



APPLIES TO ACADEMIC YEAR 2010/2011

GRA 5916 Core Concepts in Political Economy

Programme

Core Course, Master of Science in Political Economy

Responsible for the course

Department

Term

According to study plan

ECTS Credits

6

Language of instruction

English

Introduction

This is the introductory political economy course. It is designed for students taking the MSc in Political Economy, or a 'minor' in Political Economy. The focus is on the fundamental core concepts in political economy.

The central themes include political institutions and decision making.

Learning outcome

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. Students will explore problems of democratic decision making, including questions of equality and efficiency. 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 reading

Books:

Lijphart, Arend. 1999. Patterns of democracy : government forms and performance in thirty-six countries. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press

Shepsle, Kenneth A. and Mark S. Bonchek. 2010. Analyzing politics : rationality, behavior, and institutions. 2nd ed. New York : W.W. Norton

Collection of articles:

Compendium of Journal Articles

Other:

A list of compulsory readings will be provided on It's learning or in class.

During the course there may be hand-outs and other material on additional topics relevant for the course and the examination.

Recommended reading

Books:

Mueller, Dennis C. 2003. Public choice III. Rev. and expanded ed. of Public choice II. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Selected chapters

Course outline

1. Introduction to political economy
2. Democratic institutions and decision making, including electoral systems.
3. Public and private goods
4. Majority voting and voting rules
5. Interest groups and rent seeking

6. Delegation and the role of bureaucracies
7. International organisations and supranational governance

Computer-based tools

It's learning

Learning process and workload

A course of 6 ECTS credits corresponds to a workload of 160-180 hours.

Please note that while attendance is not compulsory in all courses, it is the student's own responsibility to obtain any information provided in class that is not included on the course homepage/It's learning or text book.

Examination

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

30% Class work (in-class midterm exam).

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 student evaluation beyond the information given in the course description will be provided in class. This information may be relevant for requirements for term papers or other hand-ins, and/or where class participation can be one of several elements of the overall evaluation.

This is a course with continuous assessment (several exam elements) and one final exam code. Each exam element will be graded using points on a scale (e.g. 0-100). The elements will be weighted together according to the information in the course description in order to calculate the final letter grade for the course. You will find detailed information about the point system and the cut off points with reference to the letter grades on the course site in It's learning.

Examination code(s)

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

Examination support materials

A bilingual dictionary.

Exam aids at written examinations are explained under exam information in our web-based Student handbook. Please note use of calculator and dictionary.

<http://www.bi.edu/studenthandbook/examaids>

Re-sit examination

It is only possible to retake an examination when the course is next taught.

The assessment in some courses is based on more than one exam code.

Where this is the case, you may retake only the assessed components of one of these exam codes.

Where this is not the case, all of the assessed components of the course must be retaken.

All retaken examinations will incur an additional fee.

Additional information

Honor Code

Academic honesty and trust are important to all of us as individuals, and represent values that are encouraged and promoted by the honor code system. This is a most significant university tradition. Students are responsible for familiarizing themselves with the ideals of the honor code system, to which the faculty are also deeply committed.

Any violation of the honor code will be dealt with in accordance with BI's procedures for cheating. These issues are a serious matter to everyone associated with the programs at BI and are at the heart of the honor code and academic integrity. If you have any questions about your responsibilities under the honor code, please ask.