
Anil Duman

Room: Quellenstrasse 51, QS A413
E-mail: dumana@ceu.edu

Fall Term, AY 2020/2021

Credit value: 8 ECTS (4 CEU credits)
Master of Arts in Political Science (1 year): Elective
Master of Arts in Political Science (2 years): Elective
Prerequisites: None
Online class meetings: Tuesdays and Wednesdays 15:30-16:30
Office hours: By appointment, sign up in advance at https://dumana.youcanbook.me

COURSE INTRODUCTION:

The course aims to examine welfare states and current welfare policies in a comparative perspective. To achieve this, different approaches on the role of states and markets in welfare provision are analyzed. In the first part of the course fundamental concepts, origins and typologies of welfare state are reviewed. This part tries to answer the questions of what a welfare state is, why it exists and how it differs across countries. The second part covers a variety of issues such as active and passive labor market policies, pensions, health care, work and life balance, and redistribution. Given the complexity of welfare state, we are not able to cover all the policies, but the course captures the highly relevant areas and provides a comparative perspective. In the final part of the course, welfare state challenges are examined to understand the impact of globalization, migration, and post-industrialization on social policy. At the end of this part we will be able to understand the extent and reasons of retrenchment, liberalization, and privatization of social expenditures. Throughout the class both theoretical and empirical material are covered. Even though the course has no prerequisites, some background knowledge on statistical methods can be needed.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

At the end of this course, the students are expected to

- understand the basic terms in welfare state research
- have sufficient knowledge to apply these concepts in their research
- formulate researchable questions
- to be able to follow and understand the literature related to the subject matter
- be able to follow theoretical and empirical debates about social policy
• acquire knowledge of methodologies and assumptions in the study of globalization and the welfare state.
• gain skills for presenting and critically discussing scholarly work by others

LEARNING ACTIVITIES AND TEACHING METHODS:

Class Structure

The class includes both asynchronous lecture and synchronous seminar parts. In the recorded lectures, key concepts; key arguments; key theoretical and methodological approaches; puzzles and questions; the relevance of the subject matter are presented. Recorded lectures should be watched before the synchronous sessions every week, and these contain general theoretical underpinnings. The first question in each set that are listed in your syllabus will be the basis of the discussion for Tuesdays’ online sessions, and the rest of the questions need to be answered as assignments, which will be reviewed on Wednesdays’ synchronous meetings. Students are responsible for thoroughly covering the lecture material before the online meetings and read all the relevant articles/chapters beforehand. The online sessions will each be around 50-60 minutes. The purpose of these live sessions is to provide the opportunity to ask questions and to discuss with their peers and instructors. There will be no lectures during these live sessions. The instructors expect participants to come to the sessions well prepared. During live sessions we will discuss open questions and points of confusion from the video lectures, readings and go over the assignments that are posted on Perusall.

Engagement with mandatory readings

For each session, there are mandatory readings, which are available online and can be also asked from the instructor. Participants are asked to read, comment, and actively engage in exchanges with fellow students via Perusall. For information on how Perusall’s evaluation procedure works, see their website: https://support.perusall.com/hc/en-us/sections/360005183594-Scoring-and-grades and the welcome message you received once you start reading in Perusall.

Participation during online meetings

Students are expected to be actively present at all lectures and seminars. In case you are unable to attend, you need to inform the instructor via email prior to the meeting you are going to miss. Unexcused missed classes count with 0 points for participation on that specific day. During the seminars you are expected to reflect critically on the mandatory readings and to engage in discussions with your fellow students and the instructor. To do well on this part of the grade I recommend you the following strategy: participate regularly in the group work, make contributions, focus on the main points and argumentation lines of the readings, formulate your statements clearly and support them with explanatory argumentation, respond to others in discussions, pose own new questions and demonstrate critical engagement. In general, for the
grade the quality of participation prevails over its quantity, but if quantity is zero, quality is zero, too. Students who are present but do not actively participate receive the lowest passing grade for participation. Feedback on the class performance (including grade) will be provided if and when students sign up for an appointment during the office hours.

**ASSESSMENT:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation during synchronous meeting</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engagement with readings</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignments</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper</td>
<td>35%</td>
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**Assignments**

Students are expected to complete the pre-class assignment(s) on Perusall until Wednesdays (12:00). There will be one pre-class assignment in each module / per week; 12 pre-class assignments in total. A pre-class assignment will be a two-step assignment, involving a video-lecture and one compulsory reading. To successfully complete the pre-class assignments, students should deeply engage with the video-lecture and the readings through posting informative questions or comments and helping others by addressing their questions or confusions. To enhance the interaction with the classmates, you should name a classmate in your reply to his/her comment or question to have him/her notified by email or immediately on Perusall if online; in turn you’ll also be notified when your classmates respond to your questions or comments.

**Final Paper**

Each student should develop a research proposal for a study focusing one of the themes covered in the class. You have to email me the working title or short introduction to your topic week December 1st, 5:00 pm). If I don’t receive a message at the end of the specified date, you will be assigned a random topic. A research proposal should include a puzzle, a research question, theoretical elaboration of causal mechanism(s), hypotheses and operationalization of the variables, and findings. The length should be 2500 words (-10/+10), and there is a grade penalty for exceeding the upper or lower limit. Final paper is due to 25th of December by 23:59. In case of late submission half a grade will be taken away for each day. No submissions are accepted after 27th of December by 17:00 pm and exceptions will be granted solely on the basis of written proof.

The grading follows the standard scale adopted by the Department of Political Science: A: 100-94; A-: 93-87; B+: 86-80; B: 79-73; B-: 72-66; C+: 65-59; F: 58-0.
COURSE STRUCTURE AND COURSE MATERIAL:

Week 1: Definitions and Typologies (September 29-30)

This session introduces the fundamental concepts and indicators to understand what a welfare state is, how we can measure its generosity, and what type of rights welfare states give to their citizens. It also looks at the criteria marking different welfare state regimes and whether it is possible to reach meaningful typologies. It also identifies the winners and losers of welfare state across the highly accepted regimes.

1) What is welfare state and how is it different than social policy?
2) Where do you locate your home country in the typologies offered?
3) Is there a convergence or divergence of welfare states over time?

Key Readings:


Additional Readings:


Week 2: Origins (October 6-7)

This session discusses a number of theoretical approaches that try to clarify why welfare states came into existence. Power resources, business oriented, institutional and other factors are reviewed to understand which of them are explanatory for the emergence and development of welfare states.

1) What are the social and cultural features that might be more conducive to the formation of welfare states? Are these overlooked in the existing studies?
2) Is labor or capital more prominent for the existence of social policy and its evolution over time?

3) Are there differences between developed and developing countries in terms of factors causing the existence and evolution of welfare policies (for example, the importance of domestic versus international determinants)?

Key Readings:


Additional Readings:


Week 3: Labor Markets (October 13-14)

This session examines the impact of welfare state policies on labor market outcomes, and how varied these are across countries. Different types of labor market policies such as employment protection legislation, unemployment insurance as well as policies related to specific groups are considered.

1) How does the type of the welfare state affect the labor market outcomes? Please identify systemic advantages and disadvantages in terms of unemployment, wage inequality, and fiscal sustainability.

2) Which welfare state is more progressive in terms of gender division of labor and economic inequalities? Do you expect to see similarities in terms of female labor force participation across countries?

3) Do political parties respond according to the institutional factors, ideology, or economic constraints in reforming labor market policies?
Key Readings:


Additional Readings:


**Week 4: Pensions (October 20-21)**

This session examines how policies related to old age are shaped by different welfare states and how they changed over time. Especially privatization of public pensions and comparison of the systems are presented. Given that pensioners have high electoral power in certain countries, it also looks at whether these policies are economically optimal or politically driven.

1) Do you think that people have the adequate information about how much they will be making upon retirement? If not, how can the informational barriers be reduced and is it different across pension systems?

2) What are the advantages and disadvantages of private pensions from social fairness and financial sustainability perspectives?

3) Are pensioners decisive voters? If not, why doesn’t their size matter and what kind of collective action problems might arise?
Key Readings:


Additional Readings:


Week 5: Housing (October 27-28)

This section examines the relationship between housing policies and welfare state, and whether housing policies differ across countries systematically. It also briefly discusses the effect of pension systems on housing and why in particular nations home ownership is deemed to be crucial while in others rental markets are larger.

1) What are the social and cultural determinants of house ownership, and to what extent these are in line with the economic reasons for buying real estate (i.e. is renting an apartment more/less desirable)?

2) Are there generational discrepancies in terms of housing policies and available financial options such as mortgages and bank loans versus personal resources?

3) Describe the relationship between labor market mobility and housing policies. Is it hampering or fostering mobility and are there differences across countries, especially in Anglo-Saxon world and continental European economies?
Key Readings:


Additional Readings:


**Week 6: Health Care Systems (November 3-4)**

This session inspects models of health care across countries and the reasons why nations adopted various policies. Publicly provided, insurance- based and private healthcare systems are examined in depth by considering finance, regulation, and delivery aspects. The actors that are influential for reforms and change over time are also reviewed.

1) Which system of financing for healthcare (tax-based or insurance-based) is more efficient for equality and sustainability?
2) Do the existing typologies of welfare state capture the features of healthcare systems or do we need to revise the models?
3) Given all the disadvantages of private healthcare systems, how can the recent reforms towards privatization be explained? Who are the important actors behind reform and why specific actors are more/less important across countries?

Key Readings:


Additional Readings:


**Week 7: Health Care Outcomes (November 10-11)**

The second part of the healthcare session looks at policy making processes and outcomes such as life expectancy, child mortality and other commonly accepted indicators are studied. Covid-19 pandemic, its relation to the healthcare systems and viability of healthcare policies across welfare states are discussed.

1) **Which type of welfare regime is expected to generate better health outcomes? Do you think that economic inequality and health inequality are closely related?**

2) **Is employer-based healthcare insurance sufficient and desirable? Have your assessment changed after the pandemic? Do you think that particular healthcare systems are more capable to handle pandemics?**

3) **How can healthcare inequality be best measured? Should the indicators emphasize access or quality of care or affordability of services?**

**Key Readings:**

Additional Readings:


Week 8: Redistribution (November 17-18)

This section covers one of the most important policy outcomes of welfare state, namely redistribution. It answers the distinctive distributive effects of different regime types, generosity of these regimes, and how effective they are in correcting market failures with regards to income distribution.

1) Which type of welfare policies are more redistributive; universal benefits, insurance-based programs or means tested? Would inequality rankings of countries be altered if in-kind benefits (schooling, healthcare, etc.) taken into account?

2) Why do some countries redistribute more than others; carefully consider the role of institutional, political, economic, and cultural factors?

3) Are the explanations path dependent or can we expect to have major changes over time (i.e. initially more unequal countries like US remaining to be unequal or pushing for radical reforms)?

Key Readings:


Additional Readings:

Week 9: Globalization (November 24-25)

This section inspects the effect of globalization on welfare state policies, and identifies the specific challenges raised because of international integration. Both political and economic constraints are evaluated with respect to the different welfare regimes, and different responses to common challenges are assessed.

1) Who are the winners and losers of globalization? Do these groups vary according to the welfare regime in a country, and if so how?

2) Are responses to globalization similar or opposing in developing and developed countries? In which social policy areas, do we observe convergence and divergence, and why?

3) Which parties do globalization losers vote for? In other words, can we link reductions in public spending and welfare entitlements to populism? What are the alternative policies to social protection that losers can demand?

Key Readings:


Additional Readings:

Week 10: Post-Industrialization (December 1-2)

This section continues to examine the challenges for welfare states and highlights the characteristics of post-industrial societies, which are characterized by less stable labor markets, lower rates of economic growth and larger shares of service sector. The political mechanisms through which post-industrialization affect social policies and the effects of economic transformations are also reviewed.

1) Although, there is a general declining trend in economic growth rates, some economies have more stable patterns. Is it the general decline or volatility of growth that matter for austerity? Similarly, does the speed of deindustrialization be another factor besides its extent?

2) What are the labor market and social policies that can effectively protect the workers and individuals in a post-industrial world? Can all countries implement such policies, if not, what are the political and economic barriers?

3) Is there a link between deindustrialization and populism? If so, why do the have-nots opt for right wing parties rather than expansion of welfare programs?

Key Readings:


Additional Readings:

Week 1: Immigration (December 8-9)

This section looks at the settlement of immigrant populations and whether they pose any threats for the social protection systems of the host societies. In this section, also the citizens’ attitudes, and responses by the policy makers to migration are analyzed. We also try to understand how the polices and labor market integration differ between skilled and unskilled labor as well as refugees.

1) How is the migration policy determined? Do you expect to see changes in migration policy over time, if so, in what direction and why?
2) How can we evaluate the well-being of immigrants and native-born population? Are economic indicators satisfactory, and if not, what else can be included in the measures?
3) Is there a relationship between attitudes towards migration and the welfare state in a country (i.e. are people more worried about migrants in generous welfare regimes or more welcoming)?

Key Readings:


Additional Readings:


Week 12: Future (December 15-16)

This section offers concluding remarks on the topics covered before and outlines how future of welfare states might be shaped. The impact of growing share of platform economy, lack of global public goods and technological advancements are given special attention. Also, the future of social policy in developing countries and possibility of new regimes are briefly covered in this section.
1) Is it possible to proliferate welfare states to other parts of the globe? Is it possible to expand social policies in emerging welfare states such as the Latin American, Asian and South Eastern European countries?

2) Is it possible to maintain welfare states in the West given internal and external challenges? How would these regimes look like after the pandemic; retrenched or extended?

3) Do we need new typologies, measures, indicators to grasp the breadth of social policy in developing nations? Please give some examples for new indicators that are generally not included in the categorization of Western welfare regimes.

Key Readings:


Additional Readings: