

Name: Paul R. Edleman		Course Title/Module Title: American Government or Comparative Politics / Federalism: EU & US Comparison
		Discipline: Political Science
<b>Course/Module Narrative:</b>	<p>Federalism: EU &amp; US Comparison Intended for an American government or comparative politics course.</p> <p>This module provides students with an introduction to the European Union (EU), its central institutions, and how the governing system of the EU compares to the US federal system. By focusing on federalism, the lesson highlights different approaches to a federalist style of governing and explores strengths and weaknesses in the US and EU. By exposing students to the EU system, students will be able to place US federalism in greater context and appreciate federalism as a form of political organization.</p>	
<b>Course Objectives:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ Introduce the basic structure and workings of the European Union.</li> <li>→ Analyze the role of federalism as a function of the EU.</li> <li>→ Compare and contrast federalism in the US and the EU</li> </ul>		
<b>Module Objectives/Learning Objectives:</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ <b>Students will recall the origins of the EU.</b></li> <li>→ <b>Students will identify the major EU institutions and describe their functions.</b></li> <li>→ <b>Students will discuss EU federalism.</b></li> <li>→ <b>Students will compare and contrast federalism in the US with federalism in the EU.</b></li> </ul>		
<b>Assigned Readings</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>→ European Commission, Directorate-General for Communication, <i>The European Union – What it is and what it does</i>, Publications Office of the European Union, 2022, <a href="https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2775/5377">https://data.europa.eu/doi/10.2775/5377</a> (pp. 57-61).</li> <li>→ James McBride. (2022). <i>How Does the European Union Work?</i> Council on Foreign Relations. <a href="https://www.cfr.org/backgrounders/how-does-european-union-work">https://www.cfr.org/backgrounders/how-does-european-union-work</a></li> <li>→ John McCormick. (2021). <i>Understanding the European Union: A Concise Introduction</i> (8<sup>th</sup> ed). Bloomsbury Academic. (Chapter 1: What is the European Union, Chapter 4: The European Institutions)</li> </ul>		
Comparative Examples of Federalism		

- Center for European Studies, University of North Carolina. (n.d.). *Compare and Contrast the European Union with the U.S. Government*.  
[https://europe.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/314/2017/05/4.A\\_Venn\\_Diagram\\_Compare\\_and\\_Contract\\_the\\_EU\\_and\\_US.pdf](https://europe.unc.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/314/2017/05/4.A_Venn_Diagram_Compare_and_Contract_the_EU_and_US.pdf)
- Brittany Stevens-Finlayson. (2019). *EU vs US, Comparing the EU and US Federal Systems*. BRAND EU, European Union Brand Centre.  
[http://www.brandeu.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/BEU\\_-EU-vs-US-.pdf](http://www.brandeu.eu/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/BEU_-EU-vs-US-.pdf) (pp. 1-20).

## Content & Delivery

### Course Content

- Prior to the EU module, students will have received a lecture on US federalism. The second lecture on federalism will complement and extend this content.
- Lecture one will discuss the origins of the EU and the objective of its founders to use the EU as a tool to promote peace after WWII. The presentation will briefly cover the EU's evolution and the impact of Brexit. While Brexit is not the lecture's focus, significance will be noted. The lecture will then address the different EU institutions and their functions and how the governing bodies may align with institutions within the US federal government.
- Lecture two will compare and contrast federalism in the US with the EU system. A brief background on federalism in the EU will be contributed via lecture, with the majority of time dedicated to students dividing into breakout groups to compare and contrast US and EU federalism.

### Instruction & Delivery (lecture, discussion, group work)

Two lectures of 75 minutes.

- Lecture one will cover the EU and its institutions. It will discuss the origins of the EU, why it formed, and explain the core institutions of the EU and how they govern within the context of nation-states.
- Lecture two will cover federalism in the EU compared to the US, discussing the nature of federalism in the US and EU.

## Assessment

- In-class discussion by students comparing the US and EU systems.
- Multiple-choice exam questions.
- Exam essay comparing and contrasting federalism in the US and EU.

## Resources and Materials

- See assigned readings and material.
- Anand Menon and Martin A. Schain. (Editors). (2006). *Comparative Federalism: The European Union and the United States in Comparative Perspective*. Oxford University Press.
- Marta Simoncini. *The Separation of Powers and the Administrative Branch in the European Union*. Jean Monnet Working Paper 9/23,

<https://jeanmonnetprogram.org/paper/the-separation-of-powers-and-the-administrative-branch-in-the-european-union/>

#### Video Resources on How the EU Works

- Anna Eijsbouts. (2019). How Does the EU Actually Work?. The Atlantic, <https://www.theatlantic.com/video/index/595162/voting-eu-european-union/> , or on YouTube, <https://youtu.be/idlCpZl9hQ4?si=BeH9gKGyojBbVdVP>
- DW News. (2019). How Does the EU Work (and Why it is so Complex)? YouTube, <https://youtu.be/8Rkwllr912A?si=T-RFO7zwDAwDEbVr>
- CNBC Explains. (2019). How Does the EU Work? YouTube, <https://youtu.be/9eufLQ3sew0?si=-ezFd0wuQKycrCLg>
- Irish Foreign Ministry. (2022). How the EU Works. YouTube, <https://youtu.be/6WiEFckaL5Y?si=gdIXIqheujKUCtRc>

#### Links to EU Institution YouTube Pages

- European Parliament: <https://www.youtube.com/europeanparliament>
- European Commission: <https://www.youtube.com/@EuropeanCommission>
- Council of the European Union: <https://www.youtube.com/@eucouncil>
- Council of Europe: <https://www.youtube.com/@CouncilofEuropeEn>
- Court of Justice of the European Union: <https://www.youtube.com/@CourtOfJusticeEU>
- European Court of Human Rights: <https://www.youtube.com/@EuropeanCourt>

#### Discussion/Assignment Prompts

- Briefly explain the concept of federalism.
- Describe what you believe are the pros and cons of how the US and the EU are each governed. What do you think works? What do you think fails?
- Provide examples of federalism in each system.
- Using the Comparative Examples of Federalism resources provided in class, compare and contrast how federalism works in the US and the EU.

→ Using the Brittany Stevens-Finlayson resource, select two of the policy areas identified in the reading. Then conduct additional research on how one EU member state manages that issue in collaboration with the EU. What role does each entity have? Where do their responsibilities overlap?

#### Possible Essay Question

- 1. Compare and contrast federalism in the US with federalism in the EU. Provide examples to illustrate the comparison.
- 2. Using a policy area discussed in class and the readings, select one policy area (trade, health, energy, etc.) and explain how it functions in the US and the EU and the key differences between the two regions.