Democracy and Dictatorship in Europe
Political Science 138
Tufts University
Fall Semester 2010

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Office Hours: Mondays 4:15-5:30 and Wednesdays 9:15-10:00

What this class is about

What are the origins of the modern European state? Why did some European states develop democratic institutions by the beginning of the twentieth century, while others did not? What explains the rise of social democracy and fascism? How did fascist and communist regimes operate? Why did democracy succeed in Western Europe after the end of the Second World War? What are the origins of the major political parties in Europe? These are some of the big questions we will explore in this course. While we obviously cannot cover all these topics in depth, students will gain an appreciation both for the key developments in European politics over the last several centuries as well as contemporary issues. We will also use Europe as a laboratory to explore theories of political institutions, regime type, nationalism and ethnic identity, and statebuilding. The course also considers the strengths and weaknesses of the social science methodology of comparative historical analysis.

What you will need

The following books are available for purchase at the bookstore (or, of course, through the usual internet sources—the numbers are ISBNs to help you order the right editions).

This course is reading intensive, and I realize that I am forcing you to buy many books for it. Aside from looking for used copies, you may want to share copies among yourselves to cut down on costs. All of the books will also be placed on reserve at Tisch.


Christopher Browning, *Ordinary Men* (Harper, 1992) 978-014100042


How this class will work

I intend to run this class as both a lecture course and seminar. On Mondays (and a couple of Wednesdays), I will use a lecture-discussion format to introduce the key topic of the week. On Wednesdays (and a couple of Mondays), we will discuss a reading that explores that topic. So you need to be prepared to discuss the reading on Wednesday. But it will help if you have at least read a portion of the assigned reading by Monday as it will make lectures easier to follow.

What you will need to do

Read. Read a lot. The readings average about 150 pages a week with significant variation between weeks. Everyone will need to have done the reading—and thought about it--before class. A major portion of your grade (see below) is participation, and you cannot participate if you don’t read. It goes without saying that unexcused absences will detract significantly from your participation grade. Illness and bereavement constitute valid excuses for missing class.

This course also requires a fair amount of writing. To help you think about the process of writing, I have assigned William Zinsser’s classic book On Writing Well. Every student will need to pass a quiz on this book (graded pass/fail) in order to pass the course.

Participation: 15%
Two Short Papers (5 pages): 15% each
Final Paper: 35%
Midterm: 20%

Some Important, Miscellaneous Points

Email is fine for setting up a time to meet outside of office hours, letting me know about an emergency, etc… But it is not a good medium for discussing ideas, asking questions, or turning in a paper. Please do make use of office hours.

I recognize that not all of us look forward to public speaking, and that some of you may dread speaking in front of your classmates. If you fall into this category, I hope that you can use this course as a means of overcoming your fear of public speaking in a friendly, supportive classroom environment. It is an important skill for many professions, and it can be learned. If you are very shy, please let me know and we can discuss strategies for participation.
Plagiarism: Don’t Even think about it. It is easy to spot, and the penalties are severe!

Class Schedule

September 8: Feudalism

(We will also discuss the course’s themes, mechanics, and expectations)

September 13: Statebuilding in Europe

September 15: Discussion of Military Revolution and Political Change

September 20: Political Development in the UK, France and Germany

September 22: Discussion of readings below (to be emailed as PDFs)


Ralf Dahrendorf, Society and Democracy in Germany (Doubleday: 1967), 14-17, 33-64

Sheri Berman, “Modernization in Historical Perspective: The Case of Imperial Germany,” World Politics 53, 3 (April 2001): 431-62

September 27: Capitalism and its Effects

September 29: Discussion of The Great Transformation
October 4: Democratization in Europe

October 6: Discussion of Articles in Special Issues of *Comparative Political Studies*

October 11: Liberalism, Fascism, and Social Democracy

October 13: Discussion of *The Primacy of Politics*

October 18: **In-class Midterm**

October 20: The Rise of Fascism

October 25: Fascism in Italy

October 27: Discussion of Elazar (mailed as PDF)

November 1: Fascism in Germany

November 3: Discussion of *Germans into Nazis*

November 8: Fascism outside Germany and Italy

November 15: Discussion of readings TBA (to be emailed as PDFs)

November 17: The Holocaust

November 22: Discussion of *Ordinary Men*

November 29: Rebirth of European Democracy

December 1: Communism

December 6: Discussion of readings TBA (to be emailed as PDFs)

December 8: Democracy in Europe today