

SPL 587: The Politics of Social Policies



Instructor: Volkan Yılmaz
Spring 2019, Thursdays btw. 10:00-13:00
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Course overview

This is a master's level social science course on the politics of social policies. The course is designed as an intensive, reading heavy seminar. Social policies have been critical political arenas within which the terms of the social bargain over social and economic resources are set through the power dynamics in different spatial and temporal contexts. The main aim of this seminar is to equip participants with an understanding of the politics of social policies not only in Western European countries and the US but also in Latin American countries, the Middle Eastern countries, China and India throughout 20th and 21st centuries. Upon completing the course, participants are expected to grasp different approaches and methodologies to examine global and context-specific political factors that underpin social policy making and social policy changes. Participants are also expected to develop skills in communicating their understanding of the literature on the politics of social policies in oral and written scientific form.

Organization of classes

Each class will start with a 30-min presentation of the assigned book by one participant each week, which will be followed by a class discussion. Discussions will be participant-driven and will focus on the line of reasoning presented in the book. The lecturer will deliver a wrap-up lecture at the end of each class.

Requirements

All participants are expected to read the assigned book in advance, submit a clear and discussable question for class discussion each week one day before the class (%10), actively participate in class discussions (%20), make two book presentations (%40), and submit a review essay on one book (%30) at the end of the term. Guidelines for presenting a book and writing a review will be distributed in the first week.

- **Book presentation:** Participants will prepare two 30-min presentations in which they will deliver a talk on the assigned book. In the presentation, participants are expected to explain the contribution of the book in our understanding of the politics of social policies rather than offering a mere summary of the book.
- **Book review:** Participants will submit a comprehensive book review of the book that they present in the class. In the book review, participants are expected to locate the book in the broader literature on the politics of social policies, analyze the book in comparison to other contributions to this literature and develop a clear and analytical argument about the book's strengths and/or weaknesses. Average expected length of papers will be 5000 words. (**Deadline:** 24 May 2020)

Grading scale: 90-100: AA; 80-89 BA; 75-79 BB; 70-74 CB; 65-69 CC; 60-64 DC; 55-59 DD; 50-54 F; 49-0

Reading List

Feb 6	Introduction
Feb 13	Sheri Berman, <i>The Primacy of Politics: Social Democracy and the Making of Europe's Twentieth Century</i> , New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
Feb 20	Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward. <i>Regulating the Poor: The Functions of Public Welfare</i> , New York: Vintage, 1971.
Feb 27	Theda Skocpol. <i>Protecting Soldiers and Mothers: The Political Origins of Social Policy in the United States</i> . Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 1992.
Mar 5	G. William Domhoff, <i>Who Rules America? The Triumph of the Corporate Rich</i> , Seventh Edition, New York: McGraw Hill Education, 2014.
Mar 12	Ange-Marie Hancock, <i>The Politics of Disgust: The Public Identity of the Welfare Queen</i> , New York and London: New York University Press, 2004.
Mar 19	Jennifer Pribble, <i>Welfare and Party Politics in Latin America</i> . New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
Mar 26	Tasha Fairfield, <i>Private Wealth and Public Revenue in Latin America</i> , New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
Apr 2	Prerna Singh, <i>How Solidarity Works for Welfare: Subnationalism and Social Development in India</i> , New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.
Apr 9	Jake Lin, <i>Chinese Politics and Labor Movements</i> , Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2020.
April 17	Kevan Harris, <i>A Social Revolution: Politics and the Welfare State in Iran</i> , California: University of California Press, 2017.
Apr 30	Andrea Chandler, <i>Democracy, Gender and Social Policy in Russia: a Wayward Society</i> . Houndsmills: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
May 5	Volkan Yilmaz, <i>The Politics of Healthcare Reform in Turkey</i> , Cham: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017.