POLI 891.200: Special Topics
The European Union Today: People, Policy, Politics
Spring 2017

CES Director John Stephens, Jean Monnet Chair Milada Vachudova, and Jean Monnet Visiting Scholar in Residence Mariano Torcal

Course Profile:

What does the future of the EU look like? This question is on the minds of many – and now you can discuss this question and many important issues facing Europe in POLI 490, a new “EU Today” course with experts in the field.

As a Jean Monnet Center of Excellence, the UNC Center for European Studies is offering this 3-credit undergraduate/graduate course designed for seniors and MA students who have been studying Europe and the EU. The course is team-taught by faculty affiliated with the Center, including the Center’s Director John Stephens and the Jean Monnet Chair Milada Vachudova as well as by Prof Mariano Torcal from the Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Barcelona, Spain and current EU Visiting Scholar at the Center.

The course will offer students a chance to discuss current issues in a lecture and discussion-focused environment.

Course Requirements:

Attendance at the weekly meetings is required. If you know you will have to miss a session, please email Katie Shanahan Lindner at klindner@email.unc.edu as soon as possible. Please note that this kind of prior notification does not necessarily mean that your absence will be excused. One unexcused absence is allowable; after that participation points will be deducted from your final grade.

Grades and Tardiness:

Failure to do the work involved or to comply with the attendance norms could result in an F grade for the course. Please take these requirements seriously. The final grade will be calculated as follows:

**Participation:** 25%: Students are expected to complete the assigned readings before class each week and to contribute to discussion during seminar. Good participation does not presume you understand everything in the reading – good questions make for good participation. The estimated time of dedication to prepare each session should be 2-3 hours.

**Discussion leaders:** 25%: Each student will come to two class sessions prepared to lead discussion based on the readings. Please prepare 8-10 questions in handout form. We will have everyone sign up during orientation.

**Research Paper:** 50% (Proposal 5%; Annotated bibliography 10%; Final paper 35%): Each student must write an original paper on some aspect of covered by the course. Students should consult with Professor Torcal during the course of the term about potential topics.
The paper does not have to include any data analysis. Instead, papers could include an empirical or theoretical discussion of the topics covered. It is also possible to propose topics indirectly related to these topics, but from a different perspective that might be of interest for the students.

Each student should turn in a paper proposal that states the central question to be examined, and why the question is important and interesting, briefly explains how the proposed research will address the question. The proposal should be submitted by March 6th. This proposal will count for the 5% of the total grade. After this, students have to submit a documented with all the annotated bibliography they intend to use and read. This document will count for the 10% of the total grade. The estimated time of dedication to write the research paper is 25 hours.

Course Sessions:

1. **Monday, January 23, 2017 – Orientation** John Stephens and Katie Shanahan Lindner (CES Executive Director) will provide an Introduction of the course, review of the syllabus and an overview of course requirements.

2. **Monday, January 30, 2017 – “Social Investment Agenda”** John D. Stephens, Lenski Professor of Political Science and Sociology; Director, Center for European Studies, Jean Monnet Center of Excellence, TransAtlantic Masters Program; jdsteph@unc.edu

3. **Monday, February 6, 2017 – “Immigrants, Refugees and Muslims in Europe: Some Complicated and Challenging Issues”** Rahsaan Maxwell, Associate Professor, Department of Political Science, rahsaan@email.unc.edu
   - Immigrant integration has been one of the most intense political issues in Western Europe in recent decades. While many West European countries have long traditions of integrating immigrants from fellow European countries, the dramatic post-WWII rise in migrants from outside of Europe has literally changed the complexion of cities and towns across the continent. Muslim immigrants have been especially challenging to integrate and there have been widespread debates and controversies over whether Islam is compatible with contemporary European society. In addition, the recent refugee crisis has added further flames to an already-tense situation. Today we will discuss some of these complicated and challenging issues.
   - **NOTE SPECIAL TIME:** 4-7pm in GEC 3033

The next five sessions will be taught by Mariano Torcal, Full Professor of Political Science at the Universitat Pompeu Fabra, Spanish National Coordinator of the European Social Survey, Director of the Research and Expertise Centre for Survey Methodology, UNC Jean Monnet EU Visiting Scholar; mariano.torcal@upf.edu; office GEC room 3216.

These sessions will cover five different topics on Public Opinion and Political Behavior in Europe which are very relevant nowadays. These topics are: Support for the European Integration and EU institutions, the decline of political trust (national representative institutions), opinions and attitudes toward immigration, European Elections, and support to populist and right-wing extremist parties. This is a course basically on political behavior and political attitudes in Europe.

The sessions strive to give the students a thorough and careful introduction to the essential ideas of study and analysis of political attitudes and political behavior in Europe. Knowledge on basic aspects of political attitudes, political behavior and survey and methodological issues are very welcome, but it is not a prerequisite.

In the assigned readings there are some statistical analyses. Our class discussion will be based ONLY on the summaries of results provided in the readings. Therefore, statistical knowledge is not required. However, for those students interested in gaining a deeper understanding of the data results and greater methodological discussion I recommend a basic introduction to econometrics: Gujrati’s *Basic Econometrics* (McGraw-Hill, 1988) or Dougherty’s *Introduction to Econometrics* (Oxford University Press, 2002). For basic knowledge on comparative research designs, I recommend King, Keohane, and Verba’s. *Designing Social Inquiry* (Princeton University Press, 1994).

The objective of these sessions is for students to be introduced in the study of the basic attitudes and behavior towards these five topics in Europe. Students are supposed to achieve an understanding of the basic concepts and dimensions of political attitudes, electoral behavior and some knowledge on how to deal with this expanding literature. The final goal is to have an idea what Europeans think and perceive about all these fundamental issues today.

4. **Monday, February 13, 2017 “The Concept of Political Support and Attitudes toward the EU”** This is an introductory session about the study of political attitudes. Departing from the classics on political culture, I will outline also the current discussion on Support to the EU and its basic institutions. For students not familiar with the Institutions and functioning of the European Union, I strongly recommend the following brief introduction: Simon Hix. 2014. “The EU as a new Political System”. In Daniele Caramani, ed., *Comparative Politics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, (3ed.).


5. **Monday, February 20, 2017 “Second Order Election (SOE) Paradigm for EU Elections”** Voting behavior is admittedly one of the most developed fields in political science – in approaches, concepts, indicators, findings and contributions. This session deliberately seeks to introduce a degree of simplification by discussing the foundations laid down by three classical works in the field. However, these models were fundamentally changed to explain EU elections, where the second-order election is the dominant paradigm. In this session, we will have a very profound descriptive picture of the European Elections in the last 30 years, trying to identify some patterns, trends and tendencies, and also observing the impact that it might have had on the arrival of newcomers to countries in the EU.


6. **Monday, February 27, 2017 “The representation crisis in Europe: Political trust in European democracies”** In this session we will observed the evolution of political trust in the main institutions on representation (national parliaments, politicians, political parties and judicial institutions) in Europe. After revising the main theories explaining cross-national differences in political trust, we will try to deal with the following questions. Is a clear decline trend in political trust in Europe? What explains cross-national differences in political trust in Europe? What is the effect of the crisis in political trust in Europe? Is the economic performance the only explanatory factor in the decline of political trust?

• **Readings**: Meer, Tom van de (2017). “Democratic input, macro-economic output, and political trust” In Sonja Zmerli and Tom van der Meer, eds. *Handbook on Political
7. Monday, March 6, 2017 “Public Opinion on Immigration and its electoral consequences” In this session will observe the evolution in public opinion on immigration in Europe, one of the most important issues nowadays. We will discuss different theories to explain individual level differences and cross-national differences. We will also observe some of the electoral consequences of this issue.


9. Monday, March 20, 2017 “The emergence and support to right-wing and niche parties” This session will be fully dedicated to explain the emergence of new parties in the European party systems, paying special attention to right-wing extremists parties and new niche parties.


10. Monday, March 27, 2017 “Europe under repression. How Europeans reacted to totalitarian control” Paul Corner, Professor of European History at University of Siena, Italy; Site Director, TransAtlantic Masters in Siena, paul.corner@unisi.it

The seminar asks a series of questions. How did ordinary people live under the totalitarian/authoritarian regimes of the last century? Why did people become Nazis or Fascists? Did people become communist out of conviction or because of compulsion? What was the nature of social control under these regimes and how far can
they be equated with each other? And a final, very important question: to what extent does fascism “belong” only to the past?


11. **Monday, April 3, 2017 “EUroscepticism and EU Cultural Policy”** Sabine Von Dirke, Associate Professor, German Department, University of Pittsburgh, vondirke@pitt.edu

Prof Von Dirke will discuss the correlation between the collapse of the "permissive consensus" in the early 1990s/rising EUroscepticism and the EU’s attempt to mobilize “C/culture” as a means to address this problem. In other words, her lecture will discuss some of the research on the "EUropean identity crisis" and the increase in cultural programming/funding by the EU. Her lecture will address the oldest program, "Cultural Capitals of Europe" and the most recent cultural programs – 2007-2013 and 2014-2020/Creative Europe program.


12. **Monday, April 10, 2017 “Can the Centre Hold? European Integration in the Face of Rising Populism and Democratic Backsliding in the Member States”** Milada Vachudova, Associate Professor of Political Science, Chair, Curriculum in Global Studies, Jean Monnet Chair for EU Studies; vachudov@email.unc.edu

The last two years have seen a dramatic transformation in the political landscape of Europe due to the rising power of populist and xenophobic political parties and leaders in many EU member states. We will discuss the contours of Europe’s refugee crisis, and the variation in how EU member states have responded to the call to help refugees, to develop EU burden-sharing, and to end the refugee flows. We will explore what changes in European and British politics and political attitudes led to the astounding Brexit vote in the United Kingdom last June — and what are the consequences. We will also examine the problem of democratic backsliding among EU member states, and ask whether other countries are following in the footsteps of Viktor Orban’s Hungary in centralizing power and dismantling liberal democracy in the heart of Europe.

13. Monday, April 17, 2017 “The on-going impact of the financial crisis on the EU, including implications of Brexit” Despina Alexiadou, Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, University of Pittsburgh, dalexiad@pitt.edu


14. Monday, April 24, 2017 “From the Paris Attacks to Berlin: Terrorism, Migration and Security in Europe” Tobias Hof, DAAD Visiting Professor of History; tobi@email.unc.edu

French President François Hollande condemned the terrorist attacks in Paris on 13 November 2015 as an “act of war”. The vocabulary used by him and others is meant to establish a sense of unity, prepare citizens for suffering and herald the long effort ahead. Some scholars fear that the French and European reaction foretells a new global war on terrorism that may be just as unsuccessful as the first one. They demand that Europe, which has been struck by other terrorist attacks since Paris, must learn from the mistakes of the US in the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks. At the same time, however, Europe faces another challenge which can no longer be understood as separate from the crisis of terrorism after the Paris attacks and the attacks in Germany: the refugee crisis. In fact, for nationalists and far right populists these two crises were never really separate to begin with. In the lecture we will discuss their impact on European everyday life, security measures, immigration policy as well as the involvement of European countries in the “war on Terror” in the midst of serious challenges to the European Union. The lecture will focus on the central question of how to find a balanced path between the Scylla of unbridled liberalism and the Charybdis of authoritarianism in fighting terrorism in modern times without forfeiting Europe’s dignity by rejecting refugees in need (Emmanuel Macron).


**List of further recommended readings from Professor Torcal:**

The Concept of Political Support and Attitudes toward the EU

**Second Order Election (SOE) Paradigm for EU Elections**

The representation crisis in Europe: Political trust in European democracies.

- Meer, Tom van de, and Armen Hakhverdian (2016) “Process, performance, and political trust: A cross-national study in 48 European countries on political trust as an

Public Opinion on Immigration and its electoral consequences.


The emergence and support to right-wing and niche parties.