

COURSE DETAIL

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY AND SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE GLOBAL FIRM

Country

Germany

Host Institution

Free University of Berlin

Program(s)

Free University Berlin

UCEAP Course Level

Upper Division

UCEAP Subject Area(s)

Sociology Economics American Studies

UCEAP Course Number

140

UCEAP Course Suffix**UCEAP Official Title**

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY AND SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE GLOBAL FIRM

UCEAP Transcript Title

THE GLOBAL FIRM

UCEAP Quarter Units

4.50

UCEAP Semester Units

3.00

Course Description

The firm plays a central role in contemporary capitalist societies. Firms not only shape economic outcomes, but also concentrate power and produce conflict within society. Understanding the firm, therefore, requires moving beyond a purely economic perspective to examine how firms organize power and authority within broader social and political contexts. The course uses case studies and empirical examples from the United States to assess the applicability of theoretical perspectives. The first block introduces foundational theories of the firm, emphasizing the centrality of the means of production in capitalist societies. The second block focuses on the role of workers and the organization of labor within the firm. This section covers workers' relations with capital and output, as well as the division of labor and changes in bargaining power. The last block explores multinational corporations as central actors in globalization in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries and examines how the expansion of global value chains and accelerating technological change have increased their power and transformed their role in society.

Language(s) of Instruction

English

Host Institution Course Number

32601

Host Institution Course Title

THE POLITICAL ECONOMY AND SOCIAL FOUNDATIONS OF THE GLOBAL FIRM

Host Institution Course Details

<https://www.fu-berlin.de/vv/en/lv/1049264?m=361403&pc=701222&sm=965826>

Host Institution Campus

Host Institution Faculty

Host Institution Degree**Host Institution Department**

John-F-Kennedy-Institut für Nordamerikastudien

Course Last Reviewed

2025-2026

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