

**Georgia Institute of Technology/GTL  
Sam Nunn School of International Affairs/Ivan Allen College**

**INTA 2221:**

**Politics of the European Union: Metz as a Gateway to Understanding France and Europe Today**

**\*This course fulfills the Core Area E Social Science Requirement and the International Relations Requirement for the International Plan.**

**\* This is an experiential and active learning format course that entails site visits and field trips over the course of two weekends (typically the first and second weeks of the semester) and one additional day trip (often the last week of classes) during the course of the semester. Sites visited are described below.**

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**Course Description:** The aim of this course is to provide an in-depth introduction and overview of the history and politics of the European Union from its inception to the new era of development under the 2009 Treaty of Lisbon. Studying European integration from the Georgia Tech campus in Metz, France provides a unique vantage point as the Lorraine region lies at the very heart of the historic rivalry between France and Germany that produced three major conflicts (the Franco-Prussian war and the two World Wars) but then would come to symbolize reconciliation and unity through one of the most ambitious and successful peace projects the world has ever known. The EU has evolved from six founding members in the 1950s to currently 28 countries representing 508 million citizens and consumers. French politics and society as well as contemporary socio-cultural issues and political and economic phenomena across Europe cannot be understood without appreciating what the EU is, how it functions and how France and the other 27 member states shape and are shaped by this complex political and economic entity.

**Course Organization:** The course is organized into three main parts. Part one traces the evolution of European integration with a special focus on the fundamental debates about the nature and scope of European unification and its character as both a political and economic project. Special attention is given to the influence of French leaders on the founding of the European project as well as the importance of the French-German relationship and U.S. support for the rebuilding of Europe. Part two examines the EU's institutions, decision-making processes and the scope and content of EU law and policy

through the evolution of its treaties over the past six decades of its history. After gaining deeper knowledge of the historical background of the EU and the nuts and bolts of what the EU is and how it works, Part three explores the extent to which the growing supranational and transnational nature of the EU challenges traditional concepts of domestic politics (citizenship, sovereignty, democracy) as well as foreign policy and international relations. This part of the course will also draw on the concepts of globalization and Europeanization inviting students to think comparatively and critically as they consider French and European politics and society in global perspective and in contrast with their own cultural and national backgrounds. Additionally, the course examines contemporary debates and policy challenges within the European Union such as the rise of euroscepticism and “Brexit” as well as the on-going refugee and migration crisis. Finally, the course compares the EU with the United States as a model of democracy and political economy as well as a global actor and a diplomatic force in world politics. Overall, the course offers a dynamic learning experience that provides both traditional lectures with discussion oriented classes complemented by field trips, film screenings, guest speakers and visits to museums, and political and historical sites.

To enhance the quality of classroom discussions it will be helpful to follow current events and the news related to developments in French and European politics. The best sources for staying informed about current issues in the EU for English speakers are the BBC and Euronews websites, France 24 (English) *The Financial Times* and *The Economist*. For French speakers, *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* are leading national newspapers and France Info, France Culture and France 24 are other useful sources.

### **Key Learning Objectives:**

- Build knowledge of the role and contemporary issues of the European Union in France, Europe and the world
- Develop basic analytical skills to assess the impact of European integration on domestic and international politics
- Provide an understanding of the functioning of European institutions and the policy making influence of the EU on regional and global governance
- Demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that influence Europe and the global system
- Increase cultural and ethical awareness. Students will become more aware of the diversity of cultural and ethical systems in the world and will be able to identify, critically analyze, and apply distinguishing traits/perspectives/ formulations/ institutions in comparative or international empirical cases or issue areas.

### **Useful websites:**

For a wealth of information on the institutions, Member States and current policies of the European Union, consult the EU’s official website, Europa. The URL is:

<http://europa.eu.int>

Information from the European Union’s Delegation to the United States can be found at:

[www.eurunion.org](http://www.eurunion.org)

The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the equivalent of the U.S. State Department and commonly referred to as the “Quai d’Orsay,” has an excellent website (with an English version) with news and information about French diplomacy and foreign policies.

<http://www.diplomatie.gouv.fr/en/>

**Textbook:)**

John McCormick (2017) *Understanding the European Union*  
(Copies available in the GTL Library)

Additional Readings posted to T-Square

**Course Requirements and Grade Distribution:**

Attendance and participation are essential to doing well in the course. Participation comprises 10% of the total grade for the course and absences must be due to illness or other personal emergencies as approved by the instructors. Readings should be completed prior to class meetings and you should be prepared for active and engaged discussion. All exams are short essay /reflection paper in format. Additionally, for 20 % of the total grade, each student will prepare a PowerPoint presentation on a Member State (or multiple countries depending on class size) of his or her choice that covers the key debates and issues surrounding that country’s accession and integration process, key policy concerns/contributions, and overall attitudes and support for the EU. More guidelines for this assignment are provided at the end of the syllabus.

First Essay	20%
Second Essay	20%
Final Essay	30%
Member State Presentations	20%
Participation	10%

### **Academic Honesty:**

All work must be entirely your own and must be produced in accordance with the Georgia Tech Honor code. Please read the Academic Honor Code carefully (<http://www.honor.gatech.edu/honorcode.html>) and familiarize yourself with your rights and responsibilities under Institute regulations. Any suspected cases of cheating on the exams or any other form of academic dishonesty will be turned over immediately to the Office of Student Integrity for investigation. If you have any further queries on this topic, please visit the website of the Dean of Students:

[www.deanofstudents.gatech.edu/integrity](http://www.deanofstudents.gatech.edu/integrity)

### **Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement**

At Georgia Tech we believe that it is important to strive for an atmosphere of mutual respect, acknowledgement, and responsibility between faculty members and the student body. See <http://www.catalog.gatech.edu/rules/22/> for an articulation of some basic expectations that you can have of us and that we have of you. In the end, simple respect for knowledge, hard work, and cordial interactions will help build the environment we seek. Therefore, we encourage you to remain committed to the ideals of Georgia Tech while in this class.

**For students with disabilities, please consult the GT website to be aware of the services available to you as well as GT's policies and procedures.**

<http://disabilityservices.gatech.edu/content/15/policies-procedures#Student%20Responsibilities>

**ADAPTS contact information:** <http://www.adapts.gatech.edu/>

## **Schedule of Classes, Field Trips and Reading Assignments**

### **Part I. The Historical Evolution of the European Union**

#### **Week One**

##### **Introduction and Overview of the Course**

Film: "Rome and its Engineers"

The purpose of this film is to show linkages between geography, architecture and empire as well as the political and cultural underpinnings and legacies thereof. The first field trip and site visits show the history of Metz as a Gallo-Roman city through its German and modern periods and by traveling to nearby Trier, Germany students see first-hand the vestiges of the Roman empire such as the Porte Nigra, the largest Roman city gate north of the

Alps, the ruins of Roman baths and the Amphitheatre. The second planned trip also includes a visit to the Roman aqueducts just outside of Metz.

### **Field Trip 1**

#### **“Putting Metz and its region in Historical, Geostrategic and Cultural Context”**

9:00 – 15.30: TRIER (Germany’s oldest city) guided visit: Roman amphitheater, Roman Baths and Basilica. Optional visits to UNESCO sites Cathedral of St. Peter and Church of Our Lady, museum of Karl Marx/ Free Time

17.00: Ars sur Moselle/Jouy aux Arches Aqueduct

18.00 Return to GTL

9.30-11.00: FORT QUEULEU

12:45-15.00: Guided tour of -Metz: “D’une Nef à l’Autre : Cathédrale to Pompidou”

15-16:30: Visit Pompidou Centre /museum

### **Week Two**

#### **Monday 28 August**

#### **De-brief and discussion of Field Trip 1 and continue watching film**

\*Work on first essay and read “The Schuman Plan” and McCormick Chapter 1 (posted on T-Square) before Friday/Field Trip 2.

### **Field Trip 2**

#### **“The Roots of Franco-German Rivalry (and the vital role of Robert Schuman, native son of Lorraine) as backdrop to the Construction of Europe”**

9.15 -12.30 Scy Chazelles and Schuman Museum

Guided tour of Maison Robert Schuman + film + presentation

<p>Lunch break  13.30 : Departure for Visit to St. Avold  Guided visit of American Cemetery St (largest  U.S. WWII cemetery in Europe)</p>
<p>16:30: Return to GTL</p>
<p>9.15: Maginot Line/ Fort Hackenberg  10:00-12.00 guided visit  Lunch break  13.30: Departure for Gravelotte/Franco-Prussian War Museum  16.30: Return to GTL</p>

### **Week Three**

De-brief and discussion of Field Trip 2 and site visits

### **Week Four**

Lecture: Something New under the Sun? The  
Post-war Transformation of Europe  
\*Reading Assignment: McCormick, Chapters 2-3

**\*First Essay Due\***

## **Part II. Institutional Development and Policy-Making in the European Union**

### **Week Five**

Lecture: EU Treaties and the changing political identity and  
institutional landscape of Europe  
\*Reading Assignment: McCormick Chapter 4

**\*Assignments for Member State Presentations**

### **Week Six**

Lecture: Widening versus Deepening: How the EU functions and  
interacts with its Member States and Citizens

\*Reading Assignment: McCormick Chapter 5

**Week Seven**

**No Class**  
**\*Second Essay Due\***

**Week Eight**

Member State Presentations: The Founding Six

**Week Nine**

Member State Presentations: First Enlargement

**Week Ten**

**Field Trip 3**

**“ The Symbolic Heart of the EU Project”**

**TBA**

Guided tour of Strasbourg and visit to the EU Parliament

Tour and briefing at the European Court of Justice in Luxembourg

**Part III. The EU as a transnational and global actor: Implications for France and other EU countries and for the EU-US Relationship**

**Week Eleven**

**NO CLASS (Work on third essay)**

## **Week Twelve**

Member State Presentations: Second and Third Enlargements

Member State Presentations: Fourth Enlargement

## **Week Thirteen**

Member State Presentations: Fifth Enlargement

## **Week Fourteen**

Member State Presentations: Fifth Enlargement continued

Lecture: The EU as a Global Actor: Foreign and Security Policy and the emergence of a European Diplomatic Corps (The European External Action Service)

\*Reading Assignment: McCormick Chapters 8 and 9

## **Week Fifteen**

**\*Last Day of Class**

\*Reading Assignment: McCormick's Conclusion

Debating Europe's Future: political, social and economic challenges; population/demographic changes, immigration/migration issues, terrorism and other security threats, competitiveness and social equality. What a stronger or weaker EU means for the U.S. and transatlantic relations.

## **Final Essay due TBA**

### **Guidelines for essays, in-class presentations and final paper**

As indicated on the syllabus there will be three essays worth 20 percent corresponding to each of the three field trips and site visits. For each site visit, you should write approximately 1000-1500 words describing the learning experience and how it



contributed to your broader understanding of European politics, culture and society today. From the lectures and assigned readings, important concepts will be introduced and should help inform your reflections. For example, national identity, citizenship, globalization, and sovereignty are some of the core concepts that are critical to understanding the processes of European integration and may have different meanings that challenge conventional or traditional political definitions and understandings outside of the European context. You will be asked to think about these ideas in relation to the various field trips and site visits. Specific linkages and references should be made to the lecture material and the assigned readings and points will be deducted if you fail to do so. More specific guidance will be discussed prior to and after each of the individual visits. The final exam will take the form of a combined final site visit essay and a response paper (take-home essay format) of 1500-2000 words responding to a specific prompt that will allow you to demonstrate what you have learned throughout the semester about the past and present state of affairs in the European Union integrating experiential knowledge with learning attained in the classroom and from the textbook.

**Member State/Country Presentations:** This exercise will give you an opportunity to hone your research and analytical skills and improve your presentational and public speaking abilities. It comprises 20 percent of your grade.

**Format: TEN MINUTES/TEN SLIDES**

Each student will be assigned a Member State of the European Union and will conduct research on the following topics:

- Background surrounding membership
- Important facts about the country such as GDP, Quality of Life indicators, population demographics, socio-economic, religious and ethnic make-up, key commercial and trade industries, etc.
- Key roles of its participation in the EU, i.e., MEPs-Members of the European Parliament, the Commission, votes/weight in the Council of Ministers, etc. This is less important, but if there are interesting individuals, such as former prime ministers, celebrities, etc. it might be worth mentioning!
- One or two key policy areas that you determine are of particular significance to your member state. Summarize its positions in the specific debates. Provide explanation of why the policy or issue area is important and what the consequences are for its society.
- Member state's profile, image and behavior in the EU. For example, Germany and France are considered the "Twin Engines" or the motor of European integration. You should provide awareness and comment on such characterizations. The United Kingdom is often portrayed as a Eurosceptic or a "reluctant partner;" thus we would expect a discussion of this reputation for example.
- Public opinion and debate in the member state regarding EU membership (e.g., attitudes of its citizens towards membership in the EU).

