



CIEE Brussels, Belgium

Course name:	Contemporary Europe: The Belgian Experience
Course number:	BELG 3002 BRUX/HIST 3001 BRUX/INRE 3001 BRUX
Programs offering course:	Business + International Relations (BIR)
Language of instruction:	English
U.S. Semester Credits:	3
Contact Hours:	45
Term:	Spring 2019

Course Description

This course presents an overview of the culture and history of the host country, Belgium. The unique political, cultural, and linguistic situation of Belgium and its capital Brussels in Western Europe will be highlighted by introducing aspects like the identity, culture, economy and politics of the host country. All of these will be placed in a historical and a broader European perspective. It will focus furthermore on the evolution of Belgium as a federal state and on its integration in the EU and address the question to what extent Belgium is a model for Europe. Topics include Belgian, Flemish, Walloon and French- and German-speaking culture and identity, Belgium's colonial experience and evolution towards a multicultural society, art, politics and political structures, economic development, Belgium's international relations and its role in hosting supranational institutions like NATO and EU

Learning Objectives

This course is intended to provide a better understanding of the culture, economy, politics and history of Belgium as well as the different identities of its inhabitants. It also should supply a fuller appreciation of the relations of Belgium with the rest of the world and in particular with its neighboring countries. By the end of the course students will grasp the complex evolution of the different cultures that coexist on the Belgian territory to the full and have gained a better understanding of the process of European integration at large.

Course Prerequisites

None

Methods of Instruction

Classes are intended to be a mix of lecture and discussion. There will be lecturing, but I will ask questions and I expect you to do the same. An active class participation is expected as well as a careful reading of the required texts. For a number of topics there will be guest speakers and we will also do several visits.

Further important requirements of the course consist of:

- Presenting a news item on Belgium
- Group presentation of the course reading
- Writing a term paper in English or French (10-12 pages, 2400 words) on one of the topics that will be addressed during the course (a full list will be made available).
- Attending the field trips to institutions, museums and cultural events.



Assessment and Final Grade

1.	Quizzes and presentations:	20 %
2.	Participation:	10 %
3.	Term paper:	25 %
4.	Midterm examination:	20 %
5.	Final examination:	25 %

Course Requirements

Term paper

The paper can be written in English. Word length, 2400 words (10-12 pages). The topic should deal with either the history of Belgium (key events or developments) or political (institutions, federalization), cultural (identities, literature, arts) and economical (developments, deindustrialisation) life in Belgium. Students will be graded based on the clarity of their argument, precision of their reasoning and a critical engagement with the existing literature on the topic. Explain each course requirement in detail, including word length and how the student will be graded. The due date should be included in the Weekly Schedule section below. These include quizzes, midterm and final exams, group and individual presentations, research papers, etc. At least one assignment should be scheduled in the first half of the semester before the midterm.

Presenting a news item on Belgium (individual presentation)

The presentation should deal with a news item of the students' own choosing. An item that deals with either political, economical or cultural life in Belgium. The presentation consists of an overview of the topic (5-10 minutes) at hand and the students' own assessment of it (5 minutes).

Group presentation of the course reading

Groups of 3-4 students select one of the weekly readings (see Weekly Schedule) and present a summary of each of the texts, while outlining its importance (or irrelevance) for a better understanding of the topic under discussion (see Weekly Schedule).

Class Participation

Regular class attendance is required and will be taken each class. Students must notify the instructor beforehand -via email- if they will miss class for any reason. Students are responsible for any materials covered in class in their absence. Students who miss class for medical reasons must inform the instructor and the Center/Resident/Academic Director and provide appropriate documentation. Excessive tardy (over 15 minutes late) students will be marked absent. Attendance policies also apply to any required co-curricular class excursion or event. Class participation will be assessed according to student responses to spontaneous questions pertaining to the readings associated with each 'topics' session. Self-generated comments demonstrating detailed knowledge of the content of the readings will also be taken into account. In clearer terms, understanding the content and meaning of the readings is essential. Cheating and plagiarism in any course assignment or exam will not be tolerated and



may result in a student failing the course or being expelled from the program. For instance, the same written paper may not be submitted in more than one course and the work of another person must, of course, be documented in any written paper. The consequences for submitting late work, for example late papers, will be marked down 5% after the first day and 1% every day afterwards and no coursework will be accepted after the last day of class.

Weekly Schedule

Week 1 Orientation week: Presentation of the Course practical guidelines

Presentation of the aims and scope of the course. Practical information on the reader, presentations, essay and examination. Overview of the different trips that we will be making and of the ways in which the students can bring their own experiences to class to the greater benefit of everybody else.

Week 2: Belgian history in European Perspective

Reading class 1:

Tony Judt, "Is There a Belgium?", in: Benno Barnard et al., *How can one not be interested in Belgian History. War, language and consensus in Belgium since 1830*. Trinity College Dublin, Academia Press, Ghent, 2005, pp. 13-32; Brigid Graumann, "Drawn and quartered", *The Bulletin*, May 24 2007, pp. 14-15;

Reading class 2:

Piet Van de Craen, "What, If Anything, Is a Belgian", in Catherine Labio, *Op. cit.*, Yale, 2002, pp. 24-33. Luc De Heusch, "Ceci n'est pas la Belgique", in Catherine Labio, "Belgian Memories", *Yale French Studies 102*, Yale University Press, 2002, pp. 11-23;

Week 3: Pacification and Pillarization

Reading class 1:

Widukind De Ridder, "On the 'Absence of Spirit': The legacy of the abstinence from revolution in Belgium", in: Gareth Stedman-Jones, *The 1848 Revolutions and European Political Thought*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2018

Reading class 2:

Reginald De Schrijver, "Belgium Until World War I", in: Marina Boudart, Michel Boudart, René Bryssinck, (eds.) *Modern Belgium*, Society for the Promotion of Science and Scholarship, Palo Alto, 1990, pp. 54-72; Jean Stengers, "National Sentiment", in: Marina Boudart, et al., (eds.) *Op. cit.*, 1990, pp. 86-97.

Week 4 (5/2 and 7/2) : Belgian Federalism

Reading class 1:

Kris Deschouwer *The Politics of Belgium. Governing a Divided Society*, 2nd revised "edition, Palgrave



MacMillan, Houndmills, 2012, pp. 18-77, and 148-175;

Reading class 2:

N/A

Week 4: The Belgian political experience

Reading class 1:

Charlemagne, "An Artificial Kingdom moves closer to its end", *Charlemagne's Notebook – The Economist*, 14 June 2010;

Reading class 2:

Charlemagne, "A model of distrust", *The Economist*, 12 June 2010, p. 42; Rory Watson, "A year in trance", *The Bulletin*, June 2011, pp. 24-28; "Belgium's new government, an end to waffle?" *The Economist*, 3 Dec 2011

Week 5: News Item presentations

Week 6: Belgians, Identity and food: Guest lecture Peter Scholliers

Reading class 1:

Peter Scholliers, "Inventing a Belgian cuisine: food and national sentiments in a young state (1830s-1930s)"; Hettie Judah, "Food – more snacks now", *The Bulletin*, December 20 2007, pp. 44-45.

Class 2:

Guest Lecture Peter Scholliers

Week 7: Exam Review and mid-term exams

Week 8: Belgian identities and founding myths

Reading class 1:

Bart Kerremans, "The Flemish Identity: Nascent or Existent?" *Res Publica*, 39, 1997, pp. 303-314; Bart Maddens, Roeland Beerten, Jaak Billiet, "The National Consciousness of the Flemings and the Walloons. An Empirical Investigation", in: Kas Deprez and Louis Vos (eds), *Nationalism in Belgium. Shifting Identities, 1780-1995*, MacMillan Press, Houndsmill, 1998, pp. 198-208;

Reading class 2:

Serge Govaert, "A Brussels Identity? A Speculative Interpretation", in: Kas Deprez and Louis Vos (eds), *Op. cit.*, 1998, pp. 229-239; Roland Lloyd Parry, "Tongue-tied tension", *The Bulletin*, April 28 2005, pp. 14-17. Presenters only: Martine Van Berlo, "A Belgian Tale: A Family, A Nation, A History", in: Benno Barnard et al., *Op. cit.*, 2005, pp. 33-40;

Week 9: Belgian experience 20th century: wars, language, politics and compromises.

Reading class 1:

Larry Zuckerman, *The Rape of Belgium – the untold story of World War I*, New York University Press, New York, 2004, pp. 1-21; Sophie De Schaepdrijver, “Champion or Stillbirth? The symbolic uses of Belgium in the Great War”. in: Benno Barnard et al., *Op. cit.*, 2005, pp. 55-81; Herman Balthazar, “Belgium Since World War I”, in: Marina Boudart, et al., (eds.) *Op. cit.*, 1990, pp. 73-78;

Reading class 2:

Werner Warmbrunner, *The German Occupation of Belgium 1940-1944*, Peter Lang, New York, 1993, pp. 43-61; Dick Leonard, “Report details ‘years of shame’”, *The Bulletin*, Feb. 22, 2007, pp. 7-8; Martin Banks, “Lives on the line for freedom”, *The Bulletin*, Jan. 10, 2008, p. 24; Cleveland Moffet, “The man who would be Rex”, *The Bulletin*, July 31, 2008, pp. 16-17.

Week 10: Visit to the Brussels Museum of Fine Arts

Reading class 1:

Francine-Claire Legrand, “Architecture, Painting and Sculpture”, in: Marina Boudart, et al., (eds.) *Op. cit.*, 1990, pp. 487-507; “Illuminating Ensor”, *The Bulletin*, July 17, 2008, pp. 14-15; Presenters: Jacques De Decker, “Theater, Dance and Cinema”, in: Marina Boudart, et al., (eds.) *Op. cit.*, 1990, pp. 508-513.

Class 2:

Visit to the Fine Arts Museum

Week 11: The Belgian economy: past and present

Reading class 1:

Pieter Saey, Christian Kesteloot, Christian Vandermorten, “Un-equal Economic Development at the Origin of the Federalization Process”, in: Kas Deprez and Louis Vos (eds), *Op. cit.*, 1998, pp. 165-176; Kris Deschouwer, *Op. cit.*, Houndmills, 2012, pp. 217-224;

Reading class 2:

Dick Leonard, “The row over Belgium’s bill”, *The Bulletin*, June 22, 2006, p. 13; “Belgian beer. Brewed Force”, *The Economist* Dec 17 2011; Peter Philip, “Why Flanders is the star”, *The Bulletin*, Aug. 30, 2007, pp. 16-18; Dan Colwell “Four wheels good”, *The Bulletin*, October 12, 2006, pp. 46-47.

Group presentations: TBA

Week 12-13: Spring Break

Week 14: Belgium, Europe and the Transatlantic relation (Visit to the Federal Parliament)

Reading class 1:

Wilfried Swenden, “What – if anything – can the European Union learn from the Belgian federalism and vice versa?”, *Regional and Federal Studies*, 15, 2, 2005, pp. 187-204; Craig Winneker, “A special relationship”, *The Bulletin*, October 12, 2006, pp. 50-52.



Class 2:

Visit to the Federal Parliament

Week 14: European Culture a Sociological Approach

Reading class 1:

Review of the readings of week 10. Classes will be based on 'La Distinction' by Pierre Bourdieu (English translation, 1984). Summary of both classes will be provided.

Reading class 2:

Royal Museum for Central Africa, *Memory of Congo – The Colonial Era, Selection of Exhibition Texts*, Tervuren, 2005; Martin Ewans, "Belgium and the Colonial Experience", *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 11, 2, 2003, pp. 167-180; Martin Meredith, *The State of Africa. A History of Fifty years of Independence*. Free Press, London/New York, 2005, pp. 93-115; Simon Robinson, Vivienne Walt, "The deadliest War in the World" *Time*, June 5 2006, pp. 30-33.

Week 15: Belgium's colonial experience and the multicultural society: Migrants and the Belgian experience. Visit to VZW Foyer in Molenbeek

Reading class 1:

Patrick Loobuyck, Dirk Jacobs, "Migration and Integration Policy in Belgium and Flanders", in: Wim Vermeersch (Ed.), *Op. cit.*, Ghent, 2009, pp. 19-27. Bob Van den Broeck, "How Diverse is Flanders?" in Wim Vermeersch (Ed.), *Op. Cit.* Ghent, pp. 31-37; Jan De Zutter, "The Hijab in School: Between Truth and Pragmatism" in Wim Vermeersch (Ed.), *Op. Cit.* Ghent, pp. 86-88. Leo Cendrowicz, "Remembering Marcinelle", *The Bulletin*, June 22, 2006, pp. 12-13; Leo Cendrowicz, "Staying a mensch", *The Bulletin*, Jan. 19, 2006, pp. 14-17; Bart Maddens, Jaak Millet, Roeland Beerten, "National identity and the attitude towards foreigners in multi-national states: the case of Belgium" *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 26, 1, 2000, pp. 45-60; Anne Morelli, Jean-Philippe Schreiber, "Are the Immigrants the Last Belgians?", in: Kas Deprez and Louis Vos (eds), 1998, pp. 249-257; Brian Beary, "Detained without charge", *The Bulletin*, July 20, 2006, pp. 11-13.

Class 2:

Final day for handing in the final Essay.

Week 16: Review - Final Exam

Online Resources: TBA

Course Materials

Readings

- Anne Morelli, Jean-Philippe Schreiber, "Are the Immigrants the Last Belgians?", in: Kas Deprez and Louis Vos (eds), 1998, pp. 249-257
- Bart Kerremans, "The Flemish Identity: Nascent or Existent?" *Res Publica*, 39, 1997, pp. 303-314

- Bart Maddens, Jaak Millet, Roeland Beerten, "National identity and the attitude towards foreigners in multi-national states: the case of Belgium" *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 26, 1, 2000, pp. 45-60
- Bart Maddens, Roeland Beerten, Jaak Billiet, "The National Consciousness of the Flemings and the Walloons. An Empirical Investigation", in: Kas Deprez and Louis Vos (eds), *Nationalism in Belgium. Shifting Identities, 1780-1995*, MacMillan Press, Houndsmill, 1998, pp. 198-208;
- "Belgian beer. Brewed Force", *The Economist* Dec 17 2011
- Bob Van den Broeck, "How Diverse is Flanders?" in Wim Vermeersch (Ed.), *Op. Cit.* Ghent, pp. 31-37
- Brian Beary, "Detained without charge", *The Bulletin*, July 20, 2006, pp. 11-13.
- Brigid Graumann, "Drawn and quartered", *The Bulletin*, May 24 2007, pp. 14-15
- Charlemagne, "A model of distrust", *The Economist*, 12 June 2010, p. 42; Rory Watson, "A year in trance", *The Bulletin*, June 2011, pp. 24-28; "Belgium's new government, an end to waffle?" *The Economist*, 3 Dec 2011
- Charlemagne, "An Artificial Kingdom moves closer to its end", *Charlemagne's Notebook – The Economist*, 14 June 2010
- Cleveland Moffet, "The man who would be Rex", *The Bulletin*, July 31, 2008, pp. 16-17
- Craig Winneker, "A special relationship", *The Bulletin*, October 12, 2006, pp. 50-52.
- Dan Colwell "Four wheels good", *The Bulletin*, October 12, 2006, pp. 46-47.
- Dick Leonard, "Report details 'years of shame'", *The Bulletin*, Feb. 22, 2007, pp. 7-8
- Herman Balthazar, "Belgium Since World War I", in: Marina Boudart, et al., (eds.) *Op. cit.*, 1990, pp. 73-78;
- Dick Leonard, "The row over Belgium's bill", *The Bulletin*, June 22, 2006, p. 13
- Francine-Claire Legrand, "Architecture, Painting and Sculpture", in: Marina Boudart, et al., (eds.) *Op. cit.*, 1990, pp. 487-507
- "Illuminating Ensor", *The Bulletin*, July 17, 2008, pp. 14-15
- Presenters: (Jacques De Decker, "Theater, Dance and Cinema", in: Marina Boudart, et al., (eds.) *Op. cit.*, 1990, pp. 508-513)
- Jan De Zutter, "The Hijab in School: Between Truth and Pragmatism" in Wim Vermeersch (Ed.), *Op. Cit.* Ghent, pp. 86-88
- Jean Stengers, "National Sentiment", in: Marina Boudart, et al., (eds.) *Op. cit.*, 1990, pp. 86-97.
- Kris Deschouwer, *Op. cit.*, Houndmills, 2012, pp. 217-224;
- Kris Deschouwer *The Politics of Belgium. Governing a Divided Society*, 2nd revised "edition, Palgrave MacMillan, Houndmills, 2012, pp. 18-77, and 148-175
- Larry Zuckerman, *The Rape of Belgium – the untold story of World War I*, New York University Press, New York, 204, pp. 1-21
- Leo Cendrowicz, "Remembering Marcinelle", *The Bulletin*, June 22, 2006, pp. 12-13
- Leo Cendrowicz, "Staying a mensch", *The Bulletin*, Jan. 19, 2006, pp. 14-17
- Luc De Heusch, "Ceci n'est pas la Belgique", in Catherine Labio, "Belgian Memories", *Yale French Studies 102*, Yale University Press, 2002, pp. 11-23;
- Martin Banks, "Lives on the line for freedom", *The Bulletin*, Jan. 10, 2008, p. 24
- Martin Ewans, "Belgium and the Colonial Experience", *Journal of Contemporary European Studies*, 11, 2, 2003, pp. 167-180
- Martin Meredith, *The State of Africa. A History of Fifty years of Independence*. Free Press,

London/New York, 2005, pp. 93-115

- Presenters only: (Martine Van Berlo, “A Belgian Tale: A Family, A Nation, A History”, in: Benno Barnard et al., *Op. cit.*, 2005, pp. 33-40;)
- Patrick Loobuyck, Dirk Jacobs, “Migration and Integration Policy in Belgium and Flanders”, in: Wim Vermeersch (Ed.), *Op. cit.*, Ghent, 2009, pp. 19-27
- Peter Philip, “Why Flanders is the star”, *The Bulletin*, Aug. 30, 2007, pp. 16-18
- Peter Scholliers, “Inventing a Belgian cuisine: food and national sentiments in a young state (1830s-1930s)”; Hettie Judah, “Food – more snacks now”, *The Bulletin*, December 20 2007, pp. 44-45.
- Pieter Saey, Christian Kesteloot, Christian Vandermotten, “Un-equal Economic Development at the Origin of the Federalization Process”, in: Kas Deprez and Louis Vos (eds), *Op. cit.*, 1998, pp. 165-176
- Piet Van de Craen, “What, If Anything, Is a Belgian”, in Catherine Labio, *Op. cit.*, Yale, 2002, pp. 24-33
- Reginald De Schrijver, “Belgium Until World War I”, in: Marina Boudart, Michel Boudart, René Bryssinck, (eds.) *Modern Belgium*, Society for the Promotion of Science and Scholarship, Palo Alto, 1990, pp. 54-72
- Royal Museum for Central Africa, *Memory of Congo – The Colonial Era, Selection of Exhibition Texts*, Tervuren, 2005
- Roland Lloyd Parry, “Tongue-tied tension”, *The Bulletin*, April 28 2005, pp. 14-17.
- Serge Govaert, “A Brussels Identity? A Speculative Interpretation”, in: Kas Deprez and Louis Vos (eds), *Op. cit.*, 1998, pp. 229-239
- Simon Robinson, Vivienne Walt, “The deadliest War in the World” *Time*, June 5 2006, pp. 30-33.
- Sophie De Schaepdrijver, “Champion or Stillbirth? The symbolic uses of Belgium in the Great War”. in: Benno Barnard et al., *Op. cit.*, 2005, pp. 55-81
- Tony Judt, “Is There a Belgium?”, in: Benno Barnard et al., *How can one not be interested in Belgian History. War, language and consensus in Belgium since 1830*. Trinity College Dublin, Academia Press, Ghent, 2005, pp. 13-32
- Werner Warmbrunner, *The German Occupation of Belgium 1940-1944*, Peter Lang, New York, 1993, pp. 43-61
- Widukind De Ridder, “On the ‘Absence of Spirit’: The legacy of the abstinence from revolution in Belgium”, in: Gareth Stedman-Jones, *The 1848 Revolutions and European Political Thought*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 2018
- Wilfried Swenden, “What – if anything – can the European Union learn from the Belgian federalism and vice versa?”, *Regional and Federal Studies*, 15, 2, 2005, pp. 187-204