

Economics of the European Union

ECON 0431A M/W 8:40am-9:55am Room: AXN 104

Professor Sargent Warner 111, kristinas@middlebury.edu

Office Hours: To be decided via Doodlepoll (approx. 3 hours/week), and by appointment. The first two weeks, office hours will be **Mondays and Wednesdays from 3:00 PM to 5:00 PM**

Textbook:

The Economist (a 12 week subscription is \$12 or, the Davis Library has a subscription)

Recommended:

You will need to read at least one reputable news source daily, not per class. In addition to The Economist, the Wall Street Journal, New York Times, and Financial Times are all good sources. Keeping up with economics, business and political news for the EU is key for understanding challenges to the Union today. It will also help you understand the course material better, make you a much better guest at dinner parties, and give you a way to show your annoying cousin how much smarter you are at Thanksgiving Break. If you need even more incentive, it is required as part of your grade.

Website: Canvas

Course Description:

This class will explore the economics of the European Union, EU (obviously). The objective will be to learn how a diverse group of countries has joined to create a world economic power larger than the United States (depending on the timeframe/measure), yet struggles to agree on basic policy in many areas. What is not so obvious is the inner workings of this supranational entity, and what its working/not working means for the economies of the countries involved and the world economy. The course will proceed topically through major points of cooperation and contention, moving more or less chronologically and ending with analysis of what lies ahead. By the end of the semester, you should have a detailed understanding of what the EU is and how it works, as well as the ability to analyze past, current, and potential challenges to member states.

Class:

Attendance and participation are expected. You may use a tablet or laptop to take notes in class, but I highly recommend against using a laptop with keyboard. I will also be requiring masks to be worn in class out of respect for our shared community and varying comfort and safety needs.

The class will generally consist of two parts. On Tuesdays, the first will be what I call the “newsroom”. See details below. On Thursdays, I will give a mini lecture/seminar talk on a related topic, current topic, or provide background to the papers we will discuss as a group that you will present. The second part of class will consist of presentations and discussion of assigned readings. As this is a seminar class, students will be expected to contribute a majority amount of class time. My role is largely as a guide and facilitator. Recall my speech from the first day which I will almost surely repeat in parts throughout the semester.

Grade Policy:

Engagement 20% Short writing assignments 15%
Presentations 40% Research Paper 25%

Honor Code

All students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the appropriate authority. I view the honor code comprehensively, and believe it extends to respectful interactions in and out of the classroom. Students are encouraged to report violations of the honor code to myself, or another trusted authority.

Class Participation:

About a third of the engagement grade will come from the “newsroom” portion of the class. In this portion, we will discuss recent developments in the European Union. Students will be responsible for briefing the class on anything happening in their assigned country/ country group that is relevant to the economics of the EU. Countries will be assigned in the first week of class, based on preferences. The purpose of this exercise is to understand counterintuitive policy-making, and to fully demonstrate the complications that result from a union which is more than a trade agreement, but less than a unified country. Part of your newsroom brief should be your country’s stance on the topic of the paper we’re reading for that day. You will be limited to one minute or less. The other two thirds of the engagement grade will come from discussion of assigned readings and pre-class writing prompts. Readings can be found on Canvas.

Writing Prompts:

There will be a short writing assignment covering readings, presentations, background, and news from recent classes **due on Canvas by 5 pm the night before EVERY class meeting**. These are meant to draw attention to important concepts, and incentivize reading and participation in class. The questions serve to get you thinking critically about the material, and tying different parts of the course together. You should answer questions with the readings for the next day in mind. You may use bullet points and incomplete sentences, but you should really think about your responses. These are graded as complete or incomplete (where cursory or lazy submissions count as incomplete). I will drop 4, so if you are sick or cannot complete them in time there is some flexibility. Writing prompts count as part of Engagement.

Short Writing Assignments:

Over the semester there will be two short writing assignments due. Neither assignment will be dropped from your grade. Each assignment will be equally weighted. You will submit one each of an op-ed or a policy memo covering a topic of your choice. You must do one of each (op-ed and policy memo), but you can choose when to do each. Prompt/assignment descriptions are posted on the class website (Canvas) along with grading rubrics/details. You can use the readings as inspiration, or pick something else you’re interested in. You may do them for the topics on which you present, or on the same topic as your research project. Due dates can be found below.

Papers and Presentations:

Over the course of the semester you will be writing a research paper on the topic of your choosing. There will be several deadlines for the proposal of your topic, question, and outline throughout the semester to make sure you are on track. The last few days of class will be spent presenting your papers to the class as a way to get feedback before you turn in the final draft during finals week. Details will follow throughout the term at appropriate times.

You will also be making two topical presentations in pairs or small groups. You should sign up for your paper preferences via Doodle Poll (link on Canvas) by Monday, September 19. I will distribute the schedule in class the next day. The first paper presentations start the third Monday of the semester (September. 26). Students must meet with me by the middle of the week prior to presenting to discuss their presentation. More detailed instructions and a rubric are on Canvas.

Finally, the second week of class will be spent with you giving short (5-8 minutes) presentations of your country/country group history in the EU- when joined, role played, any policy issues frequently addressed etc. These will be quite informal, but will serve as a way for you to learn the context of major debates and policy stances countries have and how they differ. Sign up for your country preferences via Doodle Poll (link on Canvas) by Wednesday, September 14.

Office Hours:

These are for your benefit, please take advantage of them! I will choose these with the results of the Doodlepoll in mind. If my office hours do not work for you due to another class or work, please email me and we can arrange a time to meet. You may use office hours to meet with me to discuss your presentations, research, any questions you might have about the course or readings, to help me get to know you, or any number of other things. Come say hello!

Email:

Please use email wisely. I will do my best to respond to emails in a timely fashion, usually less than 24 hours- I will not respond out of regular business hours (M-F 8-5). If your question has to do with clarification, it may be difficult to explain fully over email, so I will suggest coming to office hours. If I feel the entire class could benefit from the clarification, I will do so in class.

An Addendum: You should write your emails as if you are in a professional environment (you are!). This means an appropriate salutation, full sentences, and an appropriate sign-off. Please humor me on this; I am a curmudgeon.

Accommodations

Students with documented disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in this class should contact me as early in the semester as possible to ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. Assistance is available through the Disability Resource Center (DRC). Please contact ADA Coordinators Jodi Litchfield and Peter Ploegman of the DRC at ada@middlebury.edu for more information. All discussions will remain confidential.

Extra Help:

Do not hesitate to come to my office during office hours or by appointment to discuss any aspect of the course- or really any other help or advice you might need. The Center for Teaching, Learning, and Research has tons of free resources.

You can find more at: <http://middlebury.edu/academics/resources/ctrl/students> If you find you'd like individualized help, I'm happy to meet with you one on one, or work with you to find what you might need.

Tentative Course Outline: Readings can be found on the course Canvas site.

Week #	Topic(s)	Notes
Week 1	Intros, EU History	
Week 2	History Presentations	
Week 3	Trade, CAP	
Week 4	EMU 1, 2	
Week 5	Unemployment, Growth	
Week 6	Brexit, Ukraine	
Week 7	Migration 1, 2	
Week 8	Environment, Democratic Deficit	
Week 9	Economic Populism, Euro Crisis 1	
Week 10	Euro Crisis 2, Role of the EU in the World, Looking Forward	
	Thanksgiving Break	
Week 11	Presentations	
Week 12	Presentations, Wrap-Up	
	Finals Period Final Paper Due	

Important Dates:

Topic Proposal	October 7	Week 4
Short Writing Assignment 1	October 13	Week 5
Research Question	October 21	Week 6
Annotated Bibliography, Data, & Methodology	October 28	Week 7
Short Writing Assignment 2	November 4	Week 8
Contribution & Preliminary Results	November 11	Week 9
Extended Outline	November 18	Week 10
Slides/Presentation Content	Midnight the night before presenting	
Final Paper	during Finals week-	Date TBA

A Note About Civility and the Classroom

I view my job in this course in two ways. The first is very literal, and it is my responsibility to help you learn about the economics of the European Union, and to acquire skills I think will help you to be successful in a wide range of situations in your future. I have chosen the course materials and assignments primarily with this aim in mind. The second job I have is to challenge you to think outside of our Middlebury bubble, and to become comfortable in a variety of situations. For some of you this will start in the first week when you're introducing yourself, and sharing EU news with the class. For others it will begin with your first presentation when you are up in the front of the room teaching us about a reading. For still others it won't happen until you have to share your own research ideas. Regardless of when it happens, know that our classroom is a space where we will all be participating and sharing new ideas. You should recognize that some members of our class space will be more comfortable with some materials than other. This does not make their perspective better or more important. If I do my job well, we will all struggle a bit at some point. Struggle is good. Struggle is real, in-depth learning, and that's why we're here.

I rely on you to be respectful to each other, and focus critique on the material, not the person. We all come to this place with very different histories and experiences, and every one of them is equally valid. I expect you all to participate in class, and contribute to discussions. If you have any personal circumstance that might prevent you from doing so in the ways outlined in this syllabus and on the course website, please come talk to me (or email me) so we can work together to make sure you are able to contribute in a way that benefits everyone.