



APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2006/2007

GRA 5916 Core Concepts in Political Economy

Program

Common Course, Master of Science in Political Economy

Responsible for the course

Rune Sørensen

Department

Public Governance

Term

According to study plan

ECTS Credits

6

This is an introductory political science course. It requires no previous knowledge and is primarily designed for students taking the MSc in Political Economy, but may also be taken by other MSc students. The focus is on the fundamental core concepts in political economy.

The central themes include institutions and public choice; varieties of capitalism and political systems; and international relations and international political economy.

Objective

This course provides an introduction to the concepts at the core of political economy in general, in terms of institutions and policy making as well as with respect to both national and international political economy. It is designed to introduce the students to the core concepts in the study of political economy and set the scene for the specialisation courses in the MSc in Political Economy programme. The first set of themes relate to democratic theory and constitutional design, and to institutional theories. This includes focus on how institutions order political and economic decision-making and on the interaction between the two, and introduces theories of the state, welfare and justice. The second broad theme links these questions to the development, spread and prevalence of liberal democracy. Core questions include institutional design and the delegation of power, how citizen input is translated into policy, as well as different mechanisms for citizen control and public choice analyses of the growth of state spending.

Prerequisites

A Bachelor's degree qualifying for admission to the MSc programme.

Compulsory literature

Books:

Lijphart, Arend. 1999. *Patterns of democracy : government forms and performance in thirty-six countries*. New Haven, Conn. : Yale University Press. Chapters 1,2,3,4 5, 14,16 and 17
Mueller, Dennis C. 2003. *Public Choice III*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press. Selected chapters.

Chapter 1,2 and 3 (Origins of the state)
Chapter 5, only pp. 79-91 (Median voter theorem)
Chapter 9 (Exit, voice, and disloyalty)
Chapter 10 (Federalism)
Chapter 11 and 12 (Party Competition)
Chapter 13, only pp. 264-266 (Multiparty systems)
Chapter 15 (Rent seeking)
Chapter 16 (Bureaucracy)
Chapter 17, only pp. 386-388 (Legislatures and bureaucracies)
Chapter 20 (Interest groups, campaign contributions, and lobbying)
Chapter 21 (The size of government)

Collection of articles:

Compendium of Journal Articles, including articles/chapters by R. Hardin; J. Rawls; K. A. Shepsle/M. S Bonchek; F. Scharpf; G. Tsebelis, G. W. Cox; A. Przeworski; P. Pierson; J. G. March/J. P. Olsen; J. Frieden/D. Lake; R. Palan; B. Jessop; S. Gil/D. Law; S. Peterson.

Recommended literature

Books:

Cohn, Theodore H. 2005. Global political economy : theory and practice. 3rd ed. New York : Pearson/Longman
Dunleavy, Patrick. 1991. Democracy, bureaucracy and public choice : economic explanations in political science. New York : Harvester Wheatsheaf
Hall, Peter A. and David Soskice. 2001. Varieties of capitalism : the institutional foundations of comparative advantage. Oxford : Oxford University Press
Laver, Michael. 1997. Private desires, political action : an invitation to the politics of rational choice. London: Sage Publications
North, Douglass C. 1990. Institutions, institutional change and economic performance. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press
Olson, Mancur. 2000. Power and prosperity : outgrowing communist and capitalist dictatorships. New York : Basic Books
Strange, Susan. 1990. States and markets. 2nd ed. London : Pinter Publishers
Wilensky, Harold L. 2002. Rich democracies : political economy, public policy, and performance. Berkeley, Calif. : University of California Press
Wittman, Donald A. 1995. The myth of democratic failure : why political institutions are efficient. Chicago : University of Chicago Press

Other:

Individual journal articles and book chapters available in the library and/or electronically will be recommended as further reading.

Course outline

1. Introduction to political economy: democracy, institutions and decision making; institutionalism and rational choice theories of the state; legitimacy, welfare and theories of justice.
2. Public choice and institutional design, how institutions affect games and outcomes; private desires and public goods, collective action problems; control mechanisms.
3. Governance problems related to decentralization and fiscal federalism, bureaucracy and political governance, rent seeking and interest groups, and the growth of governance.
4. The spread of liberal democracy and varieties of capitalism: comparative analysis of the institutions of liberal democracy; elections, party competition and citizen control.

Computer-based tools

None

Course structure

36 hours of lectures.

Evaluation

Your course grade will be based on the following activities and weights:

30% Class work (in the form of a mix of some/ all of the following: hand in of case write ups, projects, and homeworks; presentations and class participation; in class midterm and quizzes). Final written 3 hour exam accounts for 70% of the grade. Both parts of the evaluation need to be passed in order to get a grade in the course.

Specific Information regarding any aspect of student evaluation will be provided in class. It is the student's responsibility to obtain this information. Please note that whilst attendance is not compulsory, it is the students responsibility to obtain any information provided in class that is not included on the course homepage/Blackboard or text book. Homepages and/or Blackboard are not designed for the purpose of students who choose not to attend class.

Evaluation code(s)

GRA 59161 accounts for 100 % of the final grade in the course GRA 5916.

Aids at the examination

Bilingual dictionary

Makeup exam

Re-takes are only possible at the next time a course will be held. When course evaluation consists of class participation or process elements, the whole course must be re-evaluated when a student wants to retake a exam. Retake examinations entail an extra examination fee.

Honor Code

Academic honesty and trust are important to all of us as individuals, and they are encouraged and

promoted by the honor system. This is a most significant university tradition. The honor system is the responsibility of students. As faculty, we share the commitment to the ideals of the honor system.

At no time should notes or papers or personal consultations based on previous semesters of this course be used. As part of the honor code papers handed in as part of the course is, at the discretion of the professor, scanned for plagiarism. We are using Safe Assignment in Black Board for this purpose. Any violation of the honor code will be dealt with in accordance with BI's procedures on cheating. These issues are a serious matter to everyone associated with the program. They are at the heart of the Honor Code and academy integrity. If you have any questions about your responsibilities under the honor code, please ask.