

Course description of the elective special course within Political Science II

Note! Not all Special Courses are given each semester, more information regarding the elective courses is given at the introduction.

GENDER EQUALITY POLICY IN SWEDEN AND EUROPE

This course provides students with a general overview of literature on gender and gender equality policies in Sweden and Europe during the last 30 years. Repeatedly named “The most gender equal country in the world”, judging by the number women in the work force, in leading positions, and holding political office, Sweden has made gender equality politics part of the national identity. Swedish women enjoy a range of welfare benefits, including free and legal abortion, subsidized child care, and the protection of laws against sexual harassment and discrimination. Also, several political parties have officially declared that they are feminist parties. However, the meaning and effect of gender equality politics, as well as the roles and needs of women are continuously debated and contested.

The course examines how women in Sweden have arrived at their current position, and whether women today really do feel emancipated and experience gender equality. What are the particular feminist and/or women’s issues in Sweden today, and how might such issues differ from other European context? If most political parties are feminists and ‘for’ gender equality, what do they mean and do they mean the same thing? Placing emphasis on questions of class, ethnicity, and sexuality, the course aims at presenting a complex picture of gender equality politics in Sweden.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to be able to:

- Provide accounts of different theoretical approaches to deal with gender equality policies and welfare state policies.
- Critically analyze and apply central concepts as ‘gender’, ‘gender equality’ and ‘gender perspective’.
- Understand and recognize gendered character of everyday practices of gender policy.
- Write analytically and organize arguments in a structural way, and make use of relevant material.
- Present both in oral and written form, independent analysis related to the theme of gender equality policies discussed during the course.

21st CENTURY POPULISM IN A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

This course focuses on contemporary populism. Populism is a political phenomenon whereby traditional political parties and democratic institutions as well as international cooperative arrangements are increasingly challenged by political movements that suggest new ways of representing ‘The People’. In this course an in-depth engagement with populism as a political concept and a political phenomenon is offered. The course draws on debates in the intersection between comparative politics and democratic political theory to discuss populism, explanations for its emergence and its different manifestations across different countries and regions.

First, the course provides students with an overview in recent academic debates on populism. Here we ask the question ‘what is populism?’ and seek to define what kind of political phenomenon populism is and how we should understand it in the contemporary political landscape.

Second, the course engages in discussion regarding populism’s relation to democracy. Here students engage with the question ‘what type of challenges does populism pose to democracy?’ Does populism pose a threat to democracy or does the emergence of populist parties and movements carry the potential to reinvigorate democracy?

Third, students are exposed to the state-of-the-art on empirical research on populism. Here the course focuses on explanations of why populist parties emerge, who supports populist parties, as well as its effects on the political landscape in consolidated democracies, in Europe and beyond.

Fourth, the course offers a comparative outlook at populism in different countries and regions. Here students are allowed to choose a particular set of countries or a whole region and deepen their engagement with the dynamics of populism in those empirical settings. This deepened study of particular empirical cases and comparisons across those cases will form the basis for the course final paper.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students should have attained

- A familiarity with the state-of-the-art research on contemporary populism.
- An ability to recognize and argue for different ways in understanding its relation to democratic politics.
- An understanding of mechanisms and drivers of the emergence of populist parties in consolidated democracies.
- An understanding of the different manifestations of populism in different parts of the world, with a specific focus on Europe and the Americas.

ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

Problems like air pollution or poor water quality, decreasing biodiversity and climate change have provoked the establishment of a broad range of institutions and policies around the globe, from the local to the international level. However, why are some countries better at protecting their environments than others? How do environmental policies spread among countries? How can jointly used environmental resources be managed in a sustainable fashion? What is the role of international cooperation and individual citizens in protecting the global environment? The aim of the course is to give an introduction to the foundations and variety of contemporary research on environmental politics. The course will examine basic concepts and different traditions in this field of research. It combines theoretical and empirical contributions on environmental politics and policy from a comparative and international perspective. The course literature contains classical texts as well as recent advances in the study of environmental politics. Topics to be addressed include the theory of ecological modernization, the discussion on regulatory 'races to the bottom', explanations why some states act as environmental pioneers, the measurement of environmental performance and the influence of social movements and green interest groups.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After the course, students are expected to:

- * have gained a critical understanding of key concepts in environmental politics;
- * be able to give an overview of mayor issues and debates in environmental politics;
- * be able to identify key findings and results from empirical studies in environmental politics;
- * have gained an understanding of common methods and analytical models in environmental politics.

TRANSNATIONAL ACTORS AND INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

This course is about the role of transnational actors, such as NGOs, social movements and business groups, in international politics. The course introduces the concept of transnational actors, and relates it to the study of international organizations and global governance. Transnational actors function as service providers, watchdogs and advocacy groups, but also as a democratic opposition and the voice of a global civil society. Aspects of cooperation and conflict of transnational actors with intergovernmental organizations will be discussed on the basis of empirical studies on different issue areas, like developmental aid, environmental protection, human rights and trade politics.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completing this course, the student should be able to:

- * Identify, define and recognize relevant concepts and theories on transnational actors and their role in global governance,
- * relate, compare and critically analyze and different functions and roles of transnational actors in global governance,
- * apply concepts from the study of transnational actors to empirical cases of participation, cooperation and conflict of these actors with international organizations,
- * identify and use suitable empirical material for the study of transnational actors and international organizations,
- * have gained practice in oral and written presentation.

HUMAN AND INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

This course is designed to introduce security studies as a research area and combines traditional state-centered security issues with recent human security issues. The focus is on the actors and processes of security and how security interests relate to other state and human interests. The topics include approaches to security, concepts and notions of security, institutions of security and modern security issues globally and regionally. They also include moral and practical arguments on the nature of modern armed conflicts and violence.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to:

- * be familiar with the basic concepts and understandings of security issues;
- * be familiar with developments of violent conflicts in the post Cold War era;
- * be familiar with the morality of violence;
- * be able to analyze issues of security;
- * be able to demonstrate capabilities of discussing security issues critically;
- * be able to write about security issues.

WHAT ARE HUMAN RIGHTS? PERSPECTIVES AND CONFLICTS

DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on the concept, development and institutionalization of human rights through international politics. The central aim of the course is to introduce human rights by exploring theoretical questions and empirical case studies. We will pose theoretical questions related to the universality and scope of the human rights concept as well as analyze human rights by engaging various perspectives on where, how and through what actors human rights are realized. Empirically, we will look at developments in various regions in the world, as well as issues including war crimes, genocide, torture, environmental rights, labor rights, children rights and others.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to:

- Give an account of the central theoretical and ethical debates regarding human rights.
- Understand the historical development and institutionalization of human rights in international politics.
- Compare and contrast judicial approaches to human rights and how various actors contribute to the violation and protection of human rights.
- Write an empirical or normative analysis that applies the debates on the idea and realization of human rights for a specific human rights issue (e.g. a normative debate over a specific theoretical problem or a particular country-case, international organization or governmental body, or industry).
- Understand the complexity of the application of human rights and relate this complexity to particular human rights issues.

WAR AND DEMOCRACY IN GLOBAL POLITICS

This course addresses the problems of war and democracy in international relations while considering the implications of these phenomena for wider concepts of international conflict and cooperation. Why is war a recurring problem in international politics despite the fact that most people want peace? Why is international politics less democratic than domestic politics (or perceived to be so) despite the fact that most people value democracy in itself? Would higher levels of democracy, or different kinds of democracy, be a solution to the problem of international conflict? If so, can and should democracy be promoted and implemented even by military force? Or would a greater role of democracy in international politics worsen the problems of violence and conflict? If so, when and how should democratic values be sacrificed for the sake of peace? To address these questions, the course draws upon and presupposes some basic familiarity with different theories of international relations, such as liberalism, realism, constructivism, and normative theory. Concepts covered in the course include war, global democracy, democracy promotion, globalization, state-building, sovereignty, human rights, and security.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

The aim of the course is to provide students with a repertoire of concepts and approaches for analyzing the problems of war and democracy in international relations.

After the course, students are expected to:

- be able to understand and analyze war and democracy in relation to global and inter-state relationships;
- be able to understand war and democracy in relation to foreign interventions and state-building;
- be able to apply theories of war and global democracy to international processes and institutions;
- be able to identify and discuss normative and empirical assumptions relevant to global democracy and

- to democratic interventions;
- have gained practice in oral and written presentation.

FEMINISM AND POLITICS

This course module presents an overview of central discussions in feminist political theory and research. Different analytical approaches on gender, power and politics are discussed. Theoretical discussions on key issues in feminist political science are introduced: governance and representation, work, security and protection, women's organizing, sexuality and reproduction. The aim is to provide basic knowledge on feminist political theory and research by introducing seminal work in this field and give examples of how these ideas influences contemporary political science research. The course includes exercises of applying theoretical perspectives on political phenomena. In addition, the course provides students with time to reflect on their own use of theories as well as on the importance of theory for political science research.

Learning outcomes

Upon completion of the course module, students are expected to be able to:

- Describe different analytical approaches to gender, power and politics;
- Account for the theoretical discussions on key issues in feminist political theory addressed during the course;
- Use different feminist theories to analyze political phenomena;
- Compare different feminist approaches;
- Critically discuss the consequences of using different approaches to gender, power and politics and reflect upon their own choice of such approaches.

A NEW WORLD ORDER?

DESCRIPTION

The course module deals with major perspectives on and descriptions of the contemporary world order as well as discussions of prospects for change. Central themes include relations of globalization and transnationalism, conceptions of empire and the capitalist world-system and the role of conflict, militarism, war and other forms of violence. Fundamental to these themes are understandings of the political and the economic. A broad range of issues are problematized, in particular antagonisms entailed in universalism-particularism, global-state, core-periphery, democracy-liberalism and aspects of we-they as well as notions of class, ethnicity and gender. Counterforces in the form of democratic processes and political action as they apply to various views on future world orders are also discussed.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge and Understanding

Upon completion of the course part, students are expected to be able to:

- * identify and provide accounts of major perspectives on the contemporary world order and how it can and should be changed;
- * discuss the implications of major perspectives on the contemporary world order for practical politics.

Skill and Ability

Upon completion of the course part, students are expected to be able to:

- * apply basic concepts and approaches reflected in major perspectives on the contemporary world order to current political phenomena and events;
- * compare and contrast major perspectives on the contemporary world order and how it can and should be changed.

Evaluation and Approach

Upon completion of the course part, students are expected to be able to:

- * examine and evaluate critically arguments for and against different perspectives on the contemporary world order in a manner that is well supported and justified;
- * examine and evaluate critically arguments for and against the prospects for and desirability of changes foreseen and/or advocated by different perspectives on the contemporary world order.

SECURITY IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

DESCRIPTION

This course aims to provide students with different conceptual and theoretical tools in order to study and analyze contemporary security problems and security strategies in international politics. Students will be introduced to a wide range of security issues and asked to consider how different theoretical perspectives – including Realism, Constructivism, Securitization, International Political Sociology and Poststructuralism – can be used for analyzing these issues.

The first part of the course focuses on the impact of ideology on foreign and security policy, with special emphasis on relations between the United States and some Middle Eastern states. Moreover, issues of “continuity” and “change” in foreign and security policy will be explored by drawing upon a series of empirical cases. The foreign and security policy of “small states”, including Sweden, will receive particular attention in this regard.

The second part of the course examines the relationship between security and different forms of insecurity, and looks at how the production of threats, fears and dangers plays a vital role in the development of new security strategies. We will also discuss the challenges of moving beyond the “state” as the dominant category for thinking about “who” or “what” should be made secure, for example by trying to introduce the “human” or the “environment” as the primary “subject of security”.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completion of the course, students are expected to be able to:

- Discuss different conceptual and theoretical approaches to “security”;
- Discuss alternative explanations of security problems, historical as well contemporary ones;
- Critically engage with different readings of current trends and forces in international security;
- Discuss, in written and oral form, issues pertaining to security problems and different strategies to cope with them.

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND DEMOCRACY IN THE THIRD WORLD

DESCRIPTION

In the wake of the third wave of democratization politics in the Third World we have seen both a further development of constitutional democracy as well as authoritarian backlashes. Central in both of these processes are the various social movements, working as both pressure and support for existing governments. The course aims at problematizing the role of these movements, both theoretically and empirically, in the context of democratization and political contestation in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Different perspectives are juxtaposed and discussed against a backdrop of

contexts in the Third World, analysing both the general patterns of democratization and the role of social movements in this process. The course also discusses the recent developments of social movements related to the issue of "NGOisation" and its effects on both democracy and development.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completion of the course part, students are expected to be able to:

- * identify different perspectives and theories on social movements and their links to democracy and democratization;
- * identify similarities and differences between empirical cases, as represented in the course literature, of the role of social movements in processes of democratization in the third world;
- * present, both orally and in writing, independent analyses of the relationships addressed in the course.

INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ECONOMY

The course aims at exploring, problematising and analysing arguments, controversies, policies and outcomes in international political economy. The course focuses on the interaction of economics and politics, of the market and the state, with special emphasis on how economical and political motives and incentives interact with each other to produce policy outcomes in terms of conflict or co-operation. Specific phenomena studied include the politics of international trade and finance, the role of currencies, the functioning of international economic institutions, the importance of the international economic system for economic development, and the role played by multinational corporations and foreign direct investments (FDI).

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completion of the course part, students are expected to be able to:

- identify and understand different models that are important for analysing the mechanisms behind international economic policy outcomes;
- identify and understand the interaction between political and economical motives and incentives in the international economic system;
- analyse economic co-operation and conflict at different levels of analysis (actor/state/system);
- present independent analysis of international political-economic phenomena in oral as well as written form, based on analytical perspectives in the course;
- compare and evaluate the merits and weaknesses of various scientific theories and arguments about the international political economy discussed in the course.

GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL POLITICS

This course will examine the contributions of theories of international relations and global environmental politics to our understanding of global environmental issues, such as climate change, biodiversity loss and forest degradation. These issues will be explored through readings on the political economy of the environment, environmental security, international environmental diplomacy and transnational sustainability governance. The actors, structures and processes of international environmental politics will be investigated and the interplay of states, market and civil society actors in global efforts to mitigate and adapt to global environmental change will be examined. Course sessions will typically consist of lectures, interactive

discussions of course readings, reflection activities, student presentations, etc. designed to help students critically engage course material, enhance students' comprehension of core concepts as well as oral and written communication and critical thinking skills. Upon completion of this course, students will have a sophisticated understanding of the central issues and debates in the scholarship on global environmental politics in order to advance their own research agendas.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Knowledge and Understanding

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to be able to:

- Identify and provide accounts of the major perspective of and topic in global environmental politics and sustainable development governance;
- Discuss the key concepts and debates inform the field of global environmental politics

Skills and abilities

Upon completion of the course part, students are expected to be able to:

- apply key concepts, methods and approaches in International Relations and environmental studies to analyze global environmental issues;
- compare and contrast major perspectives and worldviews on global environmental governance and how it can be reformed and/or transformed.

Evaluation and Approach

Upon completion of the course part, students are expected to:

- Critically examine and evaluate argument for and against different perspectives on the causes of global environmental problems in a manner that is well supported and justified;
- Critically examine and evaluate arguments on how to manage and/or solve global environmental threats advocated by different perspectives in the global environmental politics scholarship

INEQUALITIES OF POLITICAL PARTICIPATION AND REPRESENTATION

DESCRIPTION

Political equality is a cornerstone of modern democracy. Yet political participation and representation is unequally distributed across individuals and groups. In this course, we explore examples of this type of political inequality, as well as its causes and consequences.

We begin by examining arguments from democratic theory about why we should care about unequal participation and representation. Next, we turn to research that explores variations in participation and representation across groups and explanations for differences. Finally, we examine research that studies the impact of variations in participation and representation.

A recurring theme when reading empirical work assigned in this class is the difficulty of credibly evaluating the causes and consequences of political inequality. Therefore, the course also strives to present some examples of innovative research designs that have been used to study political inequality. A considerable share of the course readings use quantitative methods; therefore, we will also review how to interpret and criticize results from this type of research.

The course will not provide a comprehensive survey of the state of political inequality across the world, nor in any specific region of the world. Rather, it focuses on singling out empirical work carried out in different regions of the world that has studied issues that are interesting from the perspective of democratic theory. Put differently, we focus on how one can research political inequalities empirically, with the aim of providing inspiration for the upcoming thesis-work.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

After completion of the course part, students are expected to be able to:

- Discuss and compare, in written and oral form, different perspectives on unequal participation and representation
- Describe and critically evaluate different strategies that have been used to study political inequality empirically
- Describe and critically evaluate proposed solutions to the problem of studying political inequality empirically
- Come to independent conclusions about the importance of studying political equality, as well as strategies for empirically studying variations in participation and representation, based on the readings addressed on the course.

EUROPEAN POLITICS

DESCRIPTION

More and more political questions are determined on the European level. International organizations and institutions are essential venues for interests as well as political traditions and cultures from different parts of the continent to meet, deliberate, negotiate, and decide. The main themes of this course is the European cooperation and the development of the integration project and its decision-making processes. The emphasis is on the EU but also other organizations, the member states' political systems and perspectives on the European cooperation are discussed.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the course, the student should be able to:

- Account for the most important events and conflicts behind the development of the European cooperation
- Understand the essential driving forces behind the European integration
- Account for the European countries' perspectives on the European integration
- Departing from the course literature, be able to do critical and independent analysis of the current developments, and
- Account the different types of policy documents that is produced within the EU

COMPARATIVE POLITICS IN WELFARE STATES

DESCRIPTION

This course will introduce students to the relationships among markets, government institutions, political actors, and voters in a comparative perspective. Primarily, students will learn what kinds of welfare states exist and what differentiates them, what fundamental theories and literature say about why welfare states developed how they have, and what outcomes those welfare states produced. The goal is to understand a small piece of one greater question in comparative politics, why are some countries more unequal than others?

We will also engage how and why these welfare states are challenged in contemporary society.

Globalization, technology, economic crises, new ways of working, and new sociopolitical cleavages have all strained the connections between domestic economies and democratic government. Does this mean welfare states will all become the same? Or will differences in politics continue to drive differences in political economy?

Students will develop a critical understanding of welfare regimes and politics, but the course will also leave students with a competent understanding of what domestic political and economic structures

look like in different countries as well as the measurements used to operationalize concepts like inequality, wealth, class, and partisanship.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon completion of the course, the student should be able to:

- Understand why social scientists group welfare states into distinct typologies, on what basis these typologies are designed, and how these typologies have changed over time.
- Gain a familiarity with the main policy tools of advanced capitalist welfare states and how different countries use these tools.
- Understand main theories about institutional and political change that shapes welfare state outcomes.
- Learn how changing class, family and gender, and labor market trends influence welfare states.
- Gain familiarity with how concepts such as inequality, wealth, class, and partisanship are measured statistically.