

Columbia University: Arts & Sciences

A&S Spring 2023 Standard Evaluation

Course: POLSUN3951 - EU Politics-POLSUN3951_004_2023_1 - COMPARATIVE POLITICS SEMINAR:
POLSW3951_004_2023_1_161481

Instructor: Simone Paci *

Response Rate: 11/21 (52.38 %)

1 - What did you learn - in terms of knowledge, skills, or perspectives - in this course?The answer to this question will generally be available in Vergil.

Response Rate 7/21 (33.33%)

- Great class, content and skills, a must for those interested in research in political science.
- EU politics: from European integration grand theories to specific policy fields (migration, environment, security, economy/single market, economy/monetary integration, etc)
- I learned about the history of the European Union and its structure. I learned about EU politics in different policy areas. In particular, I learned how national, intergovernmental, and supranational dynamics influence each of those policy areas. We discussed future developments of the EU (e.g. Is the EU likely to integrate further? How is the EU impacted by Euroscepticism? and more)
- About the different theories of EU integration and all aspects of EU integration: economic, social, cultural, migration, foreign policy, environment.... Skills: how to properly design a theoretical framework for a paper, with a clear thesis statement, testable hypothesis and data collection plan
- The foundations of the EU system as it stands today and major issues themes/issues the EU deals with
- Everything about EU Politics.
- All about EU politics. The history, different policy areas, and specific challenges the EU has faced and continues to face.

2 - What percentage of the work (including reading) assigned for this course did you complete on schedule?

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means			
All or almost all	(1)	9	81.82%	<div><div></div></div>				
Most	(2)	2	18.18%	<div><div></div></div>				
Some	(3)	0	0.00%	<div><div></div></div>				
This question is not applicable	(4)	0	0.00%	<div><div></div></div>				
				0 25 50 100				
Response Rate								
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3 - What is your overall assessment of the course? What are its strengths? In what ways might it be improved? In answering this question, you might address the value of readings and assignments, the structure of the course (including the relationship of sections to lectures), the contribution of the course to your knowledge of the subject matter and to the development of your analytical and reasoning skills, etc. We encourage you to use specific examples where possible.

Response Rate	7/21 (33.33%)
<p>• solid 10/10 right there. Maybe the only comment I'd make is that discussion posts may not be the best way of assessing participation, which could be replaced by well calibrated questions sent every week by email to the teacher (so the students don't "inspire" themselves a little too much from discussion posts of their fellow classmates, which are probably AI generated either way). Otherwise, I've had a lot of polisci classes before, this one was one of the most rigorous and engaging! I simply regret not having it earlier in my academic life, especially for the research related methodology.</p> <p>• Very interesting/fun class for people interested in prominent theories, and case studies/applications of EU politics, I think this is a great introduction to those who have some sense of the EU/knowledge of some important EU topics. Absolutely amazing class.</p> <p>• I really enjoyed taking this course. The syllabus was very well designed: the first sessions summarized the history of the EU and focused on the theories of European integration. This theoretical background was both interesting and useful as we referred to those theories in all the following sessions of the course. The following sessions were each focused on a theme / policy area, including monetary, migration, environmental, and security policy areas. For each policy area, we would discuss: how the EU has dealt with that policy area historically; how the theories of European integration have approached that policy area; and how the EU is likely to deal with that policy area in the future. The material covered / the sessions were not redundant, they built up on one another. At the end of the semester, I feel like I have a comprehensive view of the structure of the EU and its role in multiple policy areas. This is what made the class so interesting. The readings were valuable and very well chosen by Professor Paci. Professor Paci does not assign more than two articles/book chapters a week (about 30-40 pages total). I found that this amount of readings was perfect: it allowed me to read and understand each reading in depth. Although the readings were not long, they were comprehensive. Professor Paci ensured that each reading had both a historical summary of how the EU dealt with the policy area; a theoretical part referring to the theories of EU integration (or other theory related to the topic); and a more "concrete" part focusing on a precise case/event illustrating the theoretical part of the reading. So the readings were not boring and they can satisfy both students who like theoretical analysis and those who prefer "concrete" elements/case studies. I felt like I came prepared to understand the class material and participate to class discussion every session. There is a weekly discussion post related to the reading. Writing the discussion post is not time-consuming (it can be as short as 3-4 sentences, although most students in the class chose to write more). Professor Paci made discussion posts enjoyable by changing the format from time to time (e.g. posting a picture or recording ourselves instead of writing a post). The main assignment is a research design paper. Every two weeks, students must write a "milestone" (a part) of their research design paper (i.e. research question, literature review, thesis statement and hypotheses, data plan). I found the milestones valuable because it allowed me to receive feedback from Professor Paci every step of my research and writing process. It gave me the opportunity to improve my research progressively and to feel confident about my final research paper. The other assignment in the course is a presentation on current EU affairs (10 min). Professor Paci let students choose their topic, and provides some ideas and guidance. This assignment is valuable and enjoyable because it allows students to learn about different topics, and to share their interests with the class. Another strength of this course is the very high engagement of the students. Professor Paci gives students a lot of opportunities to participate to the class discussion: participating in front of everyone, discussing in small groups, debating in the discussion posts... All students are engaged one way or another, which makes the class very dynamic. I believe that there is nothing to improve. I loved this class, and I recommend it to any student interested in EU Politics. It's okay if you feel like you have little knowledge about the EU prior to taking this class: Professor Paci will make sure that everyone is on the same page by summarizing essential information at the beginning of each session. In general, I would recommend any class taught by Professor Paci: his pedagogy and his kindness will make any course enjoyable.</p> <p>• Excellent! As I had already taken European Union politics classes back in France, I was really impressed that I learnt something new every time I went to class. I particularly enjoyed the fact that the class was both a mix of theory and empirical analysis which concretely allowed me to apply the theories to real life examples, which sometimes lack in political science classes. The readings were all very interesting and the amount of work was not too much which led me to enjoy doing the assignments and to actually do the readings. I appreciated the way the class was run, with a perfect balance between Paci's insights and discussions with the entire class. Thanks to the fact that Mr. Paci was allowing us to debate for a good amount of time, the ambience between students was really good and thus I was always really happy to come to class. If I were to be a bit more specific, as I was lacking an overall understanding of the economic framework of the EU, it was useful for me that we spent a couple of weeks on that economic aspect. Overall, I believe I will be able to use the knowledge I acquired thanks to that class for my future professional career, which is what I was looking for.</p> <p>• It was an incredibly interesting course which I didn't expect from the subject material but the professor kept everyone engaged and we covered a large breadth of topics with opportunities to go more in depth on areas that interested you. The readings were always very helpful because they provided a broad overview of the theories/topic we discussed without getting too technical or specific and everything was always tied back to current events. The milestone structure made writing the paper so much easier and always gave us opportunities to spot and fix errors before writing the entire paper</p> <p>• Course is incredible! Great syllabus. I would have preferred more econ/trade, global influence of EU, maybe some other topics too, but given the time restriction of the class, Simone did a perfect job selecting topics for the class. I loved his class format too, clear agenda and fun weekly assignments. Only thing I might change is the level of guidance we had in choosing our topics for the final paper. I feel mine was very broad and I didn't know where to start looking when choosing a topic — would have been good to have a list of possible options for reference, or more restrictions to make it less open-ended. Also, maybe some small group conferences with our peers to review each other's work and give feedback would have been nice.</p> <p>• Great course! We covered a lot of material. I enjoyed how class discussions were structured and consistently engaging over the course of the semester.</p>	

4 - What is your overall assessment of the course?The answer to this question will generally be available in Vergil.

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means		
Excellent	(5)	10	90.91%		4.91		
Very Good	(4)	1	9.09%				
Good	(3)	0	0.00%				
Fair	(2)	0	0.00%				
Poor	(1)	0	0.00%				
				0 25 50 100	Question		
Response Rate				Mean	STD	Median	
11/21 (52.38%)				4.91	0.30	5.00	

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5 - Would you recommend this course to another student?The answer to this question will generally be available in Vergil.

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means
Definitely recommend	(1)	10	90.91%	<div><div></div></div>	
Probably recommend	(2)	1	9.09%	<div><div></div></div>	
I'm not sure I'd recommend	(3)	0	0.00%		
Probably not recommend	(4)	0	0.00%		
Definitely not recommend	(5)	0	0.00%		
				0 25 50 100	
Response Rate					
11/21 (52.38%)					

6 - Please qualify your recommendations if you wish:The answer to this question will generally be available in Vergil.

Response Rate	5/21 (23.81%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 100% one of the best/most interesting/most engaging class I have taken at Columbia. Mostly because of the professor to be honest: he is very knowledgeable, assigns readings that are very pertinent, and makes class seminars very inclusive, has the most engaging presentations/lectures, but also balances lectures with discussion. Content includes/encapsulates • Great teacher, listened to all the comments being done by students and adds his insights to them. Fair amount of work with a final paper conducted throughout the semester which saved me during my finals season. Learnt about EU integration in many different sectors: from the economic one, to foreign policy and environmental one. Highly recommend! • I cannot recommend this class enough, so long as it is with the same professor because I think he was the one who really made the class engaging • This is possibly the best class I've taken at Columbia thus far. Simone Paci is a GEM in every single way. He's funny, understanding and easygoing but also very helpful, well-informed. Truly an excellent seminar. • 1) Class is highly engaging 2) Materials are really organized 3) Not a heavy workload, but a qualitative one 	

7 - How does the workload in this course compare to Columbia courses with a similar structure (e.g. a lecture, seminar, laboratory, or language course)?The answer to this question will generally be available in Vergil.

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means
Much heavier workload	(1)	0	0.00%		
Heavier workload	(2)	1	9.09%	<div><div></div></div>	
Similar workload	(3)	7	63.64%	<div><div></div></div>	
Lighter workload	(4)	3	27.27%	<div><div></div></div>	
Much lighter workload	(5)	0	0.00%		
No basis for comparison	(6)	0	0.00%		
				0 25 50 100	
Response Rate					
11/21 (52.38%)					

8 - How many hours a week did you devote to this course? (Note: Please include all time spent on this class including class time, discussion sections, readings, assignments, studying, etc.)The answer to this question will generally be available in Vergil.

Response Rate	6/21 (28.57%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A lot, depending on the week. Totally worth it • work is a weekly discussion post, readings, a presentation on current affairs, milestones for your research project (which take, i would say, a significant amount of time). 2-6 hours • 4 hours (class time + readings and discussion post). 2 additional hours when I had to write a milestone. 10 hours for my current affairs presentation (I took my time, it is possible to do it faster if you need to). • 2 hours • 2 hours for class, 1 hour for reading and another hour for milestone assignments for the paper • Maybe 2-5 hours depending on how heavy the milestone is. More leading up to the final of course. 	

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Response Rate: 11/21 (52.38 %)

9 - Please evaluate Simone Paci. What are Simone Paci's strengths? In what ways might their teaching be improved? In answering this question, you might address the clarity of the lectures or presentations and their relationship to the other elements of the course, the ability of Simone Paci to generate enthusiasm and facilitate discussion, the quality of feedback, availability, the timeliness of the return assignment, etc. -

Response Rate	8/21 (38.1%)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> I've had the pleasure of having Simone Paci as instructor for two semesters now. Whilst he was a very good TA, he excelled as professor. Passionate about his work, engaging, fun, yet very rigorous and strict as to his expectations, helpful when it comes to feedbacks, knowledgeable about his topic, eager to make everyone participate, etc. To be fair, I was expecting more of an introductory kind of class, not allowing us to properly dig into our subjects of interest as consequence of its introductory value, maybe creating an overall sense of academic unfulfilment for advanced undergraduates. I could not be more mistaken! Professor Paci expects something from us, and we expect something from him. I'm sure he'll pursue a great academic career. Brilliant. The type of professor you come here for. Super enthusiastic and gives some of the best feedback I've received from a professor. I think Simone's teaching style is perhaps one of the best teaching styles I have experienced at this school. He engages the class with very interesting activities, encourages participation, assigns pertinent readings, and overall makes the class fun and engaging. The class content is very clear. Professor Paci uses a Powerpoint which makes the class dynamic and easy to follow. Professor Paci encourages students to ask questions if they need more information. Professor Paci is able to generate enthusiasm in students. For example, all students chose to write more than a few sentences for the discussion posts. I think it shows how students were engaged in the class and enjoyed sharing their ideas. As mentioned earlier, Professor Paci encourages class discussion by giving numerous opportunities for students to participate (participating in front of everyone, discussing in small groups, debating in the discussion posts...). In this way, all students can contribute to the class discussion one way or another, even if they feel shy to speak in front of everyone. So Professor Paci succeeded in creating a positive learning environment. He always tried to make us laugh. This made coming to class and learning about EU Politics very enjoyable. The feedback given by Professor Paci on the milestones was always insightful: he always gave some ideas to further our research. His comments were encouraging and made working on the research project enjoyable. Feedback on the assignments were always given in a timely manner (2-3 days after the assignments were turned in). It gave students the time to adjust/improve their research project in order to do better on the following milestone. Professor Paci made himself available to discuss with students, at the end of the class or during office hours. I encourage all the students who will take this course in the future to go to office hours! Professor Paci is easy to talk to and he will give you new ideas to improve your assignments. It could be great to add a group work project on a controversial topic or at least to have a presentation with one group that is for a certain policy and the other that is against. Or other idea: a fictional negotiation on an EU policy as if we were at the EU commission Literally one of the best professors I've ever had. Consistently kept the class engaging by having breakout groups or in class discussions, but was also very good at telling which questions/topic areas students weren't engaging with as much and was able to pivot easily rather than get stuck on something the students weren't engaging with. Very good at providing succinct overviews for those not familiar with the subject area, and consistently referenced both readings and current events which made it easy to tie everything together as we went through the class, especially because he would also reference what we discussed in past weeks so everything felt relevant. Also very easy to talk to one-on-one in office hours or approach after class and it felt like he genuinely wanted to help the students. Amazing timeliness in returning feedback and grades on assignments, and the feedback was always very constructive, and not vague, so you could tell he actually did read and engage with the submissions rather than skimming them. I cannot think of anything negative to say about him as a professor/teacher, and it was one of the best classes I've taken largely because of his teaching style Simone is excellent in every possible way. The man did a great job for his first class ever, and I was honored to be a part of it. Keep doing what you're doing. And congratulations Simone, you have a bright future in teaching! Very good. He is very knowledgeable on the topic and clearly interested in learning more about it and teaching it. He was always enthusiastic in class, open to criticism and helped steer class discussion diplomatically when arguments became heated or students began to take umbrage. Very good feedback on assignments and quite timely as well. This level of engagement with each students work and timely grading made the class more enjoyable. 	

10 - What is the overall teaching effectiveness of Simone Paci? -

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means			
Excellent	(5)	10	90.91%					
Very Good	(4)	1	9.09%					
Good	(3)	0	0.00%					
Fair	(2)	0	0.00%					
Poor	(1)	0	0.00%					
				0 25 50 100	Question			
Response Rate				Mean		STD		Median
11/21 (52.38%)				4.91		0.30		5.00

11 - What are the strengths and weaknesses of (discussion section leader, lab section leader, grader) as an instructor, and how might 's teaching be improved?

Response Rate	0/21 (0%)
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12 - What is the overall teaching effectiveness of ?

Response Option	Weight	Frequency	Percent	Percent Responses	Means			
Excellent	(5)	0	0.00%					
Very Good	(4)	0	0.00%					
Good	(3)	0	0.00%					
Fair	(2)	0	0.00%					
Poor	(1)	0	0.00%					
				0 25 50 100	Question			
Response Rate				Mean		STD		Median
0/21 (0.00%)				0.00		0.00		0.00