The European Union (EU), including its precursors, the European Communities, has always been a security organization. Its primary security contributions have been to facilitate Franco-German reconciliation, and to strengthen stability and enhance prosperity among its member states. The progressive enlargement of the EU to include most European countries has helped to expand a zone of stability and prosperity throughout the Continent. Nevertheless, a series of setbacks in recent years—notably the euro crisis, the migration crisis, and the rise of populism and illiberal democracy—has shaken the foundations of the European project. Britain’s departure from the EU (Brexit) provides an additional jolt.

Beyond its borders and potential borders (the outer limits of possible enlargement), the EU is a security actor, mostly though the provision of soft security, but increasingly as a provider of hard security as well. EU trade and development policies have a security as well as an economic purpose. Since the early 1990s, the EU has been developing a Common Foreign and Security Policy, which now includes a burgeoning Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP). Under the auspices of the CSDP, the EU has been involved in a number of civilian and military peacemaking and peacekeeping operations.

This course will examine the EU’s contribution to regional and global security at a time of growing instability throughout the world. Sessions will focus on the nature and purpose of the EU; EU institutional arrangement and security-related policies; and the EU’s involvement with particular countries, such as China, Russia, and the United States. The course will also explore particular challenges facing the EU today, such as Brexit and the still unresolved euro and migration crises.

Instructor: Professor Desmond Dinan, ad personam Jean Monnet Chair, Schar School of Policy and Government; e-mail ddinan@gmu.edu

Office Hours and Location: Wednesdays before class (16:00-19:00) in the Schar School office, Research Hall, room 359; and by appointment at other times of the week at the Arlington Campus.

Learning Outcomes:

Knowledge of the EU; its security-related institutional arrangements and policies
Ability to communicate effectively in both oral and written forms, applying appropriate rhetorical standards (e.g., audience adaptation, language, argument, organization, evidence, etc.)

Ability to apply critical thinking skills to EU security-related issues and concerns

Readings: There are two required books: Anne Marie Le Gloannec, Continent by Default: The European Union and the Demise of Regional Order (Cornell University Press, 2017); and Robert Kagan, The Jungle Grows Back: America and Our Imperiled World (Knopf, 2018). In addition, students will be required to read a number of articles, speeches, government documents, and policy papers. The readings for each week of the semester will be e-mailed to students in advance. Students are recommended to keep up to date on developments in and relating to the EU, by reading relevant newspapers and newsletters, such as the Financial Times (FT), the Guardian, Politico Europe, and EurActiv.

Assignments: The assignments for this course are a research paper (max 10,000 words) and two short presentations, relating to the paper (one presentation mid-semester on research in progress; another presentation at the end of the semester on the research results). Students will select their research topic early in the semester, in consultation with the instructor. The grading for the assignments is as follows: final paper 70%; presentation on research in progress 10%; presentation on research results 20%. The timeline for the assignments is as follows:
Select research topic: by February 13
Submit paper outline and preliminary list of sources (optional): by February 27
Make presentation on research in progress: to be scheduled mid-semester
Submit draft final paper (optional): April 17
Make presentation on research results: to be scheduled for May 1 and May 8
Submit final paper: May 1
Note: There are no exams in this course

Class Format: Students are expected to read the material in advance, and to come to class prepared to discuss what they have read. Readings for each week will be e-mailed to students well before each session. Classes will usually begin with a brief discussion of current EU and global affairs, before a discussion of a particular topic, according to the course syllabus.

Class Schedule:

Weeks 1 and 2 (January 23-30)
Introduction to the course; The EU Today: Challenges; Responses; and Institutional Arrangements
Note: Class will not meet during Week 1, on January 23; class will meet for the first time on January 30

Week 3 (February 6)
The European Communities: Origin and Development of a New Security Entity

Week 4 (February 13)
From Community to Union

Week 5 (February 20)
EU Enlargement

Week 6 (February 27)
Threats to EU Stability: The Crisis Years

Week 7 (March 6)
The European Neighborhood Policy; Ukraine and Russia

Week 8 (March 13)
Spring Break: No Classes

Week 9 (March 20)
The Common Security and Defense Policy

Week 10 (March 27)
EU Security Strategies: Trade, Development, and Climate Change

Week 11 (April 3)
The EU, Turkey, and the Middle East

Week 12 (April 10)
The EU and the US

Week 13 (April 17)
The EU and China

Week 14 (April 24)
Security Implications of Brexit for the UK and the EU

Week 15 (May 1)
Discussion and Presentations

Week 16 (May 8)
Discussion and Presentations