This study abroad course takes students to Europe for 24 days and features visits to:

- Belgium: Brussels and surroundings
- Netherlands: Amsterdam/Hague
- Scotland: Edinburg

**Option 1: “Southern Trip”**
Evolution of Government and Society
- Siena/Florence
- Rome
- Greece: Athens/Mykonos
- Istanbul

**Option 2: “Northern Trip”**
European Integration and Identity
- Berlin
- Prague
- Stockholm
- Dublin

This trip, sponsored by the Political Science Department, provides an international experience that is invaluable to a student’s resume and future career options. Students who participate in the seminar are from a variety of majors and backgrounds and the instructors consider the trip as an interdisciplinary education experience. The goal of the seminar is to provide students with a meaningful and thought provoking trip.
Introduction

Students will have an opportunity to visit the major historical and cultural sights of these cities as well as hear lectures from experts in international and European politics.

The program will employ hands-on learning to provide students with an experiential understanding of early political thought and political systems. This is not your typical study abroad course where students go to a foreign country and take classes at a host university. It is a holistic approach that maximizes the international experience.

The holistic experience means students should get an appreciation of not only the history of European political systems, but gain an understanding of European society and culture both past and present. To achieve this end, we will not only focus on historical trends of various states, but also compare these with contemporary issues. In addition we will consider changes in culture and society as depicted in the art and architectural treasures of Europe.

Students also will have the opportunity to visit some of the world's greatest historical monuments, such as the Coliseum in Rome, the Vatican Museum, the Berlin Wall, Charles Bridge, Grand Place, Blue Mosque, Dail Eireann (Irish Parliament), Trinity College, and the Acropolis. Lectures will be given on site by the course instructors.

Interests

Students with an interest in any of the following will find this a valuable, life changing experience.

- International Politics
- Political Economy
- European History
- Art
- Sociology
- Organizational Structures
- Culture & People
- Architecture
- Food

Fast Facts

- All majors are welcome - we prefer diversity
- Taken for 6 Political Science credits
- Register through Shippensburg Extended Studies Office
- Summer Financial Aid is available for students taking six credits in the summer.
European Integration and Political Economy—Itinerary

(Everyone will participate in this portion)

Edinburgh, Scotland

On 18 September 2014 Scotland will hold a referendum on whether the country should seek independence from the rest of Britain. This year’s seminar will begin with a visit to Edinburgh, one of the most beautiful cities in Europe, to meet scholars, politicians and students in order to learn about the debates surrounding the referendum and its possible implications. Our hosts will be Dr. Murray Leith, Dr. Duncan Sim, of the University of the West of Scotland, and some of their students. Dr. Leith is one of the foremost authorities on Scottish nationalism and the co-author of Political Discourse and National Identity in Scotland. Dr. Duncan Sim is an expert on Scottish immigration to the United States and author of American Scots: The Scottish Diaspora and the USA.

While recovering from our jetlag, we will tour the Royal Mile, see the residence of the Queen in Scotland and climb Arthur’s Seat.

Brussels

Our arrival on the Continent will be in the Capital of Europe, Brussels Belgium. Modern Belgium encompasses an area that has been claimed by all the major powers of Europe. During the Renaissance its cities, including Brussels, were part of an international commercial center and felt the influence of the great Italian, Dutch and English Renaissance thinkers and artists. Brussels is also conveniently located within a three-hour train ride to Paris, Amsterdam, and many other destinations in France, Germany, Holland, and Belgium. Today, Brussels is not only the capital of Bel-
gium, but in many ways it is the capital of Europe with many institutions having their headquarters in and near the city.

While in Brussels students will be staying with host families. These host families will be situated around the northern suburb of Brussels in two small towns called Aalsenburg and St. Genesius-Rode.

The focus of the course in Brussels is to gain knowledge through meeting with decision-makers and visiting sites. Examples of what we will be doing:

- Taking a city tour of Brussels highlighting the political and historical developments of the famous Grand Place and tracing Belgium’s role in European history overall.
- Visiting the beautiful medieval town of Bruges.
- A briefing at the European Parliament
- Several guest lecturers will discuss Belgian history and its role in modern Europe.
- We will also study the state of modern European integration with visits to NATO and SHAPE headquarters, including a meeting with NATO officers.
- Meetings with local entrepreneurs to discuss the development of and maintenance of businesses in an age of globalization.
- Visiting the former World War II concentration camp of Breendonk.

Amsterdam

We will travel to The Hague, the center of international law and jurisprudence. Our itinerary is to receive a briefing at the International Criminal Court and take a tour of the Peace Palace, which houses the International Court of Justice. If possible we will have the opportunity to sit in on one of the trials. Students will have time to explore Amsterdam’s famous museums (Van Gogh Museum, Rijksmuseum, Anne Frank House) and the numerous canals of the city.

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**Trip Option 1  Evolution of European Government and Society**
Rome

We will spend three days in Rome. As Ancient Rome has been the model for many of our western institutions of government, society, and culture, it is a great place to start in order to understand the heritage of European institutions. While in Rome, we will visit the site of the ancient Forum, the Coliseum and other famous ruins. We will also tour the Vatican Museum to see the treasures housed there, as well as develop an understanding of the role of the Church in European history. A favorite activity is sitting at a café on one of the many squares or searching for an outdoor concert.

Siena/Florence

Siena is a college town that, apart from having a beautiful and active city center called the Campo, contains numerous interesting treasures. We will discuss the various governmental structures of these Renaissance city states and enjoy their historical treasures. In addition, we will use Siena as a launching pad for Florence. Students will be given a tour of the Uffizi Gallery, which houses the major art treasures of the Renaissance. In addition they will be given tours of several palaces and churches in the city. A favorite activity is joining the hordes of students/travelers/revelers who congregate at night at the Campo.

Athens

Athens is the birth place of western civilization and we will visit the Acropolis and Forum and discuss the contributions made by the classical Athenians to politics and cultures. We will have a chance to visit the famous Plakia neighborhood with its medieval streets and busy modern nightlife. In addition we will visit the National Museum, home to an impressive well organized gallery of sculptures.
Free Time: Greek Islands

You will be given three days to do whatever you want. Your options are to stay in Santorini (almost everybody’s favorite), visit Naxos (known for its interesting landscapes and hiking) or to carouse the famous beaches, towns and (if you can afford it) nightlife of Mykonos. You cannot go wrong with any of these choices. In late May, lodging tends to be very reasonably priced and abundant.

Istanbul

Istanbul is at the crossroads of many civilizations, old and new. Apart from being the only major city to straddle two continents, it has been the capital of the Byzantine and Ottoman empires. In the Cold War it was the southern flank of the NATO alliance. In the War on Terrorism it is the lynchpin between East and West. Turkey borders numerous countries (many unstable) including Iraq, Syria, Iran, Armenia, Greece and Georgia. It is an Islamic country with a secular governmental structure. In Istanbul we will discuss contemporary issues and visit such sites as the Grand Bazaar, Blue Mosque, Hagia Sophia, Topkapi Palace and Basilica Cistern.

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Trip Option 2

European Integration and Identity: Globalization, Politics and the Future of Europe

Stockholm, Sweden

Stockholm is one of the great cities of Scandinavia that is largely unknown to American tourists. The city is a major political, cultural and historic center of Northern Europe. It rests on fourteen islands, which provides for many photographic opportunities. While in Stockholm, the seminar will discuss topics such as immigration, defense and social services; all important issues in the upcoming Swedish general elections in September 2014. While in Stockholm we will have a briefing from an English-language journalist based in the city and consider the portrayal Swedish and Viking heritage at the National Museum.

Berlin, Germany

Germany’s tumultuous past and its pivotal position in Central Europe makes it a fascinating case study in European politics. The process of putting back together a city, divided for forty years by the Berlin Wall, was a monumental task. We will examine the process of reintegration as well as the process of developing a political identity in a country that has had a history with which many take exception. The seminar will ponder the question what it means to be a German citizen in today’s world.

Activities: Guided tour of the Reichstag building, home to the German Federal parliament; Pergamon Museum; Story of Berlin Museum; Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe; walking tour of Berlin; an interview with a locally-based journalist; dinner at a Bavarian-style restaurant.
Prague, Czech Republic

Prague is one of the most beautiful cities in the world. Since the collapse of the communist government in 1989, Prague has been one of the most popular destinations for travelers. Journalist Alan Levy declared Prague the new Left Bank of the 1990s, meaning that it was the new center for the arts, politics and culture, supplanting Paris. Since that time, Prague has been a destination for artists, backpackers and tourists alike. Prague has been significant throughout history as the center of the Holy Roman Empire, the site of the Second Defenestration of Prague, which was the proximate event of the Thirty Years War, and more recently the Prague Spring of 1968 and the Velvet Revolution of 1989.

Activities: Briefing at the Prague Post, Visit to the Jan Palach and Jan Hus Memorial, Tour of Prague Castle; Briefing at Radio Free Europe and Radio Prague, tour of the Museum of Communism

Dublin and Ireland

Free Time: Students will have an opportunity to independently explore Ireland outside of Dublin, any of which could include Cork, Galway or Waterford. They will have an opportunity to design their own weekend and explorations. Irish cities and small towns have plenty of opportunities for music, history, hiking, walking and exploration.

Few countries have benefited more from the EU than Ireland. It has experienced incredible economic growth but is now feeling the economic downturn as hard as any country. It has a fascinating history and relationship with Great Britain. Ireland did not attain its independence until 1922. Its long and turbulent history has many lessons for students of politics, including integration, economic development, human rights and identity politics. While Irish independence is relatively recent, its recorded history...
dates back several centuries. Dublin is a city that reflects Irish history and nationalism, as well as key aspects of Irish identity.

Activities: Briefings and tour of Dáil Éireann (Irish Parliament); 1916 Rebellion Walking Tour; Tour of Croke Park Stadium, meeting with members of the Irish Parliament.

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The Online Component

Before departing we will post online orientation components. This will include a survey of European history from the Roman Empire to the present, including an introduction to the various political systems and an overview of what to expect from an international experience. In addition, current trends and various cultures will be examined in order to understand the current context and the culture of the places we will be visiting. Students will obtain a basic knowledge of political economy and the international governmental organizations crucial to trade and security. An emphasis will be placed on examining the many current controversies in these areas. Finally, students will be oriented to understand the cultural norms and practices of the continent and will be expected to observe, to the best of their ability, culturally-sensitive behavior while on the seminar.
The Instructors
Dr Mark Sachleben, Dr. Niel Brasher and Dr. Sally Brasher will be conducting the program. Mark and Niel are professors in the Political Science department at Shippensburg University. Mark teaches international and comparative politics. He has traveled extensively in Europe and has participated and led several academic excursions to the continent as well. His research and teaching interests include European national politics as well as the study of the European Union as an international organization. Niel teaches political economy and policy analysis. He has previously taken sixteen different university groups to Europe. He has spent two years running The American University’s highly successful study abroad program in Brussels. Sally is a professor in the History Department at Shepherd University in West Virginia. She teaches medieval, early modern and women’s history. Sally has conducted extensive research in Italy and Belgium and has taken ten different university groups to Europe.

Logistics
Program Costs: Program costs (includes: airfares, lodging, bus transportation, field trips, entrance fees, activities, some meals) are $3690. In addition, students need to pay tuition for the six credits. For instate students this is about $2000. Students taking 6 credits in the summer are eligible for financial aid loans—including program costs. Students must secure their own passports.

Eligibility and Rules
Typically we attract students from a variety of backgrounds. While there are some political science and history students, they normally make up less than a third of the trip membership. There are no academic pre-requisites for this trip. We look for people who are in good academic standing (e.g. no probationary students) and have a good attitude, who interact well with others and have an open mind toward learning. We can and will teach you everything else. Students learn a great deal about politics, history and economics, but they report learning much more about other cultures and themselves.

We find this type of program attracts a wide variety of interesting people. They self select themselves by their eagerness to take the risk to go on such a trip and historically we have had almost a 100 percent satisfaction rate. Most report it is the most valuable learning experience they have had in college.

We are teachers and facilitators, not chaperones. Students are treated like the adults that they are. We have very few rules. They mostly consist of the need to treat others (locals, tour guides, bus drivers, colleagues) with respect, attend all sessions, be attentive at all sessions, no drugs and no excessive drinking. Students who violate the rules will be dismissed from the program.

We will be using a variety of forms of transportation. Students will be responsible for carrying their own luggage and keeping track of their personal belongings. There is a great deal of walking and hiking so students need to be in reasonably good shape.

Application
A $350 non-refundable deposit is required with your application. The deposit will only be refunded should the student not be accepted into the program. Airfare ($1100) will be due early winter or whenever we find the best rate. The balance of $2240 will be due April 15 or when the student’s financial aid check arrives, if needed. Applications will be accepted until the program is filled; however, to insure consideration, applications should be received by 1 December 2013. Make your check payable to Shippensburg University/Brussels Study Abroad.

Application link = http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ship2014