

## COURSE DETAIL

### HEALTH VS. ECONOMY? A HISTORY OF THE GERMAN WELFARE STATE

**Country**

Germany

**Host Institution**

Free University of Berlin

**Program(s)**

Free University Berlin

**UCEAP Course Level**

Upper Division

**UCEAP Subject Area(s)**

Political Science Economics

**UCEAP Course Number**

138

**UCEAP Course Suffix**

E

**UCEAP Official Title**

HEALTH VS. ECONOMY? A HISTORY OF THE GERMAN WELFARE STATE

**UCEAP Transcript Title**

GERMN WELFARE STATE

**UCEAP Quarter Units**

4.50

**UCEAP Semester Units**

3.00

**Course Description**

Since the mid twentieth century the German welfare state has seen public health outcomes improve with sustained economic growth. But when the pandemic forced governments round the world to consider imposing lockdowns, journalists portrayed the choice in stark terms: either protect the population or the “health” of the economy. Lockdowns were feasible, however, only where governments increased welfare spending substantially, and as the pandemic unfolded other significant links between health and the economy—in Germany, the importance of the biomedical industry, for instance—became patent. Each week, the course focuses on an aspect of the complex interplay between health and “economy” in the history of the German welfare state, arguably the oldest in the world. Topics include the establishment of social insurance; the German coal and chemical industries; the therapeutic revolution during the so-called golden age of the welfare state; population politics, including abortion law, in East and West Germany; surprising trends in public health outcomes in east and west Germany since reunification; and the challenges posed by population ageing and immigration. Along the way, the class discusses questions which the study of the welfare state raises and to which the pandemic has given renewed significance: How should governments act to improve public health outcomes? To what extent should they intervene in people's lives in pursuing such objectives?

**Language(s) of Instruction**

English

**Host Institution Course Number**

16919

**Host Institution Course Title**

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**Host Institution Course Details**

<https://www.fu-berlin.de/vv/en/lv/900453?query=welfare%20state&sm=851413&id=900...>

**Host Institution Campus**

Free University of Berlin

**Host Institution Faculty**

**Host Institution Degree**

**Host Institution Department**

Deutsche Philologie

**Course Last Reviewed**

2024-2025

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