

COURSE DETAIL

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND INEQUALITY

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

K

UCEAP Official Title

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND INEQUALITY

UCEAP Transcript Title

POL ECON & INEQUAL

UCEAP Quarter Units

4.50

UCEAP Semester Units

Course Description

The seminar provides a deep dive into economic inequality as relates to political economy more broadly, delving into questions such as “what inequality is and how to measure it?”, “what causes inequality?”, “how can welfare and redistributive policies manage inequality?”, and “why are some countries more equal than others?”. The first purpose of the course is to explain what causes economic inequality and how—and to what extent—it can be reduced. The second goal is to provide students with the theoretical and methodological tools to conduct their own empirical study to address these questions. The seminar begins by delving into conceptualizations and measurements used for economic distributions and income inequality. The second part centers on theories explaining levels of economic inequality, including the work of Pareto, Kuznets, Piketty and Milanovic. The third part focuses on the role of the state and redistribution in managing economic inequality, including theories on welfare-state formation, optimal taxation and the impact of political institutions. Finally, the last part is about public opinion on inequality and redistribution, centering on studies and theories about when voters want redistribution. The interplaying dynamics between economic distributions, political institutions, and public opinion are a running theme of the seminar. Students explore and discuss these dynamics as they are articulated in the literature and also propose and test new theories.

Language(s) of Instruction

English

Host Institution Course Number

15114

Host Institution Course Title

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND INEQUALITY

Host Institution Campus

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree

Host Institution Department

Otto-Suhr-Institut für Politikwissenschaft

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