

Syllabus
University of Montana
Department of political science
Politics of the World Economy
PSCI 582

Meeting days and times
Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00-12:20 pm
LA 337

Course instructor

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Office hours: Tuesdays, and Thursdays 1:30-2:30 pm, and by appointment

Office: LA 355

Course Description and objectives

This course is a graduate-level introduction to some basic concepts, tools, and problems in international and comparative political economy. Particularly, it seeks to examine the implications of the ‘economic’ relations among ‘states’ (the terms are in quotes because we will further examine these concepts in some depth throughout the class). Since political economy is a vast field (once upon a time it included what is now known as economics) course such as this can only briefly sample the many issues and problems it deals with. Those interested in further study should consider talking to me or other faculty about options available in various social-science departments. Nonetheless, the course does occasionally go into some depth on a number of topics. To that end it would be a good idea to do the readings carefully and spend some time thinking about them. Since this is a seminar, though I will be doing some talking, I will expect active student participation.

Objectives

In addition to building your knowledge about theories and concepts of political economy (see bullet points below), this course also aims to develop several types of skills. First is your critical reading ability - i.e., being able to read and understand what authors are arguing and the strengths and weaknesses of their views. The second is your ability to write clearly - an extremely difficult task that can only be mastered through practice. Virtually no one is a born writer. Virtually everyone can be a good - even outstanding - writer. Focused papers will help to develop your skills. Third the course encourages you to develop your “public” speaking skills – albeit a very accepting and public. There is a heavy emphasis on student participation and discussion in each class, along with more structured presentations and debates. Finally some of the work is accomplished in small groups. Working in groups is a developed skill and hopefully the discussions and projects we do will contribute to it. Be assured that your grade in the course will be based overwhelmingly on your individual performance.

By the end of this course you should be able to:

- Understand and critically examine the concepts of “the market,” “the state,” and the relationship between the two.
- Understand the historical antecedents of (many) political-economy explanations; for instance those having to do with the distributional effects of trade between countries under different circumstances/conditions.
- Understand, and explain the various factors that account for governmental economic policies (both ‘fiscal’ and ‘monetary’)
- Understand (and examine) the concept of “economic development” and be able to critically reflect on arguments about long-term economic “growth.”

Readings

Most of the readings from books will be posted on the class moodle site. Journal articles are available on jstor.org or other databases (even a google search will pull up the articles).

Course requirements

1. 20%: First paper
2. 20% Second paper
3. 40% a research proposal (between 5000 and 6500 words) on a topic of your choice. You should consult with me within the first three weeks of the semester to decide on your respective topics. We will have additional subsequent consultations, including over preliminary drafts (you should submit at least one for me to comment on). The research proposal will generally consist of the following components:

The research proposal will generally consist of the following components:

- A statement of the research question, which addresses the following questions: (1) why is the question important, given the present state of knowledge? (2) How does the question fit into current conversations/ arguments; if it does not, why should the question be included?
- A literature review, which succinctly summarizes what, if anything, has been written about the question, and what have been some of the approaches to answering it (if any). The review should also point out—if possible—some of the shortcomings of the extant ways of either looking at/conceptualizing and/or answering the question.
- A summary of the alternative argument that explains how it improves on or adds to the existing debate. Remember that this does not have to be the “final” argument; it can be an interesting alternative argument that illuminates a new aspect of the question or makes one think differently about it (of course you will have to say why it should be “interesting”).
- A description of how the project will be completed, which addresses the following questions: (1) what kind of evidence will be advanced to support the argument (for instance, will there be a case study, or some kind of comparative study)? (2) Why is such evidence appropriate for the question asked? (3) How will such evidence be collected?

The proposal will be judged by the following criteria:

- Does it contain the components enumerated above? If not, is there a good reason not to include all of them?
- Is the question clear? Is it precisely stated?
- Is the project realistically achievable, say as a part of a senior, or master’s (even doctoral) thesis?
- Is the writing clear and coherent? Are there too many spelling and grammatical errors? Are all the works properly cited?

4. 20%: final exam

Assignments must be handed in at the beginning of class on the date assigned (except for the take home final; see below). Late papers will be marked down by 1/3 a grade (e.g., B goes to B-) per day (or any part thereof).

Attendance: More than two unexcused absences will negatively affect your participation grade.

How to Read an Article or Book in Political Science

When analyzing any topic in political science (or any other social science for that matter) it is important to keep methodological issues in mind. When approaching theory, be it IR theory or otherwise, always ask yourself: What is at stake in this article or book? Specifically, you should ask:

- ❖ What is the central question of this book/article? What puzzle is the author trying to explain?

- ❖ What is the central argument? (cause and effect or independent and dependent variables, important intervening variables or scope conditions)
- ❖ What are the competing arguments?
- ❖ What are the strengths and weaknesses of this argument versus the competing arguments?
- ❖ What evidence does that author present that is convincing...or not?
- ❖ So what? Why does this matter? What are the policy implications? What are the theoretical implications?

By approaching your readings with these questions in mind you will be able to extract the relevant information from the reading, remember it better, and be able to utilize the ideas more effectively in your papers and exams.

Tips on close reading

Close reading entails reflecting on the text as you are reading, and evaluating the author's argument. Here are a few suggestions for close reading:

Look for the author's argument and the evidence she uses to support it: What is the main claim she makes? With whom is she disagreeing? Then consider your reactions to the author's work: Does this make sense to you? Why or why not? What are the weaknesses of the argument?

- Always read with pencil in hand. Jot down thoughts you want to raise in class. Write your reactions to the text in the margins. Above all, think about what you are reading; if you find yourself turning pages numbly, stop, take a pause, and then refocus on the author's chain of thought.
- Plan your readings to be spaced out in reasonable increments. Thoughtful reading takes time and energy. It is more pleasant and more productive to read over several days than to try and compress all the reading into a couple of nights.
- Try not to use a highlighter. Writing comments (e.g., "good counterpoint to Karl Marx") helps a reader engage with the text, whereas highlighting encourages passivity.
- Keep track of the parts of the text where you had questions, objections, or fierce agreement with the author's points. Note page numbers on a separate sheet of paper. You may also want to use post-it flags for quick reference to key passages.
- When you are done reading, check to see that you can summarize the author's argument in a few sentences. You may want to take 5 minutes and write down this summary, particularly if you are reading several different texts in given week.
- Remember that the goal of close reading is not just to have touched the pages, but to be able to say something about the material and evaluate it.

These tips may seem unfamiliar at first, but can become useful habits when practiced over time.

Additional Info:

- Some of the readings in this course could be difficult. Please do not hesitate to see me in office hours or make an appointment if you feeling like you are having difficulties.
- Some issues generate a substantial clash of ideas. It is important to remember that vigorously debating ideas is NOT incompatible with respecting the people with whom you disagree. Decorum and respect are expected.

- **It should go without saying that the Honor Code will be strictly enforced. Ignorance of the Honor Code is not an excuse. The code can be found at (http://life.umt.edu/vpsa/student_conduct.php If you have any question(s) please see me.**

Disability Services

The University of Montana assures equal access to instruction by supporting collaboration between students with disabilities, instructors, and Disability Services for Students. If you have a disability that requires an accommodation, contact either of us at the beginning of the semester so that proper accommodations can be provided. Please contact Disability Services for Students if you have questions, or call Disability Services for Students (DSS) for voice/text at 406.243.2243. You may also fax the Lommasson Center 154 for more information at 406.243.533.

Course Schedule (this is subject to change)

August 27	Introduction to the class
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August 29	<i>What are social explanations?</i>
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How do we study “reality”? Answer: through necessarily drastic simplification. But how do we do this? How does the subject matter of political economy simplify the world? What does it mean to “explain in the social sciences?”

- Robin Dunbar, “What is this Thing Called Science?” From *The Trouble with Science*, (Harvard, 1996)

September 3	<i>More on Social Explanations</i>
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- Jon Elster, “Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences,” Chapter II, 13-21

September 5	<i>Microfoundations of political economy</i>
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Are people “rational”? If so, how rational? Individually rational or collectively rational?

- Jon Elster, “Nuts and Bolts for the Social Sciences,” Chapter III, 22-39, Chapter IV, 30-41

September 10	<i>Microfoundations continued</i>
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- Mark Granovetter, “Economic Action and Social Structure: The Problem of Embeddedness,” *The American Journal of Sociology*, 91:3 (1985), 481-510
- Amartya Sen, “Rational Fools: A Critique of the Behavioral Foundations of Rational Choice Theory,” *Philosophy and Public Affairs* (1977), pp. 317-344

September 12	<i>Markets: what are they (and in history)?</i>
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- Karl Polanyi, *The Great Transformation*, pp. 43-85
- Charles Lindblom, “The Market as a Prison,” *The Journal of Politics* (44) 2, 324-336

September 17	<i>Markets in History (continued)</i>
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Was Polanyi wrong? If so about what and to what extent? What was he right about?

- Santhi Hejeebu and Deirdre McCloskey, “The Reproving of Karl Polanyi,” *Critical Review* 13, 285-314
- Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism: The Wheels of Commerce*, pp. 223-230

September 19	<i>More about markets</i>
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- Neil Fligstein, “Markets as Politics: A Political-Cultural Approach to Market Institutions,” *American Sociological Review*, 61(4), 656-673

Plus go back to Granovetter above. What does he say about the implication of human behavior for markets?

September 24	<i>The State</i>
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You might have noticed sporadic references to states and their role in the origin and functioning of markets (or detected an implied role of the state in the articles above). But what are states and how did these political entities come into being?

- Charles Tilly, “War Making and State Making as Organized Crime,” From *Bringing the State Back In*
- Hendrik Spruyt, “Institutional Selection in International Relations: State Anarchy as Order,” *International Organization*, Vol. 48, No. 4 (Autumn, 1994), pp. 527-557

First Paper Questions Posted

September 26	<i>What do States do in their dealings with other states (or the relation between power and plenty)?</i>
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- Jacob Viner, “Power Versus Plenty as Objectives of Foreign Policy in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries,” *World Politics* (1) 1, 1-29
- **First Paper due**

October 3	<i>Continued</i>
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- Robert Gilpin, “The Politics of Transnational Economic Relations”, *International Organization*, Vol. 25, No. 3, Transnational Relations and World Politics (Summer, 1971), pp. 398-41

October 8	<i>States and economic interaction: Two Views</i>
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- Stephen D. Krasner, “State Power and the Structure of International Trade” *World Politics*, Vol. 28, No. 3 (Apr., 1976), pp. 317-347

October 10	<i>The Second view</i>
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- Jeff Frieden, “Sectoral Conflict and Foreign Economic Policy, 1914-1940”, *International Organization*, Vol. 42, No. 1, The State and American Foreign Economic Policy (Winter, 1988), pp. 59-90

October 15	<i>Interactions between states and the international system: Three views</i>
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- Timothy J. McKeown, “Hegemonic Stability Theory and 19th Century Tariff Levels in Europe,” *International Organization*, Vol. 37, No. 1 (Winter, 1983), pp. 73-91
- David A. Lake, “The State and American Trade Strategy in the Pre-Hegemonic Era”, *International Organization*, Vol. 42, No. 1, The State and American Foreign Economic Policy (Winter, 1988), pp. 33-58

October 17	<i>The world system?</i>
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- Peter Gourevitch, “The Second Image Reversed: The International Sources of Domestic Politics”, *International Organization*, Vol. 32, No. 4 (Autumn, 1978), pp. 881-912
- Immanuel Wallerstein, “The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis”, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. 16, No. 4 (Sep., 1974), pp. 387-415

October 22	<i>Money</i>
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- Christopher J. Neely, “An Introduction to Capital Controls”
- Jeffrey Frieden, “Invested Interests: The Politics of National Economic Policies in a World of Global Finance,” *International Organization*, Vol. 45, No. 4

October 24	<i>On Economic/Financial Crises</i>
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- Mark Blyth, “The Austerity Delusion,” *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2013
- Mark Blyth, “A Pain in the Athens: Why Greece isn’t to Blame for the Crisis,” *Foreign Affairs*, July 2015
- Yanis Varoufakis, “How Europe Crushed Greece,” *New York Times*, Sept 8, 2015

Second Paper Questions Posted

October 29	<i>We have already been implicitly talking about globalization. Let us make it explicit by using the term (or what is new about ‘globalization’)?</i>
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- Herman Schwartz, “Globalization: The Long View”
- Karl Marx and Fredrich Engles, “The Communist Manifesto”

October 31	<i>“Globalization,” and imperialism</i>
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- Adam Smith, *Wealth of Nations* , Book IV, Chapter VII, Part III

November 5	<i>Continued</i>
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- John A. Hobson, *Imperialism, a Study*, pp. 64-93
- **Second Paper Due**

November 7	<i>How did rich countries get rich? An interesting view</i>
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- Ha-Joon Chang, *Kicking Away the Ladder*, selections
- Ha-Joon Chang, Video excerpts from various talks

November 12	<i>Another View on Development</i>
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- Douglass C. North, “Institutions,” *Journal of Economic Perspectives*, Winter 1991
- Ha-Joon Chang, “Institutions and economic development: theory, policy and history,” *Journal of Institutional Economics*, 7(4): 473-498

November 14	<i>Another historical view</i>
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- Immanuel Wallerstein, “After Developmentalism and Globalization, What”, *Social Forces* 83:3, March 2005

November 19	<i>Globalization: the modern debate</i>
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- Helen Milner, “Globalization, Development, and International Institutions: Normative and Positive Perspectives,” *Perspectives on Politics*

November 21	<i>A debate on “globalization”</i>
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- Jagdish Bhagwati, “In Defense of Globalization,” A video talk

- Joseph Stiglitz, *Globalization and its Discontents*, (New York: WW Norton, 2002) selections
- Sanjay Reddy, “Globalization, Labour Markets, and Social Outcomes in Developing Countries”

November 27	<p><i>Let us rethink some concepts: Is the distinction between ‘power’ and ‘plenty’ (‘Politics’ and ‘Economics’) clear cut, or what the heck is “capital”?</i></p> <p>Presentation/discussion of issue analysis papers (50 mins allocated; 6 presentations)</p>
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- Thorstein Veblen “On the Nature of Capital, I and II” *The Place of Science in Modern Civilization and Other Essays*, pp. 324-387
- Fernand Braudel, *Civilization and Capitalism: the wheels of commerce*, pp. 232-249

November 28	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>
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December 3	<i>Presentation/discussion of issue analysis papers (80 mins allocated; 10 presentations)</i>
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- **Final Exam Posted**

December 5	<i>Presentation/discussion of issue analysis papers (80 mins allocated; remaining presentations)</i>
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Final Exam due on December 10th by 5 pm (I will create a moodle upload link)