PSCI 3092 Comparative Political Economy

Course Description

The term Political Economy is a broad and sometimes over-used term that describes a strain of research found in all sub-fields of Political Science. Put simply, Political Economy is comprised of two distinct traditions: 1) the study of how politics and economics interact; 2) the study of political behavior through the use of models traditionally used in economics. This class will expose students to both traditions and will evaluate questions of economic growth, political stability, inequality, corruption, welfare spending, taxation etc. from an interdisciplinary perspective, featuring analytical frameworks and insights from political science, economics, gender studies, history, sociology, and social and cognitive psychology. In the course of the class we will examine how domestic institutions and interests structure the prospects for growth and stability in a country and we will analyze the driving forces behind economic development and underdevelopment, transitions from state-dominated to market-dominated economies, and sustained economic maturity. The examples featured in the class cover a broad geographic and chronological spectrum and include resource-cursed and war-torn economies in Africa as well as (against the odds) successful African cases (Mauritius), economic success stories from East Asia (South Korea and Japan), transitioning economies from the former communist and post-communist world of Eastern Europe (the Soviet Union and Russia, Poland, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Bulgaria), and mature market and social democracies, such as Germany, Scandinavia, and the UK.

Course Requirements

Presentations: 10%
In-class Exam 1: 25%
In-class Exam 2: 25%
Debate or Final Paper: 10%
Final Exam: 15%
Movie entries: 5%
Participation and Attendance: 10%

Presentations:

You will be expected to give a 10 min presentation on how a specific political and/or economic and/or societal institution in a country of your choice has led to three positive or negative socio economic outcomes. You will do this in groups. The presentations will be 10% of your final grade.

Exams:
There will be three exams in this class. The midterms are not cumulative and will focus on the first and second major topics of the class: The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment and The Political Development of Communism and Post-communist Transitions. The final will be cumulative and will feature questions from all sections of the class including the third and final one - the Political Economy of Advanced Industrialized Democracies. Each midterm will be 25% of your final grade, while the final will be 15%.

Debates:
We will have an in-class Oxford style debate in the end of the semester with two panels arguing two opposing perspectives on whether states or international institutions, such as the IMF, the World Bank, the EU etc, are better equipped to spur growth and development. The 6 volunteers in the debate will be exempt from having to write a final paper for the course but will write and submit outlines of their arguments (talking points). The rest of the class will try to make at least one valuable contribution to the debate. The debate will be 10% of your final grade and will take place on the last day of this class.

Final Paper:
You are expected to write one 5-page paper focusing on two developing or developed countries and explaining what institutions have been responsible for their growth or lack thereof. 10% of the final grade, due May 5th.

Movie Entries:
We will see a number of documentaries in this class. You are responsible to submit two short reactions (max 1 page single spaced) to two documentaries of your choice connecting your impressions with the class readings. These documentaries serve an important goal – to demonstrate the real world applications of the theories and concepts we will be discussing in class. You will submit these in a single word document whenever you have completed the two reaction entries but before April 24th.

Attendance and Participation:
Many of the lectures will be presented in a style that will give plenty of opportunities for in-class participation to the students. The frequency and quality of your comments, as well as your attendance, will shape your final participation grade. If we have one or several pop quizzes in class, those will also factor in your participation grade.

I will grade your work on the following (standard) scale.

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**Required Readings**

All required readings in the course schedule, are available electronically, either through D2L or directly ONLINE.
A few suggested additional news sources are listed below:

- **The Financial Times** (British daily newspaper with quality information)
- **The Economist** (weekly British news magazine with a good comparative perspective)
- **De Spiegel** (popular German news magazine with online content available in English)
- **The New York Times** (decent coverage of various regions across the world)

**Original Work + Honor Code**

It is expected that all work you do in this course represents original work not previously or simultaneously handed in for credit in another course. All work for this course falls under the University’s Honor Code.

**Questions and Absences**

If you have questions about the course, please come see me after class or during office hours. In general I will not be able to answer substantive questions over email. If you have to miss class on the day of an exam, then you must write and explain beforehand in all but the most unusual circumstances. Attendance is required.

**Course Schedule**

**The Political Economy of Development and Underdevelopment**

1. **Jan 18 Introduction and Expectations**
2. **Jan 20 What is political economy** – O’Neill, Patrick. 2010. Essentials, Chapter 4
10. **Feb 8 How to rob Africa 2**
11. **Feb 10 The theory and evidence behind the Resource Curse** – Extensions: civil war opportunities and motivations – “Why Natural Resources Are a Curse on Developing Countries
and How to Fix It” The Atlantic. 2012; and “When are natural resources bad for growth?” Microeconomics. 2013.

13. Feb 15 BBC the curse of oil 2

15. Feb 20 Secrets behind Korea's economic success - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bJ0hMr5TSkl
16. Feb 22 Midterm1

The Political Economy of Communism and Post-communist Transitions


18. Feb 27 The Political Economy of Communism – from Marx to Stalin
19. Mar 1 The Post-communist Transition of Eastern Europe: shock therapy in liberal and illiberal democracies - Vachudova, Europe Undivided, Intro (online) + Illiberal Regimes and the Leverage of the EU
20. Mar 3 The Post-communist Transition of Eastern Europe: shock therapy in liberal and illiberal democracies - - Vachudova, Europe Undivided, Intro + Illiberal Regimes and the Leverage of the EU

21. Mar 6 The Post-communist Transition of Eastern Europe: shock therapy in liberal and illiberal democracies - Vachudova, Europe Undivided, Intro + Illiberal Regimes and the Leverage of the EU

23. Mar 10 The Bulgarian Transition: Bulgaria – the long revolution - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iYzp778OEyo

24. Mar 13 The Bulgarian Transition 2


29. **Mar 24 Midterm 2**

March 27 – 31 Spring Break

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**The Political Economy of Developed Industrial Democracies**


32. **Apr 7 Paper and Debate Presentation**

33. **Apr 10 Comparing Healthcare systems** - Movie Showing: Sick around the world

34. **Apr 12 In class Presentations**

35. **Apr 14 In class Presentations**


38. **Apr 21 Welfare State Retrenchment** – Esping-Andersen, “Why we need a new welfare state?”


5. May 3 - Debate
6. May 5 – Review

Five final points:

(1) If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner so that your needs can be addressed. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at dsinfo@colorado.edu. If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Injuries under Quick Links at Disability Services website (http://disabilityservices.colorado.edu/) and discuss your needs with me.

(2) Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. Please let me know as soon as possible whether arrangements along these lines are in order.

(3) Students and faculty each have responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Those who fail to adhere to such behavioral standards may be subject to discipline. Professional courtesy and sensitivity are especially important with respect to individuals and topics dealing with differences of race, color, culture, religion, creed, politics, veteran's status, sexual orientation, gender, gender identity and gender expression, age, disability, and nationalities. See policies at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/classbehavior.html and at http://www.colorado.edu/studentaffairs/judicialaffairs/code.html#student_code

(4) The University of Colorado Boulder (CU-Boulder) is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working, and living environment. The University of Colorado does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, or veteran status in admission and access to, and treatment and employment in, its educational programs and activities. (Regent Law, Article 10, amended 11/8/2001). For purposes of this CU-Boulder policy, "Protected Classes" refers to race, color, national origin, sex, pregnancy, age, disability, creed, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, or veteran status. Individuals who believe they have been discriminated against should contact the Office of Discrimination and Harassment (ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at http://hr.colorado.edu/dh/

(5) All students of the University of Colorado at Boulder are responsible for knowing and adhering to the academic integrity policy of this institution. Violations of this policy may include: cheating, plagiarism, aid of academic dishonesty, fabrication, lying, bribery, and threatening behavior. All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html and at http://honorcode.colorado.edu