

Sociology 180P

Fall 2016

**Comparative Perspectives on U.S. and European Societies:  
Political Economy**

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Office hours: Mon 11am-12.45pm &

Wed 1.15-2pm, Room 487, Barrows Hall

**Course Description**

This course compares the United States and Europe from a political economy perspective. The course consists of four parts: After an introduction to comparative political economy the first part will deal with theoretical and historical foundations of comparative political economy more generally and the relationship between the US and Europe more specifically. The themes that are covered in this part include concepts such as the world market, global capital, nation states, comparative advantage, dependency, hegemony, embedded liberalism, imperialism, and transnationalism. We will also discuss concepts such as Fordism and Keynesianism and answer questions such as why has the US no working class party and what is the European Union.

The second part of the course will then look more specifically on institutional differences between the US and European countries and related socio-economic outcomes. The topics covered include varieties of capitalism, innovation, industrial relations, welfare states, and inequality. We will also enquire questions such as why has the US no public health care system and is there something such as a European Social Model.

The third part of the course will discuss current challenges and policies faced by the US and European countries, including challenges such as free trade, China as new economic powerhouse, energy security and climate change, as well as migration and integration. As a specific challenge faced by some European countries, we will also talk about the making of the Euro and possible lessons from the US dollar.

The fourth part of the course is devoted to transitions, crisis, and protests. It covers issues such as globalization, neoliberalism, the Great Recession and its specific dynamics in the US and Europe, as well as youth protests and the future of democracy.

## **Organization**

We will meet three times a week: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday from 1-2pm in room 170 Barrows Hall. Each class or each week deals with a specific topic listed in the course schedule below. The topic is also reflected in the assigned readings. In order to be able to follow the content of the class, take part in the discussions, and be prepared for the exam, students are strongly advised to complete and prepare the readings *before* the topic is presented in class. Preparation implies that students can recap the content of the readings, identify the main arguments, and ask questions if they have problems to understand the whole or parts of the text. At two occasions we will watch documentaries that relate to a specific topic of the class. Movies can be a form of recreation, but students should note that the content is relevant for the course.

The main purpose of the course is to learn. And to learn one has to ask questions. Students should therefore never hesitate to ask questions, especially if presentations are difficult to follow or seem unclear (most likely you are not the only one who cannot follow). Presentations that are not understood are a waste of time – for the teacher and for the students. In my experience questions help teachers to make them understandable.

## **Readings**

All readings are available for download at the bcourses website under the heading modules.

## **Assignments and evaluation**

The course evaluation will be based on three components with varying importance for the final grade (see below). Full attendance means that you can miss the class three times in the semester; participation implies that students raise questions and take part in discussions. The take-home exams will consist of two questions that should be answered based on the lecture and the readings and have to be submitted until the dates laid out in the course schedule. The final exam will include five questions on topics covered in the lectures and the readings.

- Attendance and participation 10%
- First take-home exam: 20% (announcement Sept 21, due date: Sept 30 midnight)
- Second take-home exam: 20% (announcement Nov 4, due date: Nov 14 midnight)
- Final in-class exam: 50%

## **Communication**

Communication is very important for a smooth facilitation of the course. Students are strongly encouraged to visit me during my office hours, especially if they encounter any problems to follow the course or to meet the evaluation requirements. Email is a very convenient way of communication, but students should notice that I may need time to respond to emails. Also: if you need to contact me via email, please make sure to use your official Berkeley email account when doing so and refrain from using acronyms or unnecessary abbreviations that might not be understood outside of a social networking context.

## **Academic Honesty**

UC Berkeley's honor code states "As a member of the UC Berkeley community, I act with honesty, integrity, and respect for others." Respect for others also includes respect for the work of other academics. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged or falsely acknowledged presentation of another person's ideas, expressions, or original research as one's own work. Please keep in mind that any paraphrasing or quotation must be appropriately acknowledged. Ignorance of what constitutes plagiarism does not excuse students.

## **Accommodations for Disabilities**

The Disabled Students' Program (DSP) is the campus office responsible for verifying that students have disability-related needs and for planning appropriate accommodations. Students who need accommodations for disabilities must obtain a letter of confirmation from the Disabled Students' Program. If you already possess a Letter of Accommodation from the DSP, please give it to me immediately after receiving it or as soon as possible, so that I might be able to make necessary arrangements in a timely manner.

## **Course Schedule**

### **Aug 24: Introduction**

### **Aug 26: What is comparative political economy?**

## **Part I: THEORETICAL AND HISTORICAL FOUNDATIONS**

### **Aug 29: Global capital and national states**

E. Wood, Global Capital and National States. In M. Rupert & H. Smith (eds.), *Globalization and Historical Materialism*, New York: Routledge, 2002, pp 17-39

### **Aug 31: World market, comparative advantage, and dependency**

H.-J. Chang: Kicking Away the Ladder – Globalization and Economic Development in Historical Perspective, in J. Michie (ed.) *The Handbook of Globalization*, Cheltenham: Edward and Elgar, 2011, pp. 385-394.

### **Sept 2: Hegemony**

R. Cox, Gramsci, Hegemony, and International Relations. *Millennium* 12(2), pp. 162-175

### **Sept 7: Embedded liberalism or new imperialism?**

R. Abdelal & J. Ruggie, The Principles of Embedded Liberalism. In D. Moss & J. Cisternino (eds), *New Perspectives on Regulation*, Cambridge MA: The Dobin Project, 2009, pp. 151-162

### **Sept 9: Transnationalism**

K. Van der Pijl, The Marshall Plan Offensive and Capitalist Restoration in Europe. In his book *The Making of an Atlantic Ruling Class*, 1984, pp. 138-156.

### **Sept 12: American Fordism**

B. Jessop, Fordism and Post-Fordism. A Critical Reformulation. In: A. Scott & M Storper (eds), *Pathways to Regionalism and Industrial Development*, London: Routledge, 1992, pp. 43-65

### **Sept 14: European Keynesianism**

J. Cornwall & W. Cornwall, Foundations of the Golden Age. In their book *Capitalist Development in the Twentieth Century*, 2007, pp.157 -185

### **Sept 16: Why has the US no working class party?**

### **Sept 19: What is the European Union? I**

A. El-Agraa, The Passage to the EU. In his book *European Union Illuminated*, Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, pp. 36-68

### **Sept 21: What is the European Union? II**

ANOUNCEMENT OF THE FIRST TAKE-HOME EXAM

## **Part II: INSTITUTIONAL DIFFERENCES AND RELATED OUTCOMES**

### **Sept 23: Varieties of Capitalism I**

C. Crouch, Typologies of Capitalism. In his book *Capitalist Diversity and Change*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 25-45.

### **Sept 26: Varieties of Capitalism II**

### **Sept 28: Dynamics of adjustment in European capitalisms**

V. Schmidt, Still Three Models of Capitalism? In her book *The Futures of European Capitalisms*,

### **Sept 30: Innovation**

B. Amable, Social Systems of Innovation and Production. In his book *Diversity of Modern Capitalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003, pp. 85-92

DUE DATE OF THE FIRST TAKE-HOME EXAM (Sept 30 midnight)

### **Oct 3: Industrial Relations I**

L. Turner, K. S. Wever & M. Fichter, Perils of the High and Low Roads: Employment Relations in the United States and Germany. In K. S. Wever (ed.), *Labor, business, and change in Germany and the United States*, Kalamazoo, MI: W. E. Upjohn, 2001, pp. 123-155.

### **Oct 5: Industrial Relations II**

### **Oct 7: Welfare States I**

G. Esping-Andersen, The Three Political Economies of the Welfare State. In his book *Three Worlds of Welfare States*, London: Polity Press, 1991, pp. 9-34.

**Oct 10: Welfare States II**

**Oct 12: Why does the US lack a public health care system?**

**Oct 14: Inequality**

J. Pontusson, Rethinking the Trade-off between Growth and Equality. In his book *Inequality and Prosperity*, Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005, pp. 1-14.

**Oct 17: Is there a European Social Model?**

C. Hermann & B. Mahnkopf, Still a Future for the European Social Model? *Global Labor Journal*, 1(3), pp. 314-330.

**Part III: CURRENT CHALLENGES AND POLICIES**

**Oct 19: Trade and regional integration I: The Common Market project**

P. Krugman, Competitiveness: A Dangerous Obsession, *Foreign Affairs* 73(2), pp. 28-44.

**Oct 21: Trade and regional integration II: NAFTA**

J. Stanford, The North American Free Trade Agreement. In J. Michie (ed.), *The Handbook of Globalization*, Cheltenham: Edward and Elgar, 2011, pp. 261-282.

**Oct 24: Movie: The Transatlantic Trade Partnership**

**Oct 26: China**

H. Hung, A Post-American World? In his book *The China Boom*, Columbia University Press, 2016, pp. 115-144.

**Oct 28: Energy**

P. Stevens, The Shale Gas Revolution, Chatman House Briefing Paper, August 2012, pp. 1-12.

**Oct 31: Climate Change**

C. Damro, I. Hardie & D. MacKenzie, The EU and Climate Change Policy. *Journal of Contemporary European Research*, 4 (3), pp.179-192.

**Nov 2: Migration and Integration**

I. Bloemraad & E. de Graauw Immigrant Integration and Policy in the United States. In J. Frideres & J. Biles (eds), *International Perspectives: Integration and Inclusion*. Montreal: McGill-Queens University Press 2012, pp. 205-232.

**Nov 4: The making of the euro: Lessons from the US dollar?**

P. Arestis & M. Sawyer, European Integration and the 'Euro Project'. In J. Michie (ed.) *The Handbook of Globalization*, Cheltenham: Edward and Elgar, 2011, pp. 252-260.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF THE SECOND TAKE-HOME EXAM

## **Part IV: TRANSITIONS, CRISES, AND PROTESTS**

### **Nov 7: The US and the making of global capitalism**

L. Panitch & S. Gindin, A World After Its Own Image, in their book *The Making of Global Capitalism*, London: Verso, 2012, pp. 275-300.

### **Nov 14: From Keynesianism to neoliberalism**

D. Harvey, Freedom's Just Another Word... In his book *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005, pp. 5-38.

DUE DATE OF THE SECOND TAKE-HOME EXAM (Nov 14 midnight)

### **Nov 16: The Great Recession in the US: From housing bubble to financial crisis**

M. Blyth, America: Too Big to Fail? In his book *Austerity. The History of a Dangerous Idea*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 21-50.

### **Nov 18: The Great Recession in Europe: From financial crisis to debt crisis**

M. Blyth, Europe – Too Big to Bail? In his book *Austerity. The History of a Dangerous Idea*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 51-93.

### **Nov 21: Crisis, structural adjustment, and neoliberal convergence**

C. Hermann, Structural Adjustment and Neoliberal Convergence in Labor Markets and Welfare. Competition and Change 18(2), pp. 111-130.

### **Nov 28: Comparing protests: Occupy Wall Street and Indignados**

E. Castaneda, The Indignados of Spain: A Precedent to Occupy Wall Street. *Social Movement Studies*, 11 (3), pp. 309-319.

### **Nov 30: Movie 'Requiem of an American Dream'**

### **Dec 2: Post-Democracy?**

C. Crouch, Why Post-Democracy? In his book *Post-Democracy*, Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004,

FINAL EXAM: place and date to be announced.