Comparative Political Economy

Foundation Seminar, first term 2017-2018

Dorothee Bohle and Philipp Genschel

Mondays, 17:00-19:00

Seminar Room 2

Administrative Assistant: Adele Battistini

Description

The seminar introduces comparative research and debates on varieties of market economies. It focuses on approaches that seek to conceptualize different models of capitalism in advanced and peripheral capitalist countries, and investigates the relative role of institutions, interest groups, and ideas in constituting, reproducing and transforming these models. The first part of the course focuses on the influential “Varieties of Capitalism” approach, its precursors and critics, and attempts at expanding it geographically beyond advanced capitalist countries. The second part focuses on issues such as the role of finance and housing, inequality and taxation in contemporary capitalism. The course concludes by bringing politics to political economy.

The aim of the course is twofold. One is to familiarize students with classic texts and recent publications that any emerging scholar of comparative political economy will find useful (the list is in that sense necessary but not sufficient, of course). The other is to help students develop their own research project by encouraging them to see it through the lens of the class readings. Class room discussions will offer ample opportunity to raise concerns related to individual projects.

Requirements

For each session, we ask students to post 2-3 questions about readings (or the relationship among the readings), with each question accompanied by an expository paragraph or two explaining the
origin and context of the question. Over the course of the seminar, students must submit questions for 5 of the 10 course sessions (students may choose the sessions for which they post questions, except for the first session). Students are expected to post questions to the course webpage by noon the previous day, and these guide our discussion in the next day’s class. These brief ‘question papers’ are fundamental for the holding of a good discussion of the materials, as is a thorough reading of the assigned readings.

Writing a term paper is encouraged. Your term paper should draw on the literature covered in the course but go well beyond it. The goal of any term paper should be an eventually publishable article. Those who wish to write a term paper should submit it to us by email and in paper copy, with a cc to Adele Battistini.

This seminar is worth 20 credits.

**SYLLABUS**

**Session 1 Introduction  2 October**


**Session 2 Classical debates  9 October**


**Session 3 Corporatism and the Welfare State 16 October**


**Session 4 Peripheral capitalisms 23 October**


Schneider 2008: Hierarchical Market Economies


Andreas Nölke, Arjan Vliegenthart, Enlarging the Varieties of Capitalism: The Emergence of Dependent Market Economies in East Central Europe, World Politics, Volume 61, Number 4, October 2009, pp. 670-702

**Session 5 East European Capitalisms 30 October**


Session 6 Varieties of residential capitalism 6 November


Session 7 Growth models 13 November


Session 8 The political economy of taxation 20 November


**Session 9 Inequality in Advanced Economies  27 November**

Pontusson, Jonas and Lane Kenworthy, ‘Rising Inequality and the Politics of Redistribution in Affluent Countries’, *Perspectives on Politics*, 2005.


**Session 10 Politics of capitalism  4 December**

