

COURSE DETAIL

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF INEQUALITY AND REDISTRIBUTION IN THE US

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 American Studies

UCEAP Course Number

138

UCEAP Course Suffix

J

UCEAP Official Title

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF INEQUALITY AND REDISTRIBUTION IN THE US

UCEAP Transcript Title

POL ECON INEQUALITY

UCEAP Quarter Units

4.50

UCEAP Semester Units

3.00

Course Description

The aim of this course is to understand why income and wealth inequality varies across space and time by focusing on one of the richest, but also one of the most unequal democracies of our time: The US. While in theory all citizens in a democracy have the same voting power - so one would expect democratic governments to act to keep inequality as low as possible - there are quite significant differences in economic inequality over time and space. Why is this? To answer these questions, the course examines different theories of inequality and different policy areas that affect inequality. It looks at long-term trends in inequality and the structural features of capitalism that tend to push inequality upwards. The course examines the wide range of policies in what is loosely termed the 'welfare state' that tend to mitigate the inequalities generated by market capitalism. Students discuss how demography, gender differences, migration and ethnicity relate to inequality. And they try to understand why elections sometimes produce governments that redistribute income and wealth from rich to poor, and sometimes produce governments that do the opposite. Finally, the course reviews how rising inequality - a clear trend in the rich world since the late 20th century - affects politics and democracy.

Language(s) of Instruction

English

Host Institution Course Number

32602

Host Institution Course Title

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF INEQUALITY AND REDISTRIBUTION IN THE US

Host Institution Campus**Host Institution Faculty**

Host Institution Degree

Host Institution Department

John F Kennedy Institute für Nordamerikastudien

[Print](#)