SCANDINAVIAN POLITICS

Objectives
This course examines the politics of the five Scandinavian (or Nordic) countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. Scandinavia is noted for its peacefulness, class and gender equality, strong labor unions and social democratic parties, expansive welfare states, law-abiding citizens, high standards of living, and high prices and taxes. We will explore these and other Scandinavian characteristics, with three main objectives: (1) to familiarize you with Scandinavian politics and society, (2) to cover important scholarly topics and debates as they relate to Scandinavia, and (3) to engage you in discussion and writing. Class meetings will include lectures, discussion, and films. Students will benefit from having some background in comparative politics, for example Political Science 11 or an equivalent. Some familiarity with European politics and history will also be helpful, but not a prerequisite. The course will be supported by a TritonEd (Blackboard) account, where lecture files and assignments will be uploaded. There will be no podcasts or i-clicker assignments.

Responsibilities and Grades
Your course assignments will include (1) a paper, (2) an in-class midterm, and (3) an in-class final examination. In-class tests will consist of objective as well as essay questions. The paper can be either on a topic chosen by you and approved by the instructor, or on your choice among a set of topics assigned by the instructor. The midterm and the paper will count equally toward course grades before adjustment for participation. If your final exam grade is better than the average of your midterm and paper, your final will count 50% toward the course grade and each of the other assignments 25%. In the opposite case, each major assignment will count one-third. You will be expected to attend class and participate in class discussions, and course grades may be adjusted, up or down, for participation (up to 10%). You will need to complete all the written assignments to pass the course. Tests will be based on lectures, presentations, and readings. Late papers will be penalized. Incompletes or special exams will be given only for timely petitions in pressing and properly documented cases in accordance with UCSD policy.

Academic Integrity
Fair and effective education requires academic honesty, any violation of which (such as cheating) is a serious matter. The General Catalog spells out UCSD regulations concerning academic integrity. Note especially that plagiarism, i.e., submitting as your own work or without proper attribution something done wholly or in part by another person, is strictly prohibited. This includes unauthorized collaboration on course assignments as well as heavy reliance (e.g., copying passages more or less verbatim) on unattributed sources. Unless otherwise indicated, all course assignments are individual, and you are not permitted to collaborate with any person in or outside this class. In-class tests will be closed-book, with no aids allowed. We will without exception report any suspected case of academic dishonesty to the Academic Integrity Office for disciplinary action.

Books and Materials
The following books have been ordered by the UCSD bookstore:
These books will be supplemented by additional readings. All readings below are required and will be placed on library reserve in hard copy or e-reserve.

Calendar
Tentatively, the midterm has been scheduled for February 10, and the papers will be due on March 8. The final examination will be given on Friday, March 24, between 11:30am and 2:29pm, location TBA. All dates and class schedules are subject to change.

COURSE OUTLINE AND READINGS

January 9-11:  Introduction: The Nordic Societies
Arter, chap. 1.
Bengtsson, pp. 1-7.
Booth, Introduction.
Bergman and Strøm, chap. 2.
Study Questions:
1. What are the boundaries of the Nordic region?
2. What makes the Scandinavian countries distinctive?

January 13-18:  Vikings, Kings, and Queens
Booth, Denmark, chaps. 1-2.
Nordstrom, pp. 1-37 and 52-78.
Study Questions:
1. How did the Vikings affect Europe, and why did they suddenly become peaceful?
2. Margrethe I and the Kalmar Union: Precursors of the European Union?

January 20-23:  Nordic Competition and Conflict
Booth, Denmark, chaps. 1-2 and 10.
Study Questions:
1. Why should we remember Christian IV and Gustavus Adolphus?
2. Why did Sweden eclipse Denmark as the Nordic great power?

January 25-27:  Industrialization, Nationalism, and Democratization
Arter, chap. 2.
Booth, Iceland, chaps. 3
Study Questions:
1. How have the Nordic countries been pioneers of modern democracy?
2. How did colonialism and industrialization affect Scandinavia?

January 30:  Political Culture
Arter, chap. 9.
Bengtsson, chap. 4.
Booth, Denmark, chaps. 4-6, 11-12, 14; Iceland, chap. 5; Norway, chaps. 1, 4, 7; Finland, chaps. 1-3; Sweden, chaps. 1-3.
Study Questions:
1. Why do the Nordic countries have such high levels of social trust?
2. What aspects of Nordic culture are most likely to confuse or frustrate foreigners?

February 1-3: Parliaments and Governments
Arter, chaps. 6 and 11-12.
Bengtsson, chap. 2.
Bergman and Strøm, chaps. 1, 3-7, 10.
Study Questions:
1. Why are the Nordic legislatures called “working parliaments,” and how does it matter?
2. Are Nordic political leaders a cross-section of their populations?

February 6: Political Executives
Arter, chap. 13.
Bergman and Strøm, chap. 2 (review) and the relevant parts of chaps. 3-7.
Booth, Sweden, chap. 10;
Study Questions:
1. Why do the Scandinavian countries still have monarchies?
2. How have political checks and balances come to be more important in Scandinavia?

February 8-15: Political Parties and Voters
Arter, chaps. 3-5 and 7-8.
Bengtsson, chaps. 3, 6, and 8-10.
Bergman and Strøm, chap. 8.
Study Questions:
1. What is special about the Nordic five-party model, and is it still alive?
2. Why have Nordic voters become so much more fickle?

February 10: MIDTERM EXAMINATION

February 17: The Rise and Decline of Social Democracy
Arter, chaps. 4-5, 10.
Bengtsson, chaps.
Study Questions:
1. Why has the Swedish Social Democratic party been so spectacularly successful?
2. How has social democracy shaped Scandinavia?

February 22: Corporatism and Economic Policy
Arter, chap. 10.
Booth, Iceland, chaps 1-2; Norway, chaps. 5-6.
Study Questions:
1. What is the purpose of corporatism?
2. Why did Sweden, Finland, and Iceland need to be turned around?

February 24: Gender and the Roles of Women
Booth, Finland, chap. 7; Sweden, chap. 9.
Study Questions:
1. Why have the Nordic countries in recent decades become so woman-friendly?
2. How has the strong presence of women affected Scandinavian politics?

February 27 – March 1: The Welfare State
Booth, Denmark, chaps. 3, 7-9; Finland, chap. 6; Sweden, chap. 11.
Study Questions:
1. How has the Nordic welfare state changed from the Great Depression to the 21st century?
2. Will the Nordic welfare state go bankrupt?

March 3-6: Immigration and Integration
Booth, Norway, chaps. 2-3; Sweden, chaps. 4-6.
Rose, chaps. 1, 3-4, and 6.
Study Questions:
1. Why are some Nordic countries still much more ethnically homogeneous than others?
2. Do the recent terror incidents mean that the Nordic countries have failed to integrate immigrants and ethnic minorities?

March 8: PAPERS DUE

March 8: Civil Liberties and the Rule of Law
Booth, Denmark, chap. 14; Sweden, chaps. 4 and 6.
Rose, chaps. 7 and 10.
Study Questions:
1. Why are Scandinavians so law-abiding?
2. What are the differences between civil liberties in Scandinavia and the United States?

March 10-13: The Nordic Region and Europe
Arter, chap. 18.
Booth, Finland, chaps. 4-5
Study Questions:
1. Why have the Nordic countries been so Euro-skeptic?
2. How did World War II and the Cold War affect Nordic attitudes toward Europe?

March 15: The Nordic Region and the World
Arter, chaps. 16-17.
Booth, Iceland, chap. 5; Epilogue.
Christine Ingebritsen, Scandinavia in World Politics (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2006), chap. 2.
Study Questions:
1. Why have the Nordic countries become global agenda-setters?
2. How have key individuals shaped Nordic international engagement?

March 17: Summary and Review

March 24: FINAL EXAMINATION