to-be Union members: the Czech Republic, Hungary, Slovenia, Cyprus, Malta, Bulgaria and Romania. Read The Emerging European Union, pp.37-44, and Ever Closer Union, pp. 67-78.

8 First quiz
Détente in the Cold War: the United States and the Soviet Union pay visits to each other and make a few rhetorical toasts. Greece, Portugal and Spain jettison their dictatorship and slowly open up to democracy. Brighter political prospects but economic realities are still bleak. The late 1970’s – early 1980’s: the end of Détente. Increasing tension between East and West. The Soviet invasion of Afghanistan is followed by a crisis in Poland. Creation and meaning of Solidarity as a workers’ union in a communist dominated country. Reactions in
Western Europe and in the Soviet Union. The early 1980’s: Greece becomes the 10th member of the EC. Political changes in France and Germany with good effects on the EEC, for ex. the EMS. Problems, on the other hand, with the U.K. (the BBQ) and with the East: the Euromissile crisis. Necessity to strengthen the EEC. Research main characteristics of Turkey, Poland, Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania. Read *Ever Closer Union*, chapter 4, pp. 81-101, and *The Emerging European Union*, pp. 49-57, and *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 2, pp. 21-24..


17 The first paper is due The third enlargements. From Ten to Twelve: following Greece, Spain and Portugal join the EEC, the Mediterranean culture penetrates the group and changes its nature. Jacques Delors becomes President of the European Commission and immediately starts rocking the boat. The Federal Republic assumes some leadership of the Community to the dismay of France but the partnership remains at its best. Gorbachev becomes General Secretary of the Soviet Union. The Single European Act re-launches the EEC. Read *Ever Closer Union*, chapter 5, pp. 103-124. *The Emerging European Union*, pp. 57-69, and as a review, chapter 6, pp. 91-100.


24 1989 the peaceful (or almost) revolution in Eastern Europe suddenly reshapes the continent: the Fall on the Berlin Wall. Its impact on the European Community in particular and on the continent in general.
Some extra reading will be assigned from magazines. The German reunification and some immediate consequences within the EC. Read articles assigned in *The Economist* and *The Emerging European Union*, chapter 4, pp. 57-63.

March 1  The peaceful revolution in Europe follows its course. The Union achieves undeniable success with economic integration but runs into increasing difficulties with regard to political integration. The will to integrate is there, but traditions and cultures are hard to transcend. Read as a review *The Emerging European Union*, chapter 6, pp. 100-114, and several articles assigned in *The Economist*.

3  The German reunification and its consequences in Central and Eastern Europe. While uncertainty prevails in Russia, ethnic and religious conflicts flare up again in the Balkans, and war erupts in the ex-Yugoslavia with no reaction on the part of the EU. New states are born, adding to the already prevailing confusion. Are they viable politically and economically? Is the European Community becoming an economic monster and a political midget?

**Recess**


17  Second quiz
In the early 1990’s the relationship between France and Germany is, once again, the focal point of the new Union. On the issue of EMU, economic stagnation in the EU makes monetary union more of a necessity. Meanwhile there is disappointment in Central and Eastern Europe because young democracies and fledgling capitalism do not deliver the goodies quickly enough. Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 6, pp. 115-134, and Wistrich, chapter 3, *Economic and monetary union*, pp. 45-59.

22  Crisis in the Union due to its inability to put an end to the civil war in Yugoslavia. The Union really shows its absence of common policy and lack of initiative. The new enlargement does not hide the problems: from Twelve to Fifteen, Scandinavian cultures and traditions join the Union.
look at the new members, the need for institutional reforms, and preparation for the Amsterdam Treaty. Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, Chapter 7, pp.139-159.

24 Review of the material covered and a new look at Western Europe. From Maastricht to Amsterdam: with 15 members the new European Union needs flexibility and flexibility is born out of compromise. Once again, old traditions must be overcome. Read *Ever Closer Union*, pp. 159-184.

29 Economic and monetary problems within the Union, EMU, the common currency, the (in)famous criteria. Meanwhile a new Europe takes shape. Another issue that challenges traditions: the Common Agricultural Policy. Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 8, pp. 163-182.

31 The Central and Eastern European countries come knocking at the door of the European Union. Can they join and how is it going to affect the integration of the 15? The treaty of Nice is a good indication of the problems to come and of the difficulties to accommodate the future members. Read *Ever Closer Union*, pp. 184-199 and *The Emerging European Union*, pp. 78-87.

April 5 Preparation for and implementation of the euro. The advantages, disadvantages and the uncertainties. The next enlargement to Central and Eastern European countries: need for reforms. How can the institutions of the Union survive with 20 or 25 members? The Nice Treaty fails to deal with the situation and shows the difficulties of political integration. Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 9, pp.187-208.

7 Third and last quiz of the semester.
The next enlargement to Central and Eastern European countries: need for reforms. Can the Central European and Eastern European new democracies bridge the economic and cultural gaps that separate them from their Western counterparts? Can common political and economic aspirations reconcile cultural differences? Read *The Emerging European Union*, chapter 7, pp.117-132, and *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 10, pp.212-229.


14 EU relations with the US. Read *The Emerging European Union*, chapter 11 pp. 191-198, and *Ever Closer Union*, pp. 531-554. The American invasion
of Iraq divides Europe, brings France and Germany closer together against American policy, and damages the relations.


21 EU relations with Japan (cont.) – The unconvincing July 2000 summit – agreement toward further dialogue and cooperation, a lot of wishes but few concrete results. Japan toes the American line on the Iraqi issue, exacerbates the existing division within the EU, and irritates the French and the Germans. The emergence and future of economic blocks. A look at Japan and China and the likely future trade problems. Read The Major Nation-States in the EU, chapter 13, pp.281-299.

26 The regions. Could the future of Europe be in the hands of the regions? Could it be the end of the nations in Europe? Could regionalisms replace old nationalisms. Integration and preservation of differences : the on-going double challenge. Read The Major Nation-States in the EU, chapter 14, pp. 302-317. The second paper is due today

28 Any future for NATO, for a credible European defense policy, and for a European citizenship? A European culture or a European mosaic of cultures? A common foreign policy or just a common policy? Read The Major Nation-States in the EU, chapter 16, pp.351-374.

FINAL EXAM

Final comments:

Needless to say (but I will say it anyway) that class attendance is mandatory and class participation is very highly encouraged. You must come to class prepared, with good knowledge of the material covered in the previous class, and of the material assigned as
homework. As a token of my good will you will be allowed to miss class three times with no question asked. Unpredicted situations can always happen and some tolerance is necessary. After three absences however you will need a serious note from your doctor (in case of illness) or from whoever able to testify as to the seriousness of the situation. This, of course, excludes friends, roommates, neighbors, but not parents and College officials. Unless you have a solid reason for doing it, DO NOT ask for make-ups.

Unexcused absences will be penalized and the final grade lowered.

There will be three hourly quizzes and two papers. The midterm grade will be determined by averaging the grade on the first quiz, the grade on the paper and the class participation. The final grade will include the average of the quizzes for 40%, the average of the papers for 25%, the final exam for 25%, and the class participation for 10%

Finally, be careful with plagiarism. Quoting from a book, journal, or some kind of website without indicating the source does constitute plagiarism.

I wish you all a good, productive and pleasant semester.