Something is rotten in the state of European democracy. Or so at least many scholars and pundits would claim. This seminar investigates the state of the art in social scientific research on the challenges confronting democratic practice in the European Union and in its member-states. The seminar is organized according to the idea that social science identifies real-world problems, critically examines the diagnoses of such problems, and takes account of changing features of the world that exacerbate or ameliorate the existing problem.

Expectations: The seminar depends on everyone having closely read the texts for each session; it depends for its intellectual vitality on the active engagement of all participants. To facilitate researcher involvement, we will (after the first class session) ask students to present and defend an intellectual position taken in the readings during one session. We reserve the right also to “cold-call” throughout the term: that is, to stimulate student involvement by asking seminar participants to share their opinions on a point under discussion at any given time, without advance warning.

I. The Problem

Session 1, October 5 2010

Governance and EU Democracy: Whence Comes EU Legitimacy?

- Fritz Scharpf, Governing in Europe: Democratic and Effective?, pp. 1-83, 156-204.

Session 2, October 12 2010

The Democratic Deficit

- Suggested Reading: Debate between Yves Mény and Andrew Moravcsik in EUI Review
Session 3, October 22 2010 [this week meeting on Friday 15:15-17:00, not Tuesday]

(National) Politics and EU Democracy


Session 4, October 26 2010

(Transnational) Politics and EU Democracy

- Notre Europe, 2006. “Politics: The Right or the Wrong Sort of Medicine for the EU? Two Papers by Simon Hix and Stefano Bartolini.”

II. The Usual Suspects

Session 5, November 2 2010

Political parties, party systems and EU Democracy

- EUDO Report on a European Party System 2010
Session 6, November 16 2010

Voters and EU Democracy


Session 7, November 23 2010

Is the United States a Democratic Model for the EU?


III. Crisis and Avenues of Institutional Innovation

Session 8, November 30 2010

Referendums and EU Democracy


Session 9, December 7 2010

Democratic Innovations and EU Democracy
• Papadopoulos, Yannis, 2005. “Implementing (and radicalising) art. 47.4 of the Constitution: is the addition of some (semi-) direct democracy to the nascent consociational European federation just Swiss folklore?”, Journal of European Public Policy, 12:3: 448-467.
• Bertelsmann Report on the ECI

Session 10, December 14 2010

The economic crisis and EU Democracy