

Vesalius College  
POL 241 European identity, euroscepticism  
and the legitimacy problem of the EU  
Michel Huysseune

**Office hours and contact information**

Office hours: Wednesday 10-12 pm, and by appointment.  
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**Classes**

Monday 14.00-16.00  
Tuesday 14.00-16.00  
Wednesday 14.00-16.00  
Thursday 14.00-16.00

**Course Description**

Recent events like the rejection of the European Constitution by the French and Dutch electorates have highlighted the weak legitimacy the European Union enjoys. This weakness is accompanied by interrogations about the meaning of European identity, for example by defenders of the Christian roots of Europe.

This course explores the various dimensions of the legitimacy and identity crisis of the European Union. It reflects upon the problems of defining a European identity, and on the conflicting visions of Europe proposed to the public. It proposes an overview on debates on the legitimacy of the EU and its institutions and on their alleged democratic deficit. It analyses the causes for popular rejection of the Constitution and skepticism towards the European Union. It studies and compares the role and the ideologies of Eurosceptical political parties.

**Objectives and methods**

The course intends to give the students an in-depth analysis of contemporary controversies about the legitimacy of the European Union. With the “no” votes on the European Constitution as a starting-point it will explore both popular and elite attitudes towards the European Union. It analyses debates on the significance of European identity, and on the legitimacy of the institutional framework of the European Union. The course will give an extensive overview of the various (national and ideological) forms of Euroscepticism, as expressed by public opinion and political parties.

At the end of the course, students should be acquainted with:

- political and theoretical debates on European identity
- debates and theoretical perspectives on the legitimacy of the EU
- the various forms of Euroscepticism

### Teaching methods

The course will be based on lectures and in-class discussion. Students are required to read the material that corresponds to each lesson and to participate to discussions around a number of topics. Each student will also be asked to make a presentation in class around a particular topic related to the course count for 10% in the final evaluation.

There will a number of guest lecturers with expertise in particular fields.

### Assignments

Two assignments are to be made. The first one concerns the in-class presentation, for which a short written synthesis must be submitted. Subjects for in-class presentations will be proposed to the students (who may also propose relevant subjects themselves).

Students must also produce a paper of about 3,000 words. The purpose of this paper will be outlined in detail in the first class, and students will then have to agree a subject with the professor for June 5<sup>th</sup>. The paper itself will be due on July 3<sup>rd</sup>.

### Assessment

Evaluation:

- Presence and participation in classes: 10 %
- In class presentation: 10%
- Paper: 40 %
- Final Exam: 40 %

Grades will be given both on a 0-20 scale and in a letter grade. The computation of the final grade will be based on the 0-20 scale (which gives a more accurate outcome). Conversion between the two systems of grading will follow the following table. Scores on the 0/20 grade will always be converted in the letter grade that approaches most closely the score.

Grade	Grade points	Score (./20)	Score (./20) rounded to nearest .5	Score (as a %)
A	4,00	17,00	17,0	85%
A-	3,67	16,22	16,0	81%
B+	3,33	15,44	15,5	77%
B	3,00	14,67	14,5	73%
B-	2,67	13,89	14,0	69%
C+	2,33	13,11	13,0	66%
C	2,00	12,33	12,5	62%
C-	1,67	11,56	11,5	58%
D+	1,33	10,78	11,0	54%
D	1,00	10,00	10,0	50%
F	0,00	7,67	Below 10	38%

**Late papers policy:** Written work should be submitted on paper at the beginning of class, or through e-mail, on the date specified in the course schedule. The penalty for late written work is 1 point per day on the 0-20-point scale. Note that in accordance with Murphy's Law, computers are likely to crash and printers are likely to run out of ink the evening before the due date. Start in time. Make backups of your work. Computer or printer problems are no valid reason for handing in work late.

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic honesty is not only an ethical issue but also the foundation of scholarship. Cheating and plagiarism are therefore serious breaches of academic integrity. Students caught receiving or giving illicit aid during an examination will receive an "F" for the examination. Documented plagiarism of a paper will be given a "D" in instances of one or two sentences, and an "F" in more severe cases, and no revision will be allowed in either instance. Following the College policy, cheating and plagiarism cases will be communicated in writing to the Associate Dean for Students and submitted to the Student Conduct Committee for disciplinary action.

### **Required reading**

A reader with the texts discussed in class will be made available to the students at the Crazy Copy Center. When possible, texts will also be made available on PointCarré.

### **Schedule**

*Week 1:* 26 May – 30 May

Monday 26 May 14.00-16.00: Legitimacy, identity and Euroscepticism in the EU: Introduction

Tuesday 27 May 14.00-16.00: European identity: state of the art

Reading: Gerard Delanty, The Quest for European Identity, in: Erik Oddvar Eriksen (ed.), *Making the European Polity. Reflexive Integration in the EU*, pp. 127-142.

Wednesday 28 May 14.00-16.00:

Lecture: European Identity: A Historical Overview (Guest lecture by Pieter-Jan De Vlieger, VUB)

Thursday 28 May 14.00-16.00: Europe and the other

Reading: - Bo Stråth, Multiple Europes: Integration, Identity and Demarcation to the Other, in: Bo Stråth (ed.), *Europe and the Other and Europe as the Other*, Brussels/Berlin, P.I.E.-Peter Lang, 2000, pp. 385-420.

*Week 2:* 02 June – 06 June

Monday 2 June 14.00-16.00: Europe vs. US: conflicting identities

Reading: Alessandro Ferrara, Europe as a 'Special Area for Human Hope', *Constellations*, 2007, 14 (3), pp. 315-331; - George Weigel, Is Europe Dying? Notes on a Crisis of Civilizational Morale, *Watch on the West*, 2005, 6 (2), pp. 1-5, European Outlook American Enterprise Institute, [http://www.aei.org/publications/pubID.22139/pub\\_detail.asp](http://www.aei.org/publications/pubID.22139/pub_detail.asp); Eli Zaretsky, Global Rift: Robert Kagan and the Europe/America Divide, *Constellations*, 2003, 10 (3), pp. 358-363.

Tuesday 3 June 14.00-16.00: Europe and Otherness: Eastern Europeans and immigrants

Reading: Dieter Fuchs and Hans-Dieter Klingemann, Eastward Enlargement of the European Union and the Identity of Europe, *West European Politics*, 2002, 25 (2), pp. 19-54; Verena Stolcke, New rhetorics of exclusion in Europe, *International Social Science Journal*, 51 (159), March 1999, pp. 25-35 (11)  
<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/doi/pdf/10.1111/1468-2451.00174>.

Wednesday 4 June 14.00-16.00: EU and religious identity

Reading: Agustín José Menéndez, A Christian or a *Laïc* Europe? Christian Values and European Identity, *Ratio Juris*, 2005, 18 (2), pp. 179-205; Sammi Zemni, Islam, European Identity and the Limits of Multiculturalism, in: W. A. R. Shadid, P. Sj. van Koningsveld (eds), *Religious Freedom and the Neutrality of the State: The Position of Islam in the European Union*, Leuven, Peeters, 2002, pp. 158-173.

Thursday 5 June 14.00-16.00: European identity, Islam and Turkey

Reading: Nilüfer Göle, Europe's Encounter with Islam: What Future?, *Constellations*, 2006, 13 (2): pp. 248-262; Anne-Marie Le Gloanec. Is Turkey Euro-Compatible ? French and German Debates about the "Non-Criteria", *Constellations*, 2006, 13 (2): pp. 263-274.

**Week 3:** 9 June – 13 June

Monday 9 June 14.00-16.00: Conceptualizing/contextualizing legitimacy

Reading: Bernhard Peters, Public Discourse, Identity, and the Problem of Democratic Legitimacy, in: Erik Oddvar Eriksen (ed.), *Making the European Polity. Reflexive Integration in the EU*, pp. 84-123.

Tuesday 10 June 14.00-16.00: Deliberative supranationalism

Reading: Erik Oddvar Eriksen, Deliberative Supranationalism in the EU, in: Erik Oddvar Eriksen and John Erik Fossum (eds), *Democracy in the European Union. Integration Through Deliberation?*, London, Routledge, 2000, pp. 42-64.

Wednesday 11 June 14.00-16.00:

Lecture: Ionut Sasu (Institute for European Studies, VUB), Deliberative democracy and European legitimacy.

Thursday 12 June 14.00-16.00: EU Public Sphere

Reading: Ruud Koopmans, Who inhabits the European public sphere? Winners and losers, supporters and opponents in Europeanised political debates, *European Journal of Political Research*, 2007, 46 (2), pp. 183–210.

**Week 4:** 16 June – 20 June

Monday 16 June 14.00-16.00: The Democratic Deficit Debate

Reading: Andreas Follesdal & Simon Hix, Why There is a Democratic Deficit in the EU: A Response to Majone and Moravcsik, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2006, 44 (3), pp. 533–62.

Tuesday 17 June 14.00-16.00: The Democratic Deficit Debate (2)

Reading: Hauke Brunkhorst, The Legitimation Crisis of the European Union, *Constellations*, 2006, 13 (2), pp. 165-180.; Myrto Tsakatika, Governance vs. politics: the European Union's constitutive 'democratic deficit', *Journal of European Public Policy*, 2007, 14 (6), pp. 867–885.

Wednesday 18 June 14.00-16.00: A European Constitution

Reading: Jürgen Habermas, Why Europe Needs a Constitution, *New Left Review*, 2001, 11, pp. 5-25; Renaud Dehousse, The Unmaking of a Constitution: Lessons from the European Referenda, *Constellations*, 2006, 13 (2), pp. 151-164.

Thursday 19 June 14.00-16.00: The EU elites and the legitimacy crisis

Reading: George Ross, What do 'Europeans' Think? Analyses of the European Union's Current Crisis by European Elites, *Journal of Common Market Studies*, 2008, 46 (2), pp. 389–412.

**Week 5:** 23 June – 27 July

Monday 23 June 14.00-16.00: Euroscepticism: the French referendum

Reading: Gilles Ivaldi, Beyond France's 2005 Referendum on the European Constitutional Treaty: Second-Order Model, Anti-Establishment Attitudes and the End of the Alternative European Utopia, *West European Politics*, 2006, 29 (1), pp. 47-69; Bernard Cassen, ATTAC Against the Treaty, *New Left Review*, 2005, 33, pp. 27-33.

Tuesday 24 June 14.00-16.00: Euroscepticism: the Dutch referendum

Reading: Marcel Lubbers, Regarding the Dutch 'Nee' to the European Constitution. A Test of the Identity, Utilitarian and Political Approaches to Voting 'No', *European Union Politics*, 2006, 9 (1), pp. 59-86; René Cuperus, Why the Dutch Voted No. Anatomy of the New Euroscepticism in 'Old Europe', Wiardi Beckman Foundation, think-tank of the Dutch Labour Party/PvdA, at: <http://www.policy-network.net/uploadedFiles/Publications/Publications/Cuperus-final.pdf>

Wednesday 25 June 14.00-16.00: Opposition to the EU

Reading: Lauren McLaren, Opposition to European integration and fear of loss of national identity: Debunking a basic assumption regarding hostility to the integration project, *European Journal of Political Research*, 2004, 43, pp. 895–911.

Thursday 26 June 14.00-16.00: Defining Party-Based Euroscepticism

Reading: Petr Kopecky & Cas Mudde, The Two Sides of Euroscepticism. Party Positions on European Integration in East Central Europe, *European Union Politics*, 2002, 3 (3), pp. 297-326; Aleks Szczerbiak & Paul Taggart, *Theorising Party-Based Euroscepticism: Problems of Definition, Measurement and Causality*, Sussex European Institute, Working Paper N° 69, 2003.

**Week 6:** 30 June – 04 July

Monday 30 June 14.00-16.00: Contextualizing Euroscepticism: the British example

Reading: John Coles, British Influence and the Euro, in: Martin Holmes (ed.), *The Euroscepticism Reader 2*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2002, pp. 7-24; Russell Lewis, The Myth of Europe, in: Martin Holmes (ed.), *The Euroscepticism Reader 2*, Basingstoke, Palgrave, 2002, pp. 151-170.

Tuesday 1 July 14.00-16.00: Contextualizing Euroscepticism: Italy

Reading: Michel Huysseune, *A Eurosceptic vision in a Europhile Country: The Case of the Lega Nord* (unpublished working paper).

Wednesday 2 July 14.00-16.00: Contextualizing Euroscepticism: the Nordic Countries

Reading: Tapio Raunio, Softening but Persistent: Euroscepticism in the Nordic EU Countries, *Workshop on Euroscepticism*, 1-2 July 2005, Amsterdam.

Thursday 3 July 14.00-16.00:

Concluding lesson

**Week 7:** 07 July – 11 July

Final Exam