

POSC 235 CONTEMPORARY EUROPEAN POLITICS

**DR LALANDE
SPRING 2006**

Class: Monday and Wednesday 12:50 - 2:00

Office: Comenius 103

Office hours: M-W-F 9:00 – 10:10 or by appointment

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Textbooks:

J. Richard Piper: **The Major Nation-States in the European Union**

Desmond Dinan: **Ever Closer Union**

David M. Wood, Birol A. Yesilada: **The Emerging European Union**

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:

Monday January 16

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.

Wednesday January 18

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. From the Coal and Steel Community to the failure of the European Defense Community, and the success of the Treaty of Rome. Research main features of **Luxemburg, Belgium, The Netherlands, and The United Kingdom**. Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 1 pp.1-10.

Monday January 23

The **Federal Republic of Germany** and NATO. The creation of the Warsaw Pact. Crackdown in Budapest. In Western Europe the UK refuses to cooperate. Read *Ever Closer Union*, chapter 1, pp. 9-33. **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. Read *Ever Closer Union*, chapter 1, pp. 9-33.

Wednesday January 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 Decade of De Gaulle). *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 2, pp. 19-21.

Monday January 30

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. 27-38.

Wednesday 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.

Monday February 6

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. 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. 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.38-46, and *Ever Closer Union*, pp. 67-78.

Wednesday February 8

First quiz

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. 51-60, and *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 2, pp. 21-24..

Monday February 13

The Institutions of the EEC: The European Parliament and its first democratic elections. A Parliament like no other one in the world: three sites and eleven official languages! Read *Ever Closer Union*, chapter 10, pp. 267-280, 288-291, 295-298. The Commission, its role, powers and prerogatives. From Walter Hallstein to Jacques Delors. Read *Ever Closer Union*, chapter 8, pp. 205-217 and 223-227. *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 3, pp. 42-46, and 49-52.

Wednesday February 15

The European Council and the Council of Ministers. Some other institutions: EMU, EMS. Read *Ever Closer Union*, chapter 9, pp. 237-265. A few words on the Court of Justice. Research main characteristics of **Bosnia, Serbia, Macedonia, Albania**, and **Croatia**. Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU* pp.46-49..

Monday February 20

The first paper is due

The third enlargement of the EU. The Ten become the 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.

Wednesday February 22

From the Single Act to the Treaty of Maastricht. Economic growth and new prosperity. The road to Maastricht and preparation of the Maastricht Treaty. 1988-1989 the “velvet” Revolution in Eastern Europe. From a small incident in Hungary to the fall of the Berlin Wall: the previously unthinkable chain reaction. Read *Ever Closer Union*, chapter 6, pp. 127-156.

Monday February 27

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.

Wednesday 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. 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? Read as a review *The Emerging European Union*, chapter 6, pp. 100-114, and several articles assigned in *The Economist*.

Spring recess

Monday March 13

The Maastricht Treaty and its painful ratification show the difficulty of political and social integration. Cultural values come in the way of political intentions. The early 1990's. The post-ratification period and some of the lessons learned. The new situation within the EU. Read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 5 on France, pp.89-112.

Wednesday March 15

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 on France, pp. 115-134. Read *The Emerging European Union*, chapter 5, pp. 67-73 and 77-78.

Monday March 20

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. A 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 on Germany, pp.139-159.

Wednesday March 22

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. 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 *Ever Closer Union*, pp. 159-184 and *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 8 on Germany, pp. 163-182.

Monday March 27

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.

Wednesday March 29

Preparation for and implementation of the euro. The advantages, disadvantages and the uncertainties of the single currency. 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 on Italy, pp.187-208.

Monday April 3

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 on Italy, pp.212-229

Wednesday April 5

The Copenhagen summit and the next enlargement. Questions answered and unanswered. Twenty five countries in the European Union in 2004. Turkey is still waiting in the wings. EU relations with the rest of the world, read *Ever Closer Union*, chapter 17, pp.483-503. Also, read *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, Chapter 11 on the United Kingdom and Northern Ireland, pp.233-252.

Monday April 10

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.

Wednesday April 12

EU relations with Japan – mostly a trade relation. Its importance on world trade and its recent history. Disagreements, tensions and need for cooperation. The trouble caused by protectionist trade policies and the modern Battle of Poitiers. The Agreement of July 1992, its limited success and the remaining problems. The continuous Japanese balance-of-payments surplus with the EU and the annoying Japanese legal barriers that limit EU exports to Japan. Several reasons why EU markets need to remain accessible to Japanese products. Read *The Emerging European Union*, chapter 11, pp. 198-201. *Ever Closer Union*, pp. 499-502, and *The Major Nation-States in the EU*, chapter 12 on the UK and Northern Ireland, pp.255-276.

Easter recess

Wednesday April 19

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 on Spain, pp.281-299.

Monday April 24

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 on Spain, pp. 302-317. **The second paper is due today**

Wednesday April 26

Is there any future for NATO, for a credible European defense policy, and for a European citizenship? Is there a European culture or just a mosaic of European cultures? Can there be 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:

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 **twice** (the equivalent of one week of work) with no question asked. Unpredicted situations can always happen and some tolerance is necessary. After two absences however you will need a serious note from your doctor (in case of illness) or from a person able to testify as to the seriousness of the situation. This, of course, excludes friends, roommates and 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.