Welcome to Political Science 100X, Political Economy! To find this course, you should login to Blackboard, the university’s instructional delivery system, through: http://maymester-classes.uaf.edu and then go to PS 100X.

Normally, I offer political economy over a 15-week semester. This course is highly condensed, and is offered over two weeks. If you want to do well in it, you should get a head start by beginning the readings early.

SCOPE

Political economy is one of the foundation courses in the UAF core curriculum. It is designed for lower-division students, and assumes no prior study of either economics or political science.

Governments and markets affect most of our choices in daily life. Political economy is the systematic study of the intersection of governments and markets. In this course, you will become familiar with the players—individuals, groups, and institutions—which make decisions. You will learn about the different processes through which decisions are made, and the ideas and values which shape decisions. And you will gain an understanding of major issues in political economy, such as inflation and unemployment, poverty, regulation/deregulation, budget surpluses/deficits, national debt, and global political and economic transformations.

If you are an alert and engaged online student, and if you do the readings, you will become familiar with the major concepts of political economy and be able to apply them to contemporary issues and events.

TEXTBOOKS

The primary text for the course is Roger Miller, Daniel Benjamin, and Douglass North (MBN), The Economics of Public Issues (17th edition, 2012). In addition, the class BlackBoard site has readings from four other texts: Cohen (2002), Gosling (2008), Lehne (2006) and Patterson (2009). These readings will add to your understanding of what the instructor presents and provide different perspectives from Miller, Benjamin & North. Finally, you will find in the Blackboard (BB) course materials section thirteen power points (PPTs) constructed from the instructor’s lecture notes, based on teaching this course for 25 years. They are identified as Political Economy (#... in the syllabus.
REQUIREMENTS (Students will receive notice when quizzes and examinations are available on Blackboard)

1. Involvement (20 percent of course grade). All students should complete the self-introduction, which is the first item in the assignments section of BB. For online students, one short paper is required, to engage you in the course. You have a choice of four essay topics, found as assignments #2, 3, 4, and 5 in the assignments section of BB; select the topic that interests you most and submit your paper by the deadline (each topic has a separate due date). Then, you should respond to the papers of two of your classmates.

Note: The instructor is available for any questions or problems you have about the course, either in office hours or by phone/e-mail. The instructor will work with the Office of Disabilities Services (208 Whitaker, 474-5655) to provide reasonable accommodation for students with disabilities. Also, remember that UAF has a student code of conduct that prohibits among other behavior “cheating, plagiarism or other forms of academic dishonesty.”

2. Examinations (40 percent). Two examinations will be given during Maymester, to test your knowledge of PPTs and readings. The exams will ask you to define terms and write essays. There are study guides for both exams in the assignments section. The exam schedule and percentage contribution to the course grade are: a) mid-term exam, May 16, 15 percent; and b) final, May 23, 25 percent. Both exams will be available in BB.

3. Quizzes (40 percent) Six quizzes composed only of true-false and multiple-choice questions will be given to help you keep on task; only scores on the highest five will be counted, for a total of 40 percent of the course grade. Quizzes will be available in BB too. Dates of quizzes are listed in the course outline and reading schedule. Quizzes and exams will be graded on a curve (allocating a certain percentage of scores to A, B, C, [and if students get less than half the answers correct, D] grades.

4. Extra-credit paper (5 percent). Students worried about their course grades will want to write a short (two-four page, typewritten) analytical paper, due by May 23 (but preferably submitted to the assignments section of BB earlier). For this assignment, you can select any chapter from the MBN text and write a critical review incorporating the political economy perspectives on public issues presented in the course. See Term Paper Tips in BB course materials for further details.

Grading system. For all completed requirements, you will receive a numerical grade—for example, on involvement (worth 20 percent) a B- equals 16.5, a B, 17, a B+, 17.5, and a B-/C+, 16. Possible points (excluding the extra-credit paper) equal 100. If you do not complete a requirement, for example one of the quizzes, then 8 points automatically are deducted from the possible 100 points. (Note: late work is accepted to the last day of class, but your grade will be docked.) Grade ranges are A: 90-100, B: 80-89; C: 70-79, D: 60-69, F: less than 60. For computation of final grades including pluses and minuses, each range is split into nearly equal thirds; so, for example, if your end-semester total point score is 82.5, you’ll receive a B-. Remember that because this course is a core curriculum requirement, the lowest passing grade is a C-.
COURSE OUTLINE AND READING SCHEDULE

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Introduction to the course: Governments and markets (May 12)
   Political Economy (1), in BB.
   Gosling, Economics, Politics, and American Public Policy, ch. 1, pp. 3-20.
   Miller, Benjamin & North (MBN), The Economics of Public Issues, 17th edition, part
   one, chs. 1-5, pp. 1-34 and also 35-37.
B. Development of the U.S. Political Economy (May 12, May 13)
   Political Economy (2), in BB
   2, pp. 40-60
   Quiz 1 available, May 13 (covers topic I)

II. INSTITUTIONS AND POLITICAL ECONOMY

A. U.S. Political Institutions—Separation of Power (May 13)
   Political Economy (3) in BB
   Highly recommended: Cohen, ch. 6, pp. 145-68
B. Economic Institutions (May 13)
   Political Economy (4), in BB
C. Global Institutions (May 14)
   Quiz 2 available, May 14 (covers topic II)

III. PROCESSES, POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC

A. Public Opinion, Media, Interest Groups (May 14)
   Political Economy (5), in BB
   Highly recommended: Cohen, ch. 3, pp. 64-92.
B. Lobbying (May 14, 1st 30 minutes; May 15)
C. Political Parties, Campaigns, Elections (May 15)
   Highly recommended: Patterson, We the People, ch. 8, pp. 253-89.
   Quiz 3 available, May 15 (covers topic III)

IV. GOVERNMENT POLICIES

A. Economic Policies
   1. Unemployment and Inflation (May 16; Mid-term exam [covers topics I-III])
      Political Economy (6), in BB
      Gosling, ch. 2, pp. 21-39
   2. Fiscal and Monetary Policies (May 19)
      Political Economy (7), in BB
      Gosling, chs.3-5, pp. 40-109
MBN, ch. 9 and Part 5, chs. 19-22, pp. 59-64, 125-154.
Quiz 4 available, May 19 (covers topic IVA)

B. Regulation
1. History of Regulation, Economic and Social (May 19, May 20)
   Political Economy (8), in BB
   Gosling, ch. 7, pp. 134-71
   MBN, part two, chs. 6-7, 10, pp. 38-52, 65-72.

2. Deregulation and Privatization (May 20)
   Political Economy (9), in BB
   Quiz 5 available, May 20 (covers topic IVB)

C. Global Trade (May 20, last hour, May 21)
   Political Economy (10), in BB
   Gosling, ch. 6, pp. 110-33
   MBN, part seven, chs. 28-30, pp. 189-208.

D. Antitrust/Industrial Policy (May 21, May 22)
   Political Economy (11), in BB
   MBN, Part four, chs. 15-18, pp. 97-124.
   Highly recommended: Lehne, chs. 12-13, pp. 240-76.
   Quiz 6 available, May 21 (covers topics IVC, D)

E. Environmental Policy (May 22)
   Political Economy (12), in BB
   MBN, ch. 8 and Part six, chs. 24-27, pp. 53-58, 161-89.

F. Inequality and Poverty: Social Policy (May 22; May 23)
   Political Economy (13), in BB
   Gosling, chs. 8-9, pp. 172-220
   MBN, Part three, chs. 11-14, Part five, ch. 23, pp. 73-96, 155-60.

V. CONCLUSIONS (May 23; final examination [covers topics IV-V, comprehensive questions too)