

**Political Science 2800 L01**  
**Introduction to Political Economy**  
**Fall 2017**

Professor: Sarah P. Lockhart, Ph.D.  
Class Time: 11:30 a.m. – 12:45 p.m., Mondays and Wednesdays  
Class Location: Lowenstein 1002  
Office Hours: Mon. 4:00-5:00 p.m.; Wed. 2:30-3:30 p.m.; Thurs. 12:30-2:15 p.m.  
Office Location: Lowenstein 917 F  
Email Address: [slockhart3@fordham.edu](mailto:slockhart3@fordham.edu)  
Telephone: (212) 930-8848

**Course Description:**

“Political economy” is a broad concept that encompasses specific epistemological orientations, theoretical approaches, methodological tools, and substantive areas of study. It is an interdisciplinary field that draws on insights from across the social sciences (political science, economics, sociology, and psychology). To political economists, the economic system (involving production, exchange, and consumption) cannot be separated from the social and political contexts in which it is embedded.

In this class, we will approach political economy as a substantive topic, examining how political institutions and social structures shape the ways in which society organizes production, exchange, and consumption. We will also use political economy as a lens to understand a wider range of important public policy issues. Specifically, we examine how individual choices, mediated by political institutions and power structures, aggregate into public policy outcomes.

We begin the semester by looking at “real-life” examples in which people created political institutions (or rules) to manage markets and facilitate cooperation where it didn’t exist before: in the American West and on pirate ships. We will then learn about the major theoretical frameworks that seek to explain how economic systems work, starting with the classical economists and their early critic, Karl Marx. We will then look at other challengers to the classical approach and the rise of neo-classical economics in the mid-twentieth century.

The second half of the semester will focus on three public policy issues in the United States: housing, hunger, and education. In particular, we will see how political and economic institutions have created and reinforced racial inequalities in our society, and consider policy solutions for creating a more just distribution of resources. We will consider the ways in which existing power structures and institutions shape our choices, either facilitating or hindering these changes.

### **Course Objectives:**

- (1) To provide students with an understanding of the major competing theoretical approaches in political economy.
- (2) To teach students how to analyze a wide range of public policy issues using the tools of political economy.
- (3) To equip students with an understanding of how structural racism continues to shape the distribution of resources within the United States.
- (4) To develop students' analytical and critical reading skills.
- (5) To develop students' research skills and writing abilities.

### **Course Policies:**

- Class attendance is required. Students that choose to miss class will lose participation credit, miss important announcements and/or assignments, and miss lecture and discussion content. Tardiness and leaving the classroom during a class session are also discouraged.
  
- Laptop and other computer use is not permitted during class. It is my experience that even the most dedicated students cannot resist the temptations to multi-task when they can. This detracts from your ability to be fully present during class discussions and lectures, and it is extremely distracting to others. Furthermore, research shows students actually retain more information when they handwrite notes instead of type them (see Mueller and Oppenheimer 2014, posted on the Blackboard).
  
- We will utilize the course Blackboard throughout the semester. Regularly check the Blackboard for announcements, course resources, and lecture slides. I strongly recommend that students make use of the discussion board to discuss the course with classmates. We will also use the Blackboard grade book; check it frequently to make sure there are no typographical errors in your grades.
  
- Email is best used for short, administrative or procedural questions. If you have substantive questions, please come to office hours or make an appointment with me. I will attempt to answer emails promptly, during normal business hours.
  
- There will be no separate study guide for the exams.
  
- If you are a student with a documented disability and require academic accommodations, you need to register with the Office of Disability Services for Students (ODS) in order to request academic accommodations for your courses. Please contact the main ODS office at Rose Hill at (718) 817-0655 to arrange services. Staff at ODS can walk you through the process and arrange appointments depending on which campus you take courses. Accommodations are not retroactive, so you need to register with ODS prior to receiving your accommodations. Please see me during office hours if you have questions or would like to submit your academic accommodation letter to me. It is your responsibility to make arrangements with me at least ONE WEEK before the relevant assignments or exams are due.

- Exams may be made up if you can provide proof of a *demonstrated incapacity* to take the exam on the set date. It is your responsibility to notify me as soon as physically possible if you need a make-up. If you do not do this, you may be denied the opportunity to make up the exam or assignment. For example, if you miss an exam and do not contact me for 48 hours, you would have to provide evidence that you were physically unable to make contact for the entire 48 hours. **All exams must be made up in person (not online).** Paper extensions will not be granted except in extreme circumstances. Talk to me *as soon as possible* if you find yourself struggling with the class or unable to complete assignments/exams as assigned. The longer you wait, the less likely it will be that we will be able to find solutions to your problem. Final decisions about if and how make-ups will be granted are left to my discretion.

- Cheating and plagiarism will be punished to the fullest extent possible. For more information, see the Fordham University Undergraduate Policy on Academic Integrity:  
[https://www.fordham.edu/info/25380/undergraduate\\_academic\\_integrity\\_policy](https://www.fordham.edu/info/25380/undergraduate_academic_integrity_policy)

- When citing sources, please use American Political Science Association (APSA) style. See this website for guidelines: <http://www.csuchico.edu/lref/pols/APSA.pdf>

### **Course Requirements:**

- Three Online Midterm Exams (40%)
- Policy Research Paper (25%)
- Participation (10%)
- Final Exam (25%)

### **Readings:**

#### ***Required -***

Anderson, Terry L., and Peter J. Hill. 2004. *The Not So Wild, Wild West: Property Rights on the Frontier*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

Rothstein, Richard. 2017. *The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Government Segregated America*. New York: Liveright Publishing.

Fisher, Andrew. 2017. *Big Hunger: The Unholy Alliance between Corporate America and Anti-Hunger Groups*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press.

Course Reader: In addition to the three required books, I have assembled a required course reader consisting of book excerpts, articles, and reports, available for purchase at:  
[http://academicpub.sharedbook.com/serve/ac/acapub/student\\_product\\_page.html?slug=1503684523\\_84\\_87814](http://academicpub.sharedbook.com/serve/ac/acapub/student_product_page.html?slug=1503684523_84_87814)

I recommend purchasing the black & white spiral-bound format.

## Assignments:

**Online Midterm Exams:** You will take three online midterm exams over the course of the semester, covering all readings and lecture material since the last exam (roughly 3 to 4 weeks of material for each exam). Exams are open book and open note, although you are expected not to speak with other students about the content of the exams until after the exam period has ended. Exams will include essay, short answer, and multiple-choice questions.

The dates of the exams are listed on the syllabus; you will have 48 hours from the end of class on the day the exam is assigned to complete it (all exams begin on Wednesday at 12:45 p.m. and end on Friday at 12:45 p.m.). You will access the exams via the “Midterm Exams” tab on Blackboard. Once you begin an exam, you will have exactly 75 minutes to complete it and you may not stop the clock for any reason.

**Policy Research Paper:** The purpose of the policy research paper is to investigate a particular U.S. domestic policy problem, analyze it using the tools of political economy, and propose a feasible policy solution. You may choose a policy problem from one of the policy topics explicitly discussed in class (housing, hunger, and education) or you may choose one we have not discussed. If you choose a topic not discussed in class, I strongly recommend that you discuss it with me during office hours early in your research process so that I can provide some guidance. Other potential topics include:

- Health and healthcare
- Poverty
- Environmental policy
- Budget and tax policy
- Immigration
- Jobs and unemployment
- Retirement and Social Security
- Unions and labor standards
- Wages and income inequality

Your paper should clearly and concisely address the following questions:

1. What is the policy challenge that you are addressing? (Provide background and context).
  - a. How does the status quo affect individuals’ choices? Do these choices lead to problematic outcomes?
2. Who are the stakeholders on this issue?
  - a. What are the stakeholders’ interests? How might stakeholders gain or lose from a particular policy change?
  - b. What power do these stakeholders have (economically, politically, institutionally, etc.)?
  - c. What potential coalitions of stakeholders exist, and how might these be facilitated?

3. What is your proposed solution? (Introduce this early in the paper and then describe it in more detail later).
  - a. What are the advantages of this policy?
  - b. What effect will your policy solution have on inequality?
  - c. How is this solution feasible, given stakeholder interests and power?
  - d. How will this policy affect individuals' choices?
  - e. What are the alternative policy solutions, and why is this one superior?

Additional resources and tips for your paper are posted on the Blackboard under the "Policy Paper" tab.

Your policy analysis paper should be 8-10 pages long. Please submit it in hard copy, typed, in Times or Times New Roman 12-pt. font with 1-inch margins. Papers should be double-spaced and *stapled*. You may print double-sided to save trees! In an emergency, you may email your paper to me so that it will be marked on time, but you must submit a hard copy as soon as possible. I will not grade emailed papers. You can submit work in class or to the Political Science Department's administrative office in 916 Lowenstein. Be sure to put my name on any work submitted to the office.

Late papers will be accepted with a 10% penalty per 24-hour period. Papers will be considered late if submitted after class begins. So, if the paper is due at 11:30 a.m. on Monday, and you submit it at 12:30 on Tuesday, you will receive a 20% deduction. Late papers will not be accepted later than the last day of class except under extreme extenuating circumstances.

**Participation:** Your participation grade will depend on several elements:

- Attendance and contribution to class discussions. I am interested in both the quantity and quality of your comments. I am particularly looking for comments that show you have read and thought about course material, and that you are listening and responding to your classmates.
- Postings you make on the course discussion page on the Blackboard. You can use the page to post: (a) questions about things you don't understand in the readings; (b) questions to prompt discussion in class about the readings; or (c) links or documents from outside the class that are relevant to the course.
- Participation in class activities.
- Reading quizzes (possibly). I reserve the right to administer pop quizzes on the readings (if quizzes are to be used, students will be warned of the possibility in advance).

**Final Exam:** The final exam will be in-class and cumulative. It will consist of one mandatory essay question, a second essay question chosen from two options, and four short answer questions chosen from six options.

## **Class Schedule and Reading Assignments:**

*Readings should be read before class on the day listed. Please bring the assigned reading for the day to each class.*

### **Week 1: Introduction.**

Wed. 8/30: NONE

### **Week 2: What is Political Economy?**

Mon. 9/4: **NO CLASS: LABOR DAY HOLIDAY**

Wed. 9/6: - Course Reader [*Invisible Hook*, Chapter 1 & 2] (pp. 3-47).

### **Week 3: Political Economy IRL: The American West**

Mon. 9/11: - *The Not So Wild, Wild West*, Chapters 1 & 2 (pp. 1-33).

Wed. 9/13: - *The Not So Wild, Wild West*, Chapter 3 (pp. 34-52).

### **Week 4: Political Economy IRL: Property Rights & Governance**

Mon. 9/18: - *The Not So Wild, Wild West*, Chapter 7 (pp. 120-137).

- Course Reader: [*Invisible Hook*, Chapter 3] (pp. 49-85).

Wed. 9/20: - *The Not So Wild, Wild West*, Chapter 4 (pp. 53-76).

### **Week 5: Political Economy IRL: Collective Action Problems**

Mon. 9/25: - Course Reader: [Ostrom, Elinor. 1998. "A Behavioral Approach to the Rational Choice Theory of Collective Action: Presidential Address, American Political Science Association, 1997." *American Political Science Review* 91 (1): 1-22.] (pp. 87-122).

Wed. 9/27: - *The Not So Wild, Wild West*, Chapter 5 (pp. 77-103) & Chapter 9 (pp. 159-176).

**ONLINE MIDTERM EXAM 1: Available Wed. 12:45 p.m. – Fri. 12:45 p.m.**

**Week 6: Theoretical Foundations of Political Economy: Classical Economics and Marxism**

Mon. 10/2: - Course Reader: [*The Political Economy Reader*, Introduction & Introduction to the Classics] (pp. 123-145).

Wed. 10/4: - Podcast: *What a 16<sup>th</sup> Century Guild Teaches Us about Competition*.

**Week 7: Theoretical Foundations of Political Economy: Challengers to the Classicists**

Mon. 10/9: **NO CLASS: COLUMBUS DAY HOLIDAY**

Wed. 10/11: - Course Reader: [*The Political Economy Reader*, Introduction to Economic Sociology and “The Great Transformation” by Karl Polyani] (pp. 146-180).

**Week 8: Theoretical Foundations of Political Economy: Neo-Classical Economics**

Mon. 10/16: - Course Reader: [*The Political Economy Reader*, Introduction to Political Science and Political Economy and “The Market System” by Charles E. Lindblom] (pp. 181-200).

Wed. 10/18: - Course Reader: [*The Political Economy Reader*, “The Road to Serfdom” by Friderich A. Hayek] (pp. 202-216).

**ONLINE MIDTERM EXAM 2: Available Wed. 12:45 p.m. – Fri. 12:45 p.m.**

**Week 9: The Political Economy of Race and Inequality**

Mon. 10/23: - Course Reader: [Report - *Race and Recession: How Inequity Rigged the System and How to Change the Rules*] (pp. 217-271).

Wed. 10/25: - Podcasts: *Georgetown, Louisiana Parts I and II*

**Week 10: Issue: The Political Economy of Housing**

Mon. 10/30: - *The Color of Law*, Preface & Chapters 1-3 (pp. VII-57).

Wed. 11/1: - *The Color of Law*, Chapters 4-6 (pp. 59-99).

**Week 11: Issue: The Political Economy of Housing**

Mon. 11/6: - *The Color of Law*, Chapters 7-9 (pp. 101-153).

Wed. 11/8: - *The Color of Law*, Chapters 10-12 and Epilogue (pp. 153-217).

**ONLINE MIDTERM EXAM 3: Available Wed. 12:45 p.m. – Fri. 12:45 p.m.**

**Week 12: Issue: The Political Economy of Hunger**

Mon. 11/13: - *Big Hunger*, Introduction & Chapters 1-2 (pp. 1-76).

Wed. 11/15: - *Big Hunger*, Chapters 3-4 (pp. 77-141).

**Week 13: Issue: The Political Economy of Hunger**

Mon. 11/20: - *Big Hunger*, Chapters 5-6 (pp. 143-214).

Wed. 11/22: **NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK**

**Week 14: Issue: The Political Economy of Education**

Mon. 11/27: - *Big Hunger*, Chapters 7-8 & Conclusion (pp. 215-272).

Wed. 11/29: - Course Reader: [Viteritti, Joseph P. 2012. “The Federal Role in School Reform: Obama’s “Race to the Top.” *Notre Dame Law Review* 87, pp. 2087-2122.] (pp. 273-307).

**Week 15: Issue: The Political Economy of Education**

Mon. 12/4: - Course Reader: [Lipman, Pauline. 2017. “The Landscape of Education “Reform” in Chicago: Neo-Liberalism Meets a Grassroots Movement.” *Education Policy Analysis Archives* 25 (54).] (pp. 309-340).

- Course Reader: [Onosko, Joe. 2011. “Race to the Top Leaves Children and Future Citizens Behind: The Devastating Effects of Centralization, Standardization, and High Stakes Accountability.” *Democracy & Education* 19 (2): 1-11.] (pp. 341-351).

Wed. 12/6: **POLICY RESEARCH PAPER DUE**

**FINAL EXAM: Monday, December 18, 2017, 9:30-11:30 a.m.**

**POSC 2800 Signature Page**

*This certifies that I have read and understood the contents of the syllabus for POSC 2800, Intro to Political Economy, for the Fall 2017 semester. I understand that there may be some changes in dates, readings, and/or assignments. I understand that it is my responsibility to keep track of these changes by listening to announcements in class and/or noting any announcements made via the course Blackboard and/or email.*

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Printed Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE COMPLETE THIS FORM AND RETURN TO PROF. LOCKHART NO LATER  
THAN THE SECOND WEEK OF CLASSES.