

POLITICAL ECONOMY (Div II)

Chair: Professor Darel Paul

Advisory Committee

- Jon M. Bakija, W. Van Alan Clark '41 Third Century Professor in the Social Sciences; on leave Spring 2022
- William M. Gentry, Professor of Economics; on leave Fall 2021
- Cathy M. Johnson, James Phinney Baxter III Professor of Political Science
- Sara LaLumia, Professor of Economics
- James E. Mahon, Woodrow Wilson Professor of Political Science
- James McAllister, Fred Greene Third Century Professor of Political Science; affiliated with: Leadership Studies Program
- Darel E. Paul, Professor of Political Science, Chair of Political Economy Program; affiliated with: Political Economy Program
- Sidney A. Rothstein, Assistant Professor of Political Science
- Lara D. Shore-Sheppard, Chair and Kimberly A. '96 and Robert R. '62 Henry Professor of Economics
- David J. Zimmerman, Professor of Economics and Orrin Sage Professor of Political Economy

The Political Economy major is designed to give students a grasp of the ways in which political and economic forces interact in shaping public policy. The major includes substantial study of the central analytical approaches in both Political Science and Economics and seeks to surmount the sometimes artificial barriers of specialization that may characterize either discipline taken by itself. Three of the required Political Economy courses undertake a conscious merging of the approaches in the two fields. These courses are designed by, and usually are taught jointly by, political scientists and economists. Political Economy 250 examines major theoretical texts in political economy and analyzes economic liberalism and critiques of economic liberalism in the context of current policy issues. Political Economy 401 examines contemporary issues in political economy in their domestic, comparative and international contexts. Political Economy 402 asks students to research and make proposals in policy areas of current importance. Background for the two senior courses is acquired through introductory courses in Economics and Political Science, a course in empirical methods, and elective courses in international, domestic and comparative economics, politics and policy.

Students in Political Economy 402 visit Washington, D.C. Sunday night through Wednesday of the first week of spring vacation to conduct interviews relating to their Political Economy 402 group projects. This is a course requirement and thus a requirement for the major.

MAJOR

The Political Economy major requires students to complete eleven (11) courses: two introductory courses each in Economics and Political Science; one empirical methods course; three core courses specific to the Political Economy Program; and three electives, one from each of three categories. In order to balance students' educations, majors must take at least one elective in Economics and one elective in Political Science; the third elective may come from either Economics or Political Science. In light of the public policy orientation of the program, all majors are also required to complete one course with a substantial experiential education component which is related to the making or effect of public policy. The purpose of the experiential education requirement is for the student to get out into the world and interact with people in cases where the stakes are real, often involving some element of community service or participation in the political process or in the making of or analysis of public policy, in order to learn something about public policy that one cannot get from a purely academic experience. This requirement must be fulfilled prior to taking POEC 402. It can be fulfilled through a regular semester-length course (which might also serve as an elective in the major), a winter study course, a study abroad academic internship, a winter study internship, or a summer internship. The chair distributes a list of approved experiential courses to majors at the beginning of each academic year. For an internship to satisfy the requirement, its focus must be the making or effect of public policy. Approval of the chair is required to use an internship to fulfill this requirement.

Two Introductory Economics Courses

ECON 110 Principles of Microeconomics

ECON 120 Principles of Macroeconomics

Two Introductory Political Science Courses

PSCI 201 Power, Politics, and Democracy in America

PSCI 202 World Politics: An Introduction to International Relations

or PSCI 203 Introduction to Political Theory

or PSCI 204 Introduction to Comparative Politics: State, Nation, and Democracy

One Empirical Methods Course

POEC 253 Empirical Methods in Political Economy

or ECON 255 Econometrics

Three Political Economy Program Courses

POEC 250/ECON 299/PSCI 238 Economic Liberalism and Its Critics

POEC 401 Contemporary Problems in Political Economy

POEC 402 Political Economy of Public Policy Issues

Three Elective Courses

Students must take at least one elective in Economics and at least one elective in Political Science; the third elective may come from either Economics or Political Science.

Please see the online catalog for up-to-date information on which courses are being offered in the current year.

One Comparative Political Economy/Public Policy Course

[ECON 204 / ENVI 234\(S\) LEC Economics of Developing Countries](#)

Taught by: [Michael Samson](#)

[Catalog details](#)

[ECON 213 / ENVI 213 LEC Introduction to Environmental and Natural Resource Economics](#)

Taught by: [Sarah Jacobson](#)

[Catalog details](#)

[ECON 214 / ENVI 212 / POEC 214 TUT The Economics and Ethics of CO2 Offsets](#)

Taught by: [Ralph Bradburd](#)

[Catalog details](#)

[ECON 228 / ENVI 228 TUT Water as a Scarce Resource](#)

Taught by: [Ralph Bradburd](#)

[Catalog details](#)

[ECON 232\(F\) LEC Financial Markets, Institutions and Policies](#)

Taught by: [Neal Rappaport](#)

[Catalog details](#)

[ECON 233\(S\) LEC Behavioral Economics and Public Policy](#)

Taught by: [Matthew Chao](#)

[Catalog details](#)

[ECON 238 / ENVI 238\(F\) LEC Sustainable Economic Growth](#)

Taught by: [Gregory Casey](#)

[Catalog details](#)

[ECON 240 TUT Colonialism and Underdevelopment in South Asia](#)

Taught by: [Anand Swamy](#)

[Catalog details](#)

[ECON 242 LEC Evaluating the Costs and Benefits of Public Policies](#)

Taught by: [Mikael Svensson](#)

[Catalog details](#)

[ECON 348 / ECON 548\(S\) LEC Human Capital and Development](#)

Taught by: [Owen Ozier](#)

[Catalog details](#)

[ECON 377 LEC Inspiration/Perspiration: The Economics of Innovation](#)

Taught by: [Steven Nafziger](#)

[Catalog details](#)

[ECON 378\(F\) LEC Long-Run Comparative Development](#)

Taught by: [Quamrul Ashraf](#)

[Catalog details](#)

[ECON 380 / ECON 519 LEC Population Economics](#)

Taught by: [Lucie Schmidt](#)

[Catalog details](#)

[ECON 381 LEC Global Health Policy Challenges](#)

Taught by: [Susan Godlonton](#)

[Catalog details](#)

[ECON 390 / ECON 536 TUT Financial Crises: Causes and Cures](#)

Taught by: [Gerard Caprio](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 394 LEC European Economic History](#)

Taught by: [Steven Nafziger](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 453 SEM Research in Labor Economics and Policy](#)

Taught by: [Owen Thompson](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 455 SEM Research in Economic History](#)

Taught by: [Steven Nafziger](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 465\(F\) SEM Pollution and Labor Markets](#)

Taught by: [Matthew Gibson](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 470\(S\) SEM The Indian Economy: Development and Social Justice](#)

Taught by: [Anand Swamy](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 476\(S\) SEM Behavioral Economics: Theory and Methods](#)

Taught by: [Matthew Chao](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 477 / ENVI 376 SEM Economics of Environmental Behavior](#)

Taught by: [Sarah Jacobson](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 501\(F\) SEM Economic Growth and Development](#)

Taught by: [Quamrul Ashraf](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 504\(F\) SEM Public Economics in Developing Countries](#)

Taught by: [Jon Bakija](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 505\(F\) LEC Developing Country Macroeconomics I: Theory](#)

Taught by: [Peter Montiel](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 510 / ECON 352\(S\) LEC Financial Development and Regulation](#)

Taught by: [Gerard Caprio](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 514 / ECON 389\(S\) SEM Tax Policy in Global Perspective](#)

Taught by: [William Gentry](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 523 / ECON 379\(S\) SEM Program Evaluation for International Development](#)

Taught by: [Pamela Jakiela](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 532 / ECON 375\(S\) TUT Inclusive Growth and Crisis Response: The Role of Social Protection Systems](#)

Taught by: [Michael Samson](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 534\(S\) TUT Long Term Fiscal Challenges](#)

Taught by: [Peter Heller](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ENVI 387 / ECON 522\(F\) LEC Economics of Climate Change](#)

Taught by: [Matthew Gibson](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[MAST 351 / PSCI 319 / ENVI 351\(F, S\) SEM Marine Policy](#)

Taught by: [Catherine Robinson Hall](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 224\(F\) SEM Neo-liberalism: What Is It and Why Does It Matter?](#)

Taught by: [Michael MacDonald](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 241 / SOC 241 SEM Meritocracy](#)

Taught by: [Darel Paul](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 246 SEM The Politics of Capitalism](#)

Taught by: [Sidney Rothstein](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 247 / ASIA 249 LEC Political Power in Contemporary China](#)

Taught by: [George Crane](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 248\(F\) TUT The USA in Comparative Perspective](#)

Taught by: [James Mahon](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 268 LEC Israeli Politics](#)

Taught by: [Michael MacDonald](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 280 / POEC 280 / STS 280\(F\) TUT Silicon Valley: Digital Transformation and Democracy](#)

Taught by: [Sidney Rothstein](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 287 / POEC 287\(F\) SEM The Firm](#)

Taught by: [Sidney Rothstein](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 289 / POEC 289\(S\) SEM The welfare state in comparative perspective](#)

Taught by: [Sidney Rothstein](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 340\(S\) SEM Why States Fail](#)

Taught by: [Ngonidzashe Munemo](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 342 SEM Beyond the welfare state](#)

Taught by: [Sidney Rothstein](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 351 / GBST 351\(S\) LEC The New Left and Neoliberalism in Latin America](#)

Taught by: [James Mahon](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 352 / GBST 352 LEC Politics in Mexico](#)

Taught by: [James Mahon](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 354 / ASIA 245 / HIST 318 LEC Nationalism in East Asia](#)

Taught by: [George Crane](#)
[Catalog details](#)

One International Political Economy Course

[ECON 215 / GBST 315\(S\) LEC Globalization](#)

Taught by: [Will Olney](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 218 / GBST 218\(S\) SEM Markets, Distrust, and History](#)

Taught by: [Ashok Rai](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 360\(S\) LEC Monetary Economics](#)

Taught by: [Kenneth Kuttner](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 514 / ECON 389\(S\) SEM Tax Policy in Global Perspective](#)

Taught by: [William Gentry](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 515 / ECON 359\(S\) SEM Developing Country Macroeconomics II: Institutions and Policy Regimes](#)

Taught by: [Kenneth Kuttner](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 516 / ECON 366\(S\) SEM International Trade and Development](#)

Taught by: [Will Olney](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 535 TUT International Financial Institutions](#)

Taught by: [Edwin Truman](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 160\(S\) TUT Refugees in International Politics](#)

Taught by: [Cheryl Shanks](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 223 LEC International Law](#)

Taught by: [Cheryl Shanks](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 228\(S\) LEC International Organization](#)

Taught by: [Cheryl Shanks](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 229 SEM Global Political Economy](#)

Taught by: [Darel Paul](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 265 LEC The International Politics of East Asia](#)

Taught by: [George Crane](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 321\(F\) SEM Immigration Politics in the U.S.](#)

Taught by: [Matthew Tokeshi](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[WGSS 211 / ECON 105 SEM Gender in the Global Economy](#)

Taught by: [Kieran Honderich](#)
[Catalog details](#)

One U.S. Political Economy and Public Policy Course

[ECON 203 / WGSS 205 LEC Gender and Economics](#)

Taught by: [Lucie Schmidt](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 205\(S\) SEM Public Economics](#)

Taught by: TBA
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 209 LEC Labor Economics and Policy](#)

Taught by: TBA
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 229 LEC Law and Economics](#)

Taught by: Don Carlson
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 230\(S\) LEC The Economics of Health and Health Care](#)

Taught by: [Lara Shore-Sheppard](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 257 LEC The Economics of Race](#)

Taught by: [Owen Thompson](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 374\(F\) TUT Poverty and Public Policy](#)

Taught by: [Lara Shore-Sheppard](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 383 LEC Cities, Regions and the Economy](#)

Taught by: [Stephen Sheppard](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 456\(F\) SEM Income Distribution](#)

Taught by: [Sara LaLumia](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 468\(F\) SEM Your Money or Your Life: Health Disparities in the United States](#)

Taught by: [Tara Watson](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ECON 538\(S\) TUT Resilience and Macroeconomic Policy](#)

Taught by: [Ralph Chami](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[ENVI 307 / PSCI 317\(F\) LEC Environmental Law](#)

Taught by: [David Cassuto](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 208\(F\) SEM Wealth in America](#)

Taught by: [Cathy Johnson](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 209 / WGSS 209 SEM Poverty in America](#)

Taught by: [Cathy Johnson](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 211 LEC Do the People Govern? U.S. Public Opinion and Mass Political Behavior](#)

Taught by: [Matthew Tokeshi](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 214\(S\) LEC Racial and Ethnic Politics in America](#)

Taught by: [Matthew Tokeshi](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 215 / LEAD 215 SEM Race and Inequality in the American City](#)

Taught by: [Mason Williams](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 216 / LEAD 216\(F\) LEC American Constitutionalism I: Structures of Power](#)

Taught by: [Justin Crowe](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 217 / LEAD 217\(S\) LEC American Constitutionalism II: Rights and Liberties](#)

Taught by: [Justin Crowe](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 250\(F\) LEC Political Psychology](#)

Taught by: [Matthew Tokeshi](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 308 SEM In Search of the American State](#)

Taught by: [Nicole Mellow](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 314 / LEAD 314\(F\) TUT How Change Happens in American Politics](#)

Taught by: [Nicole Mellow](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 315 / LEAD 315 SEM Parties in American Politics](#)

Taught by: [Nicole Mellow](#)
[Catalog details](#)
[PSCI 316\(S\) SEM Policy Making Process](#)

Taught by: [Cathy Johnson](#)
[Catalog details](#)

CREDIT FOR COURSEWORK DONE ELSEWHERE

The three Political Economy Program courses (POEC 250, 401, and 402) must be completed at Williams without exception. Students are strongly encouraged to complete the empirical methods course (POEC 253 or ECON 255) and PSCI 201 at Williams, as versions of these courses offered elsewhere are usually highly imperfect substitutes that will not provide adequate preparation for the senior seminars; students may in rare cases be able to complete either of these requirements during study at another college or university (e.g. during study abroad), but only with prior permission from the chair. The three electives and other introductory courses in Political Science may be completed during study at another college or university (e.g. during study abroad) with permission of the chair. The general policy of the Program is to grant credit for one course per semester abroad and in extraordinary circumstances, credit for three courses for an entire year abroad. Students who score a 5 on the AP exam in Microeconomics, Macroeconomics, or Comparative Government and Politics may receive credit towards the major for the cognate introductory economics or political science course(s). Credit for A levels and IB exams in Economics and for introductory microeconomics and macroeconomics classes taken at other colleges and universities (subject to approval by the Economics department study away coordinator) is given consistent with the current policy of the Economics Department. Students whose economics department placement exam scores allow them to place out of ECON 110 and/or ECON 120 may receive credit towards the major for the corresponding class. No substitute higher-level coursework is required for majors receiving credit in this way, although it is certainly encouraged. Students cannot substitute AP credit for PSCI 201.

RECOMMENDED PROGRESSION THROUGH THE REQUIRED MAJOR COURSES

Students considering a major in Political Economy are encouraged to begin with ECON 110 and 120 and any one of PSCI 201, 202, 203, or 204 in their first year, as these courses are the prerequisites or co-requisites for POEC 250. Students should plan to complete both of their two required introductory PSCI courses during either the first or second year at Williams, as first- and second-year students get enrollment preference in these classes. Students should plan to take POEC 250 and POEC 253 (or ECON 255) during the sophomore and junior years, keeping in mind that both POEC 250 and POEC 253 are offered only in the fall, and that ECON 255 requires STAT 161, STAT 201, or STAT 202 as a prerequisite (STAT 101 will also serve as a prerequisite, but only if taken prior to the fall of 2018). POEC 401, taken fall of senior year, requires POEC 253 or ECON 255 as a prerequisite, so that prerequisite must be completed before the start of senior year. Students should also get started on their electives during sophomore and junior year.

THE DEGREE WITH HONORS IN POLITICAL ECONOMY

Due to the special demands of this interdisciplinary major, the only route to honors in Political Economy is the thesis. Seniors may pursue the honors thesis course (Political Economy 493-W31) during the fall semester and winter study period. The third course contributing to such an honors program would normally be an elective in Political Science or Economics taken during the junior year. This course, which may be one of the required electives, must be closely related, indeed must prepare the ground for the honors thesis.

Juniors in the Political Economy major with at least a 3.5 GPA in the program may apply for the honors thesis program by means of a written proposal submitted to the chair by the end of the first week after spring vacation. Written guidelines for such proposals are available in the chair's office and on the program website. The proposal should have been discussed with at least two faculty members, and at least one faculty advisor from each discipline must be solicited by the student prior to submission of the proposal.

Final decisions about admission to the honors program will be made in late May after spring grades become available.

To achieve the degree with honors in Political Economy, the thesis must be completed by the end of winter study period and be judged of honors quality by a committee consisting of the two advisors and a third reader. A thesis judged to be of particular distinction will qualify its author for the degree with highest honors.

STUDY ABROAD

Despite the fact that Political Economy requires more courses than the typical major, many Political Economy majors go abroad. Since POEC 250 and POEC 253 are offered in the fall, students considering spending only one semester abroad often find spring to be the better choice. Nonetheless, many students study away for the fall or the whole year. Students planning to be abroad in the fall should take POEC 250 in their sophomore year if at all possible. Similarly, it is necessary to plan ahead to find the best way to satisfy the empirical methods requirement (POEC 253 or ECON 255) before the fall of the senior year. The easiest major credits to obtain abroad are the electives in Political Science and Economics.

FAQ

Students **MUST** contact departments/programs **BEFORE** assuming study away credit will be granted toward the major or concentration.

Can your department or program typically pre-approve courses for major/concentration credit?

Yes, in some cases, if appropriate course information is available in advance (e.g. syllabi and/or course descriptions), though students should be sure to contact the department.

What criteria will typically be used/required to determine whether a student may receive major/concentration credit for a course taken while on study away?

Course title and description.

Does your department/program place restrictions on the number of major/concentration credits that a student might earn through study away?

No, although because so many of the classes in the program are Williams-specific, there is an effective limit of 2-3.

Does your department/program place restrictions on the types of courses that can be awarded credit towards your major?

Yes. Only Economics or Political Science courses can be awarded credit, and they must satisfy one of the elective categories (or in rarer cases one of the ECON or PSCI intro requirements).

Are there specific major requirements that cannot be fulfilled while on study away?

Yes.

Are there specific major requirements in your department/program that students should be particularly aware of when weighing study away options? (Some examples might include a required course that is always taught in one semester, laboratory requirements.)

Yes. The POEC major requires 3 specific POEC courses (250, 401, and 402), and one empirical methods course (POEC 253 or ECON 255). The POEC courses are only offered in a single semester (fall for 250, 253, and 401 and spring for 402), and 401 and 402 must be taken in the senior year. 253 can be replaced with ECON 255, which is offered in fall or spring, but ECON 255 has an additional prerequisite of STAT 161, STAT 201, or STAT 202 (STAT 101 can also serve as a prerequisite, but only if taken prior to the fall of 2018).. Studying abroad in POEC requires careful planning.

Give examples in which students thought or assumed that courses taken away would count toward the major or concentration and then learned they wouldn't:

No, but students have discovered upon reaching their destination that the course is different than described so were forced to change or not count the course.

POEC 214 (S) The Economics and Ethics of CO2 Offsets (WS)

Cross-listings: POEC 214 ENVI 212 ECON 214

Secondary Cross-listing

Some electric utilities and other CO2 emission polluters are allowed to purchase carbon offsets to achieve a portion of their mandated emissions cuts, in effect, to pay others to reduce carbon emissions in their stead. Some individuals, college and universities, and for-profit and non-profit institutions have chosen voluntarily to purchase carbon offsets as a way of reducing their carbon footprint. But do offsets actually succeed in reducing carbon emissions? What separates a legitimate offset from one that is not? How should we measure the true impact of an offset? How do carbon offsets compare to other policies for reducing carbon emissions in terms of efficiency, equity, and justice? Is there something inherently wrong about "commodifying" the atmosphere? Is there something inherently wrong about selling or buying the right to pollute? Should colleges and universities be using the purchase of offsets to achieve "carbon neutrality?"

Class Format: This tutorial will be taught remotely via Zoom meetings. Each student will be the tutorial partner of one other student, and each pair of tutorial partners will meet with the instructor for 75 minutes each week. Individual "office hour meetings" will also occur via Zoom meetings.

Requirements/Evaluation: a 5- to 7-page paper every other week; a 3-page written critique every other week; one re-write paper

Prerequisites: ECON 110 or the equivalent, permission of instructor

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: first-year students and sophomores intending to major in Economics and/or to major or concentrate in Environmental Studies

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D2) (WS)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

POEC 214 (D2) ENVI 212 (D2) ECON 214 (D2)

Writing Skills Notes: Each student will write five 5-7 page papers on which I will provide written feedback regarding grammar, style, and argument. Each student will write five 3-page critiques of their partner's papers. As the final assignment, each student will revise one of their five papers.

Attributes: ENVI Environmental Policy POEC Comparative POEC/Public Policy Courses

Not offered current academic year

POEC 250 (F) Economic Liberalism and Its Critics

Cross-listings: ECON 299 PSCI 238 POEC 250

Primary Cross-listing

Economic liberalism holds that society is better off if people enjoy economic freedom. Its critics point to what they believe this position ignores or what it wrongly assumes, and hence, how it would make bad policy. This course explores the relationship between politics and economics by surveying influential works of political economy. Its first part examines major thinkers in relation to the historical development of capitalism in Western Europe and the United States: the classical liberalism of Adam Smith, Karl Marx's revolutionary socialism, and the reformist ideas of John Maynard Keynes. The second part considers mid-20th-century writers who revise and critique economic liberalism from a variety of perspectives, including Friedrich Hayek, Milton Friedman, Ronald Coase, Arthur Okun, and Albert O. Hirschman. The third part surveys significant recent contributions relevant to the themes of the course, with applications to current public policy issues, including topics such as: power relations and autonomy in the workplace; asymmetric information and social insurance; economic inequality and distributive justice; equality of opportunity; the economics of health care; positional goods and the moral foundations of capitalism; economic nationalism and new trade theory; behavioral economics; climate change and intergenerational equity; finance and financial crises; and rent-seeking. The combination of the historical focus of the early part of the course with discussion of modern policy issues and debates in the latter part of the course permits you to appreciate the ongoing dialogue between classical and contemporary views of political economy.

Class Format: This class uses a flipped classroom approach, where before each class meeting, students watch a lecture video, and sometimes write an essay or solve some problems on relating to the assigned reading and video, and then in-person class is devoted primarily to discussion.

Requirements/Evaluation: six short essays, several short homework assignments, and a final exam

Prerequisites: ECON 110 and 120 or equivalent; PSCI 201, 202, 203, or 204 (may be taken concurrently with POEC 250); open to non-majors

Enrollment Limit: 30

Enrollment Preferences: Political Economy majors and sophomores intending a Political Economy major

Expected Class Size: 30

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D2)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

ECON 299 (D2) PSCI 238 (D2) POEC 250 (D2)

Attributes: AMST Critical and Cultural Theory Electives POEC Required Courses

Fall 2021

SEM Section: 01 MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm Jon M. Bakija, James E. Mahon

POEC 253 (F) Empirical Methods in Political Economy (QFR)

This course introduces students to common empirical tools used in policy analysis and implementation. The broad aim is to train students to be discriminating consumers of public policy-relevant research. The emphasis in the course is on intuitive understanding of the central concepts. Through hands-on work with data and critical assessment of existing empirical social scientific research, students will develop the ability to choose and employ the appropriate tool for a particular research problem, and to understand the limitations of the techniques. Topics to be covered include basic principles of probability; random variables and distributions; statistical estimation, inference and hypothesis testing; and modeling using multiple regression, with a particular focus on understanding whether and how relationships between variables can be determined to be causal--an essential requirement for effective policy formation. Throughout the course, the focus will be on public policy applications relevant to the fields of political science, sociology, and public health, as well as to economics.

Requirements/Evaluation: Problem sets, group project, midterm exam, final exam

Prerequisites: MATH 130 or its equivalent; one course in ECON; not open to students who have taken ECON 255

Enrollment Limit: 20

Enrollment Preferences: Political Economy majors, Environmental Policy majors and sophomores

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Unit Notes: does not satisfy the econometrics requirement for the Economics major; POEC 253 cannot be substituted for ECON 255, or count as an elective towards the Economics major

Distributions: (D2) (QFR)

Quantative/Formal Reasoning Notes: The course teaches econometrics, i.e. statistics as economists use it, with applications in economics, political science, and other fields.

Attributes: EVST Methods Courses PHLH Statistics Courses POEC Required Courses

Fall 2021

LEC Section: 01 TF 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm Anand V. Swamy

POEC 280 (F) Silicon Valley: Digital Transformation and Democracy (WS)

Cross-listings: PSCI 280 STS 280 POEC 280

Secondary Cross-listing

Nearly every country in the world seeks to drive economic growth by promoting digital technologies. The universal model is Silicon Valley. In this tutorial, students will examine the origins of the Silicon Valley model and other countries' attempts to emulate it. Departing from "just so" stories of technological determinism, we take up the lens of comparative political economy to investigate the politics that allowed US tech firms to shape economic policy to meet their interests. It is no accident that tech became a symbol for economic growth in the 1970s, precisely when it also began to build powerful alliances in Washington. After investigating the origins of the Silicon Valley model, we trace attempts to adopt it in Europe and Asia, which highlight the model's political contingencies and some of the more salient conflicts over the tech sector. We focus on the ways in which the Silicon Valley model can threaten social welfare through economic inequality and precarious employment, and engage a variety of perspectives, including workplace ethnography, to examine these threats, as well as potential regulatory responses. The course concludes by considering what policies could be appropriate for supporting, while also regulating, the tech sector in the twenty-first century.

Requirements/Evaluation: Five 5-page papers; five 2-page responses; participation

Prerequisites: One introductory course in political science and/or permission of the instructor.

Enrollment Limit: 10

Enrollment Preferences: Preference will be given to sophomores or juniors majoring in a Division II field

Expected Class Size: 10

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D2) (WS)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

PSCI 280 (D2) STS 280 (D2) POEC 280 (D2)

Writing Skills Notes: Students will write essays each week. In addition, students will read each others' work and engage in structured critique.

Attributes: POEC Comparative POEC/Public Policy Courses PSCI American Politics Courses PSCI Comparative Politics Courses PSCI Political

Theory Courses

Fall 2021

TUT Section: T1 TBA Sidney A. Rothstein

POEC 287 (F) The Firm (DPE)

Cross-listings: PSCI 287 POEC 287

Secondary Cross-listing

The rise of gigantic tech firms--Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon--has sparked widespread worries about the role of business power in capitalist democracy. Are these firms monopolies? How can they be better regulated? Should they be? This course studies the politics of business by centering analysis on the firm. From the perspective of the workplace, we investigate the firm as an arena of power, where workers and managers meet each other in continuous contests for control. From the perspective of the public sphere, we investigate the firm as an actor whose power maps uneasily onto the channels of democratic representation. Approaching the firm as both arena and actor in a number of capitalist democracies, we will compare the politics of business across different sectors, but will focus especially on tech and finance.

Requirements/Evaluation: Class participation; two 5- to 7-page essays; one presentation; one final essay

Prerequisites: One introductory course in political science and/or permission of the instructor

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: Preference will be given to sophomores or juniors majoring in a Division II field

Expected Class Size: 15

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D2) (DPE)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

PSCI 287 (D2) POEC 287 (D2)

Difference, Power, and Equity Notes: This course studies power through the lens of class, applying that lens to understand how power functions in the employment relationship, as well as the way that firms exercise power in society more generally.

Attributes: POEC Comparative POEC/Public Policy Courses PSCI Comparative Politics Courses

Fall 2021

SEM Section: 01 TR 9:55 am - 11:10 am Sidney A. Rothstein

POEC 289 (S) The welfare state in comparative perspective

Cross-listings: PSCI 289 POEC 289

Secondary Cross-listing

Modern life has, in some ways, become less risky. You are unlikely to be trampled by a mammoth. But social risk has not disappeared--you could lose your job, get into an accident, or find yourself plunged somehow into poverty. Most countries around the world have built elaborate institutions to ensure citizens' welfare by protecting some people from some risks, but not all people and not all risks. Moreover, these institutions vary considerably both over time and between countries. This course examines those institutions. Our goal is to explain how and why welfare states vary and why there is so much inequality in the distribution of risk. We will do so by investigating the different kinds of institutions that mediate risks throughout the lifecycle, from parental leave to old age pensions, and by comparing these institutions between different countries. While focusing primarily on the welfare states of Western Europe, we will also examine how the politics of social risk unfold around the world, extending our investigation to Africa, Asia, and Latin America. We will conclude by reflecting on what lessons the welfare state offers for managing this century's biggest social risk: climate change.

Requirements/Evaluation: 3 essays; 2 presentations; participation

Prerequisites: One introductory political science course and/or permission of the instructor

Enrollment Limit: 16

Enrollment Preferences: Political science majors, political economy concentrators

Expected Class Size: 16

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D2)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

PSCI 289 (D2) POEC 289 (D2)

Attributes: POEC Comparative POEC/Public Policy Courses PSCI Comparative Politics Courses

Spring 2022

SEM Section: 01 MW 11:00 am - 12:15 pm Sidney A. Rothstein

POEC 388 (S) Comparative Political Economy

Cross-listings: PSCI 388 POEC 388

Secondary Cross-listing

This course examines the relationships between broad economic structures and political institutions. We consider why and how the spread of capitalism led to the birth of democracy in some countries, but dictatorships in others? Here we look closely at whether it is economic development which leads to the spread of democracy. Or whether it is economic crises which make the movement to democracy possible. Finally, we examine whether the emergence of a neoliberal economic order has affected the organization of political society?

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, 4 tutorial-style papers, 6 response papers, 1 revised paper

Prerequisites: PSCI 201-04 or permission of the instructor

Enrollment Limit: 12

Enrollment Preferences: Political Science Majors, Political Economy Majors

Expected Class Size: 12

Grading: yes pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Distributions: (D2)

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

PSCI 388 (D2) POEC 388 (D2)

Attributes: PSCI Comparative Politics Courses

Spring 2022

TUT Section: T1 MWF 10:00 am - 10:50 am Ngonidzashe Munemo

POEC 397 (F) Independent Study: Political Economy

Open to juniors or seniors majoring in Political Economy, with approval of a faculty supervisor and the chair.

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D2)

Fall 2021

IND Section: 01 TBA Darel E. Paul

POEC 398 (S) Independent Study: Political Economy

Open to juniors or seniors majoring in Political Economy, with approval of a faculty supervisor and the chair.

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D2)

Spring 2022

POEC 401 (F) Contemporary Problems in Political Economy

This course examines contemporary problems in political economy at and across diverse spatial scales. Using both Economics and Political Science methods of analysis, students will study the way societies respond to the myriad risks facing its citizens. The goal of this course is both to build upon theoretical debates encountered in POEC 250 as well as to prepare students for the public policy analysis they will do in POEC 402.

Requirements/Evaluation: one 5-7 page paper; one 10-12 page final policy paper; multiple in-class group presentations; class participation

Prerequisites: ECON 110 and 120; PSCI 201; PSCI 202, 203, or 204, or equivalent; POEC 253 or ECON 255 or equivalent, or permission of instructor; open to non-majors

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: Political Economy majors

Expected Class Size: 13

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Unit Notes: required for the Political Economy major

Distributions: (D2)

Attributes: GBST Economic Development Studies Electives POEC Required Courses

Fall 2021

SEM Section: 01 TF 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm Darel E. Paul, David J. Zimmerman

POEC 402 (S) Political Economy of Public Policy Issues

In this course, students form groups that conduct a political and economic analysis of a public policy issue of their choosing. They do extensive reading, conduct interviews, write a major report on their findings and recommendations, and present and defend their findings in a public talk.

Class Format: student presentations

Requirements/Evaluation: group policy projects including an 80- to 100-page paper and 2-hour presentation

Prerequisites: POEC 253 or ECON 255, POEC 250, POEC 401; open only to Political Economy majors

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: open only to Political Economy majors

Expected Class Size: 19

Grading: no pass/fail option, no fifth course option

Unit Notes: required for the Political Economy major

Distributions: (D2)

Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses POEC Required Courses

Spring 2022

SEM Section: 01 MWF 10:00 am - 10:50 am Sidney A. Rothstein, William M. Gentry

POEC 493 (F) Honors Thesis: Political Economy

Political Economy independent study.

Grading: yes pass/fail option, yes fifth course option

Distributions: (D2)

Fall 2021

HON Section: 01 TBA Darel E. Paul

Winter Study -----

POEC 22 (W) Volunteer Income Tax Assistance

Cross-listings: POEC 22 ECON 22

Secondary Cross-listing

This experiential course provides students the opportunity to explore public policy through training and work as volunteer income tax preparers for low-income working people in North Adams, Massachusetts. By the end of the term, students will be IRS-certified volunteer income tax preparers. Students have the option of writing a 10-page analytic essay or serving as tax preparers for local clients of the Berkshire Community Action Council. The course will also offer an overview of the U.S. income tax and the role of the tax system in overall U.S. social policy, especially policy towards lower-income households. Coursework will consist of a series of classes and open lab sessions coordinated with the self-paced IRS "Link and Learn" online tax preparer training program. Class time will be spent discussing policy and program context as well as working through the online training program. A poverty simulation and Q&A sessions featuring guests from local social service organizations and the community will help orient students to the issues facing low-income families in the northern Berkshires. Note: This course satisfies the Political Economy Major Experiential Learning requirement.

Requirements/Evaluation: 10-page paper

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 18

Enrollment Preferences: statement of interest

Grading: pass/fail only

Materials/Lab Fee: none

This course is cross-listed and the prefixes carry the following divisional credit:

POEC 22 ECON 22

Attributes: EXPE Experiential Education Courses

Winter 2022

LEC Section: 01 M-F 10:00 am - 11:50 am William M. Gentry

POEC 31 (W) Honors Thesis: Political Economy

To be taken by students registered for Political Economy 493.

Class Format: thesis

Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2022

HON Section: 01 TBA Darel E. Paul

POEC 99 (W) Independent Study: Political Economy

Open to upperclass students. Students interested in doing an independent project (99) during Winter Study must make prior arrangements with a faculty sponsor. The student and professor then complete the independent study proposal form available online. The deadline is typically in late September. Proposals are reviewed by the pertinent department and the Winter Study Committee. Students will be notified if their proposal is approved prior to the Winter Study registration period.

Class Format: independent study

Grading: pass/fail only

Winter 2022

IND Section: 01 TBA Darel E. Paul