POLS 5184

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Winter Term, AY 2021/2022
Tuesday 10.50-12.30; Wednesday 10.50-12.30
8 ECTS (4 CEU credits)

COURSE INTRODUCTION:
The aim of this course is to introduce students to the history, the concepts and the comparative literature of welfare state studies. The course provides students with solid theoretical and empirical knowledge and insights into methodologies to analyze welfare state reforms. In the first part of the course fundamental concepts, origins and typologies of welfare state are reviewed. This part includes debates about the definition of the welfare state and the function of social policy in different socio-economic and political circumstances. The second part covers a variety of sub-policies, including labor market policies, pensions, health care, family policies and work-life balance, social assistance and social services. In the final part of the course, recent welfare state challenges are examined to understand the impact of globalization, migration, and post-industrialization on social policy. At the end of the course students will be able to understand welfare state reforms, expansion or retrenchment of programs, as well as reasons and impacts of liberalization, privatization and nationalization.

Besides solid theoretical and empirical guidance received from the instructor, the course heavily builds on students’ knowledge and lived experiences. This teaching method allows students to gain knowledge and utilize new perspectives from each other, and engage in lively discussions about policy reforms in various geo-political settings. Students will write their final essays in several instalments (proposal, draft essay, and final essay), and will have the opportunity to provide feedback to their peers.

LEARNING OUTCOMES: Students will understand basic terms of welfare state research; acquire sufficient knowledge to apply these concepts in their own research; understand and critically discuss welfare state reforms.

ASSIGNEMENTS AND ASSESSMENT
- Students have to answer questions for the compulsory readings prior to class in writing. Answers should not be longer than 150 words. Deadline for answers is every Sunday 23:59PM. Answers will be discussed at class.
- Students have to provide some (guided) comments on the draft essays of one of their peers.
- Students have to write a final essay (2500 – 3500 words) that consists of the critical analysis of one welfare program/reform of their own country or a chosen country.
- A proposal on the topic of the essay and related readings (max. 500 words) is due on Week 7. First draft of the essay (max. 1000 words) is due at Week 11.
- Students will write a mid-term exam on Week 6.
- Guidelines of assignments are posted in a separate document on moodle!
- Final grade:
  o answers to questions + discussions + comments: 40%
  o mid-term exam: 20%
  o final essay: 40%
**Introduction**

**Week 1. Definitions and concepts**


**Recommended:**


**Week 2. Typologies**


**Recommended:**


**Week 3. Origins and historical development**


**Recommended:**


**Week 4. Gendered and intersectional analysis**


**Recommended:**


**Explanations to welfare state development**

**Week 5. Power resources and “politics matter” approaches**


**Recommended**


**Week 6. Institutions and ideas approaches**


**Recommended:**


Social policy fields

Week 7. Pension systems


Recommended:


Week 8. Family policies


Recommended:


Week 9. Labor market trends and policies


Recommended:


Challenges to welfare states?

Week 10. Populism and illiberalism


Recommended:

Week 11. Migration and multiculturalism


Recommended:


Week 12. Climate change

