COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course offers an introduction to comparative political economy. We will discuss core theoretical perspectives as well as a variety of topics and debates in the field of comparative political economy. This course does not explore comprehensively all of the issues and debates related to this field; instead, it focuses on those core debates and issues that will enable you to develop a sufficient understanding of this subject matter and prepare you for further study and specialization in the field.

This course is divided into two parts. The first part explores the theoretical and empirical bases of arguments relating to the political economy of economic growth. This is followed by a discussion of the politics of redistribution: the (re)distributive effects of political institutions and the varieties of welfare states.

COURSE MATERIALS


Here are some suggestions on how to conduct research and write papers from other professors of political science:

- http://www.ruf.rice.edu/~leeds/Leedsrespaperguide.pdf
- http://qcpages.qc.edu/Political_Science/researching.html


**GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS**

All students are expected to do all the readings for the week, to read the review papers and to come prepared for participation. In doing the readings it may be useful to keep the following questions in mind as you write these review papers:

- What are the central issues at stake in this literature?
- What are the principal arguments of the works under study?
- How does each relate to the debates in the field?
- What are the main theoretical or empirical strengths or weaknesses of these studies?
- How valuable and viable is the theory that each proposes? How effectively does it marshal empirical evidence in support of the argument?
- How well have the scholarly disputes been resolved?
- What further work might still be done to resolve remaining scholarly disputes?

Grades in the class will be based on the following items:

**Research Paper (40%)**

You will submit a 12-15 page paper displaying original research and related to one of the themes of the course. These research papers will contain (1) a theoretical argument, engaging with one of the key themes of the course and (2) an empirical test of that argument. The empirical may be quantitative or qualitative. The main requirement is that the analysis has the potential to falsify your argument. A paper proposal describing a literature review, the hypothesis to be tested and the dataset to be used is due November 13. Final paper is due December 18. Further paper guidelines will be handed out later.

**Short Review Papers (40%)**

Three or five short review papers of approximately 2 pages each. Each paper should be a discussion of issues in the readings for one week, and should be distributed to all participants by 4 pm. on Tuesday before class. Papers should not summarize readings, but should present the major theoretical debates and the contribution of readings to that debate, discuss conflicts or inconsistencies, and consider how the literature could be extended. In order to stimulate class discussion, I will ask that you list your first four preferences for the week on which you would like to write. I will then assign students to weeks, so that at least two people in the seminar have reviewed the material under study.

**Participation (20%)**

Participation will be factored into your final grade.
CLASS SCHEDULE

I. Methodology

Week 1 (September 4) Introduction

Week 2 (September 11) The Science in Social Science


Week 3 (September 18) No Class

Week 4 (September 25) Causality and Endogeneity


Week 5 (October 2) Selection Bias


**Week 6** (October 9) No Class

### II. Political Economy of Growth

**Week 7** (October 16) How Rich Countries Got Rich and Why Poor Countries Stay Poor?


*Catching-Up*


**Week 8 (October 23) Literature Review Due**


**Week 9 (October 30) Regime Type and Economic Growth: Is Democracy Good for Growth?**


### III. Comparative Political Economy

**Week 10 (November 6) Perspectives on the Welfare State**


**Inequality and Redistribution**


**Week 11 (November 13) Paper Proposal**


**Week 12 (November 20) Regime Type and Redistribution: Why do not the Poor Soak the Rich?**


**Week 13** (November 27) Political Institutions and Redistribution


**Week 14** (December 4) Globalization and Redistribution


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**The Developing World**


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**Week 15 (December 11) The Consequences of Inequality**

**Inequality and Democratization**


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**Inequality and Political Behavior**


**Week 16 (December 18) Mock Conference: Paper Presentation**