COURSE DESCRIPTION

The capitalist organization of production and the cultural heritage of the US resemble that of Western Europe. Both are advanced democratic capitalist societies. Both enjoy high per capita GDPs, high levels of labor productivity, high ratios of capital to labor, similar occupational structures with growing service sectors, highly skilled labor forces, and democratic and stable political systems. Yet, when it comes to politics Europe differs markedly from the U.S. Political cleavages, institutional structures, party systems, ideologies, and policies are all very different in Europe than they are in the US. Analyses of these differences are of interest not only because they help us understand both the US and Western Europe by viewing them in relation to one another, but they help us to raise and answer broader theoretical issues with regards to the nature and future of advanced democratic capitalist societies. For example, is American politics in some sense underdeveloped in comparison to Europe? That is, does Western Europe represent the future for the U.S.? Or is the opposite the case? Does American politics represent the vanguard that Western Europe will come to emulate? Or to put it another way: Whose side is history on? And what difference does that make?

Of course, this way of posing the question presumes that there is a European model of politics—something that Europeans would find objectionable. They would point to the same profound political differences that exist among the countries of Europe as those that distinguish the US from them. European countries differ among themselves when it comes to institutions, policies, ideologies, and political cleavages. This course will explore the differences distinguishing European countries from each other, as well as distinguishing them from the U.S.

Studying Europe is valuable not only for what it can tell us about where we may be going but who we are. That is, we can learn much about ourselves, what is distinctive about the US, by looking at Europe. Europe is a mirror we can hold up to see what looks back at us. Finally, studying
Europe gives us a glimpse as to best and worst practices. Both societies face similar problems and studying Europe gives us a chance to evaluate who does better and worse at solving them.

REQUIRED BOOKS:

Andrew Markovitz, *Uncouth Nation*
Steven Hill, *Europe’s Promise*
Richard Young, *Europe’s Decline and Fall*

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

1. Analytical Questions (as required, after each reading) 20%
2. Midterm exam 20%. (If no midterm is given, then the first three requirements each count for 25 percent of the grade and class participation the remaining 25 percent.)
3. Research Proposal 20%
4. Research Paper 20%
5. Class Participation 20%

Students must achieve at least 60 points on the first four requirements to pass the course (or 75 if no midterm is given). Students who receive less than 60 points (or 75 if no midterm is given) are subject to receive a 0.0 for the course.

COURSE OUTLINE:

1. **Europe and the U.S.: Soft and Hard Power**


   Hill, *Europe’s Promise*, pp. 197-239.

2. **Europe and the U.S.: Moral Claims and Political Realism**

Jurgen Habermas and Jacques Derrida, “February 15, Or, What Binds Europeans Together” in Daniel Levy, et al., Old Europe, New Europe, Core Europe

Hill, Europe’s Promise, pp. 1-33.

3. European Anti-Americanism:

Markovits, Uncouth Nation, all


Hill, Europe’s Promise, pp. 33-72; 93-125

Francis Castles, “Patterns of Public expenditure”

Neil Gilbert, “Comparative Analysis of Stateness and State Action: What Can we Learn From Public Expenditure”

5. Social Democracy

Shaw, “The Rise of Keynesian Social Democracy”

Sassoon, “The New Revisionism”

6. Christian Democracy

Von Keesbergen,”The Distinctiveness of Christian Democracy”

7. New Europeans


Peter Skerry, “Political Islam in the US and Europe”

8. The New Right

Richard Betz, “Political Conflict in Age of Social Fragmentation”

9. The Welfare State

Hill, Europe’s Promise, p. 72-93; 125-157
10 The EU From Across the Ocean: A UPO: Unidentified Political Object

Youngs, *Europe’s Decline and Fall*, all

11. Varieties of Capitalism: Convergence or Divergence

Vivian Schmidt, “Still Three Models of Capitalism?” in *The Futures of European Capitalism*.

12. Responding to Hill: Sustainable development


13. Responding to Hill: Democracy


15. Class Presentations on Research papers