

# PSCI 346 – Comparative Political Economy (Spring 2014)

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Office: Smith House 201  
Office Hours: Mondays 1:15-2:15 & Tuesdays 11:00-12:00  
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## Course Description

This course examines the comparative political economy of the advanced capitalist democracies of the West. Western society is largely defined by its dual commitment to democracy and capitalism; yet, these two systems of organizing political and economic life are often in conflict. The course focuses on how Western countries have adopted differing strategies designed to “smooth the rough edges of capitalism” through a broad array of programs collectively known as the “welfare state,” producing distinctive “varieties of capitalism.” We will explore a number of questions of central concern to scholars of comparative political economy. The first section focuses on how and why different countries have developed different approaches to the “welfare state.” The second section focuses on the contemporary politics of Western welfare states as they seek to meet the challenges of economic globalization, aging populations, and political change. The course concludes with a discussion of how the unique American political economy can be understood in the context of what we have learned about other liberal democratic societies.

## Course Objectives

This course may fulfill one of the breadth requirements for the social sciences and counts as Writing Intensive.

After completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Describe and identify the major features of the political economy of a number of advanced capitalist democracies.
- Understand and explain the major theoretical perspectives relating to the origins and current political dynamics of Western welfare states.
- Apply different theoretical perspectives to specific research questions related to comparative political economy.
- Discuss current issues in American politics and economics by applying a comparative and historical perspective.

## Assignments

Your grade in this course will be made up as follows:

- Class Participation (20%)
- Weekly Reading Responses (35%)
- Research Paper (45%)

## Weekly Reading Responses

Each week, students will be asked to write a two page (single spaced) critical response to the readings for the week. A good reading response will critically assess the reading by analyzing the strengths and weaknesses of the argument presented, discussing the central argument in the context of the broader course, and examining new questions raised by the readings. The purpose of this assignment is to

get you to seriously and critically engage the readings for each week prior to attending class, aiding in your understanding of course material and substantially improving the quality of in class discussion.

The weekly responses will be graded on a scale of zero to two. At the end of the semester, the total of all points received on the response papers will be added up and divided by 20 and then multiplied by 100 to give a percentage, which will constitute your grade on the weekly responses papers. This means that a student receiving ten “2s” would receive full credit as would a student receiving 9 “2s” and two “1s.” Exceeding twenty total points will not result in extra credit.

The assignment for each week is for that week’s readings. For example, for week 2 the response would be to the three chapters by Polanyi. The weekly reading assignments are to be turned in each week on Moodle AND in hard copy. Please, save them in a word readable format. **NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED.** Do not test this- you will be disappointed.

### **Research Paper**

Students will be asked to write a 15 page research paper due at the beginning of the final day of class on Thursday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>. The research paper will examine one of the central questions of comparative welfare state research. Students will be asked to locate and evaluate the available research on their given topic in order to form an answer to their chosen research question. More details concerning the format and topics of the paper will be given at a later date.

### **Readings**

There is no textbook for this class. The readings are a collection of articles and book chapters that I have placed on Moodle under “Readings.”

### **Academic Integrity**

All students are required to uphold the highest standards of academic honesty. Any case of academic dishonesty will be dealt with according to the guidelines and procedures outlined in Drew University’s *Standards of Academic Integrity: Guidelines and Procedures*. A copy of this document is available on the Drew U-KNOW website. Look first for CLA Dean’s Office and then look for: “Academic Integrity Standards.”

### **Academic Accommodations:**

Should you require academic accommodations, you must file a request with Ms. Diane Moscaritolo in the Office of Disability Services (Brothers College, Room 119B, Phone: 408-3962, Email: [dmoscaritolo@drew.edu](mailto:dmoscaritolo@drew.edu)). It is your responsibility to self-identify with the Office of Disability Services and to provide faculty with the appropriate documentation from that office at least one week prior to any request for specific course accommodations. There are no retroactive accommodations. **The deadline to request Letters of Accommodations for all students currently registered with the Office of Disability Services is 9/9/2014.**

## Course Schedule

<b>Week 1</b>	<b>Sep 04</b>	<b>Introduction</b> <b>Readings</b> Finer - Trends and Developments in Welfare States
<b>Week 2</b>	<b>Sep 11</b>	<b>Crisis of Capitalism</b> <b>Readings</b> Polanyi - Chapters 4, 6, & 14
<b>Week 3</b>	<b>Sep 18</b>	<b>Worlds of Welfare Capitalism</b> <b>Readings</b> Esping-Andersen - Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism Goodin - Alternative Institutional Designs
<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Sep 25</b>	<b>Power Resource Theory - Class Conflict</b> <b>Readings</b> Esping-Andersen - Politics Against Markets Esping-Andersen - Class as Political Agent
<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Oct 02</b>	<b>Power Resource Theory - The Role of the Elite</b> <b>Readings</b> Stephens - Labor Organization and the Welfare State Huber & Stephens - Germany
<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Oct 09</b>	<b>Culture and Religion</b> <b>Readings</b> Manow - The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Oct 16</b>	<b>Institutionalism - Votes to Power</b> <b>Readings</b> Iversen & Soskice - Electoral Institutions & Political Coalitions
<b>Week 8</b>	<b>Oct 23</b>	<b>Institutionalism - Veto Points and Players</b> <b>Readings</b> Immergut - Rules of the Game Steinmo - It's the Institutions Stupid!
<b>Week 9</b>	<b>Oct 30</b>	<b>The End of the Welfare State?</b> <b>Readings</b> Gatti & Glyn - WS in Hard Times Palier & Scruggs - Economic Crisis and the Welfare State
<b>Week 10</b>	<b>Nov 06</b>	<b>Politics of Retrenchment</b> <b>Readings</b> Korpi & Palme - New politics and class politics Pierson - The new politics of the welfare state
<b>Week 11</b>	<b>Nov 13</b>	<b>Explaining Retrenchment</b> <b>Readings</b> Brady & Lee - The Rise and Fall of Government Spending Starke et al - Parties and Social Policy Responses to Global Economic Crises
<b>Week 12</b>	<b>Nov 20</b>	<b>Varieties of Capitalism</b> <b>Readings</b> Hall & Sosckice - Varieties of Capitalism
<b>Week 13</b>	<b>Dec 04</b>	<b>The American Story</b> <b>Readings</b> Quadagno - Color of Welfare Stephens - The United States