Special Topics in Political Institutions and Economic and Social Policy

Class Code: POL-UA9795-B01

Instructor Details:
Mariano Tommasi, PhD
EMAIL: tommasi@udesa.edu.ar
Office Hours: by appointment

Class Details:
Mondays 3:30-6:45
Location: Borges classroom, Academic Center

Prerequisites:
None

Class Description:
This course explores the way in which public policies (Economic, Social, and political) emerge out of the interactions of various economic, social, and political actors. We will pay special attention to institutions and to the way in which various actors influence the policymaking process. The class will attempt to blend abstract theoretical views from economics and political science with attention to the nuances and details of policymaking in a developing country context. The professor will supplement the theory and empirical content of the course with examples of economic and social policy-making in different political institutional contexts in Latin America. The primary focus will be on economic and social policies in Latin American countries in recent times, particularly Argentina, a country in which the professor has extensive top-level policy-making experience.

Desired Outcomes:
By the end of this course, students will:
- Have an understanding of the way in which economic and social policies are determined in the political arena, and of the role played by political institutions and interest organization.
- Be familiar with some of the main developments in modern political economy.

Assessment Components:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation:</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Weekly Reading Assignments (5 reports):</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2-pager on Voting:</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Paper (5 pages):</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Paper (8 pages):</td>
<td>40%</td>
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A. Reading Report: There will be mandatory weekly readings. Each student has to present throughout the course 5 one-page reports on the readings of that week.

B. Working in groups: Students will have the option of making presentations and turning the three main assignments below (not the 5 reading reports mentioned in A) either individually or in groups of 2 or 3 students.

C. On Monday February 19, students will come prepared for a class discussion on "Voting in the US, how come D. Trump got elected?", and by Monday 26 they should submit a 2-page report on "How people
vote?” based on the class discussion.

D. **Midterm paper:** Each student or group of students is expected to write a 1500-2000 word (5 pages) report based on the readings for sessions 8 and 9 on Social Movements, new political actors, contentious collective action and clientelism. **Due Tuesday April 3.**

E. **Final paper:** Each student or group of students is expected to write a 3,000-3500 word (8-10 page) research paper on “The Political Economy of Poverty and Social Policy”. (More precise instructions will be given after the Spring Break). **Due on Exam week.**

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

**Assessment Expectations**

**Grade A:** The student makes excellent use of empirical and theoretical material and offers well-structured arguments in their work. The student writes comprehensive essays and the work shows strong evidence of critical thought and extensive reading.

**Grade B:** The candidate shows a good understanding of the issues and has demonstrated the ability to formulate and execute a coherent research strategy.

**Grade C:** Work is acceptable and shows a basic grasp of the issues. However, the work fails to organize findings coherently and is in need of improvement.

**Grade D:** The work passes because some relevant points are made. However, there may be a problem of poor definition, lack of critical awareness, or poor research.

**Grade F:** The work shows that the issues are not understood; there is little or no critical awareness and the research is clearly negligible.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Conversion</th>
<th>100-93</th>
<th>92-90</th>
<th>89-87</th>
<th>86-83</th>
<th>82-80</th>
<th>79-77</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>A-</td>
<td>B+</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>B-</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>76-73</td>
<td>72-70</td>
<td>69-67</td>
<td>66-60</td>
<td>59-0</td>
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<tr>
<td>Grade</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>C-</td>
<td>D+</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>F</td>
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**Exams and Submission of work**

Due dates for classwork cannot be changed under any circumstance.

**Final essays must be submitted to the instructor in print and electronic copy.** If students are not in Buenos Aires they must send a printed copy via express postal mail (i.e. FeDEX, DHL, UPS, etc) to the NYU Center in Buenos Aires – Anchorena 1314 - (C1425SELF) Argentina. This copy must arrive before or on the date of established deadline.

**Attendance Policy**

- NYU’s Global Programs (including NYU Buenos Aires) must adhere to a **strict policy regarding course attendance. No unexcused absences are permitted.**
- Each unexcused absence will be penalized by deducting 2% from the student’s final course grade.
- Absences are only excused if they are due to illness, religious observance or emergencies.
- Absences due to illness or mental health issues must be discussed with the Assistant Director for Academic Programs, Moira Pérez, **within one week** of your return to class.
- A doctor’s note excusing your absence is mandatory for the absence to be justified. The note must clearly state that student is not able to attend class.
- **The date on the doctor’s note must be the date of the missed class or exam.**
● Being absent to any kind of examination must be informed at or before the
time of said examination via email to
the Assistant Director for Academic
Programs, Moira Pérez (moira.perez@nyu.edu).

● Requests to be excused for non-illness purposes must be discussed with your
instructor prior to the date(s) in question. (If you want the reasons of your
absence to be treated confidentially and not shared with your lecturer, please
contact the Assistant Director for Academic Programs, Julia Tomasini, at
jt145@nyu.edu)

● Students with more than four unexcused absences will fail the course.

● Each class lasts one hour and half or two hours. Missing one class
represents one absence. For courses that meet once a week (three-hour
block), missing one class represents two absences.

● Students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence.

● NYU BA also expects students to arrive to class promptly (both at the
beginning and after any breaks) and to remain for the duration of the class. Three
late arrivals or early departures (10 minutes after the starting time or before the
ending time) will be considered one absence. Missing more than 20 minutes of a
class will count as a full absence.

● Please note that for classes involving a field trip or other external visit,
transportation difficulties are never grounds for an excused absence. It is the
student's responsibility to arrive at an agreed meeting point in a punctual and
timely fashion.

● Make-up classes for Holidays are mandatory as regular scheduled classes.

Late
Submission of
Work

Late work should be submitted in person to the Assistant Director for Academic
Programs during office hours (Mon – Fri, 9.30 am to 5 pm), who will write on
the essay or other work the date and time of submission, in the presence of the
student. Another member of the administrative staff can accept the work, in
person, in the absence of the Assistant Director for Academic Programs and will
write the date and time of submission on the work, as above.

Work submitted within 5 weekdays after the submission time without an agreed
extension receives a penalty of 10 points on the 100 point scale.

Written work submitted after 5 weekdays after the submission date without an
agreed extension fails and is given a zero.

Please note end of semester essays must be submitted on time.

Plagiarism
Policy

Academic Integrity
Academic Integrity is intimately related to the teaching and learning process.
When writing research papers, you need to keep in mind that plagiarism includes
the use of another person’s words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though
they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally. It also includes
presenting and/or paraphrasing discourse or ideas from a published work (in print
or on internet) without quotation marks and clear without acknowledgment of the
original source.

For formatting in your papers, refer to MLA guidelines.
On matters regarding academic integrity, refer to the section “Academic
Standards and Discipline” in the College of Arts and Science Bulletin
http://bulletin.cas.nyu.edu/page/academic.policies#STANDARDS and to
“Statement on Academic Integrity” in NYU Expository Writing Program: Policies
and Procedures:
http://www.nyu.edu/cas/ewp/html/policies___procedures.html#statementacademic
icintegrity

All your written work must be submitted as a hard copy AND in electronic form to
the instructor.

It is expected that the student follow the rules on academic honesty and
intellectual integrity established by NYU University.
Session 1  
[Monday  
Feb 5]

PART I: SOME BASIC ISSUES IN POLITICAL ECONOMY

Introduction to course.

Social Choice and Collective Action
Olson, Mancur 1986 The Logic, chapter 2 in his The Rise and Decline of Nations. Yale University Press.

Session 2  
[Friday  
Feb 9]

Principal agent problem in politics
World Bank 2016 Learning from the Logic of the Theoretical Literature, Ch. 4 in Making Politics Work for Development. Harnessing Transparency and Citizen Engagement.

Institutions and institutionalization

Session 3  
[Monday  
Feb 19]

Voting and elections. The American Case. The 2016 Presidential Election
Social Science in the Age of Trump. A Syllabus  


Voting and elections. Theory and the Argentine Case


Lupu 2016 The End of the Kirchner Era. Mimeo. Vanderbilt.

Session 4
[Monday Feb 26]

2-page report on “How People Vote?” due

**PART II. POLICYMAKING, POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS AND SOCIAL ACTORS**

**II A. POLITICAL INSTITUTIONS**

Introduction

Political Parties
Stokes, Susan 1999 *Political Parties and Democracy* *Annual Review of Political Science*. 2:1, 243-267
Kistchelt, Herbert 2007 Party Systems, Ch22 in Boix and Stokes *Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics* Oxford University Press.

Session 5
[Monday March 5]

Congress

Federalism
Ardanaz, M., M. Leiras, and M. Tommasi 2014 The Politics of Federalism

**Executive**


Bonvecchi and Scartascini 2014 The Organization of the Executive Branch in Latin America: What we Know and What We Need to Know *Latin American Politics and Society* 56 (1).

**Session 7**

[Monday March 12]

**II B. INTERESTS, ACTORS, AND STRATEGIES**

**Interest Articulation**

Hague and Harrop 2007 Interest Groups, Ch. 11 in *Political Science; A comparative introduction.* Palgrave.


Scartascini, Carlos 2008 The People’s Choices? The Role of Opinions in the Policymaking Process Ch. 9 in Inter-American Development Bank *Beyond Facts. Understanding Quality of Life.* IADB.


**Business**

Schneider, Ben Ross 2010 Business Politics and Policymaking in Contemporary Latin America in Scartascini et al *How Democracy Works: Political Institutions, Actors and Arenas in Latin American Policymaking.* IADB.


Assignment instructions for mid-term paper are provided.
Session 8
[Friday March 16]
(this class might be rescheduled)

Labor

Levitsky, Steven and Scott Mainwaring 2006 Organized Labor and Democracy in Latin America *Comparative Politics* Vol. 39, No. 1, pp. 21-42


Social Movements
Tarrow and Tilly 2007 “Contentious Politics and Social Movements” in Boix and Stokes *Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics* Oxford University Press.


Rossi, Federico 2015 The Second Wave of Incorporation in Latin America: A Conceptualization of the Quest for Inclusion Applied to Argentina *Latin American Politics and Society*.


Session 9
[Monday March 19]
(this class might be rescheduled)

Social Movements and Clientelism
Hochstetler and Friedman 2008 Can Civil Society Organizations solve the Crisis of Partisan Representation in Latin America? Latin American Politics and Society


Scartascini, Carlos and Mariano Tommasi (2012), "The Making of Policy:
Institutionalized or Not?” in American Journal of Political Science, vol. 56, núm. 4, pp. 787-801

**SPRING BREAK**
During the Spring Break
  - Watch the following movies:
    - Elefante Blanco
    - Cidade de Deus

**April 2**
Midterm paper due

**Session 10**
[Monday April 9]

**PART III. THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF POVERTY AND SOCIAL POLICY**

**Poverty. What is Poverty? Poverty in Argentina and in Latin America.**

May, Julian 2001 An Elusive Consensus: Definitions, measurement, and analysis of poverty, in Grinspun (ed.) Choices for the Poor. Lessons from national poverty strategies. UNDP.
Banerjee, Abhijit y Esther Duflo. 2007 The Economic Lives of the Poor Journal of Economic Perspectives, vol. 21, pág. 141-68
Duflo 2012 Human values and the design of the fight against poverty. Mimeo.

**Slums**

Rains, Krishna and Wibbels 2017 Slummier than others: A Continuum of Slums and Assortative Residential Selection.

**Violence**

Chioda, Laura 2015 Crime Prevention in Latin America and the Caribbean: Never Too Early, Never Too Late, Never Too Comprehensive. World Bank


Urban Youth and Their Social Representations


Session 11 [Monday April 16]

The Economics of Human Development and Social Mobility


Families and Poverty


Life Trajectories. Life Courses. How to move out of poverty?

(Recommended reading: Moore, Wes 2011 The Other Wes Moore. One Name, Two Fates. Spiegel & Grau trade paperbacks.)


Early Childhood & Adolescence


Economic Issues, 27(2): 263-286.
World Bank 2009 Argentine Youth Untapped Potential.

Session 12
[Friday April 20]

Social Policy and Social Policies
World Bank 2014 Social Assistance and Labor Market Programs in Latin America.
Camacho, A., Cunningham, W., Rigolini, J., & Silva, V. 2014 Addressing access and behavioral constraints through social intermediation services: a review of Chile Solidario and Red Unidos. IZA Policy Paper No. 94

Session 13
[Monday April 23]

The Political Economy of Poverty and Social Policy
Arroyo Abad and Lindert 2017 Fiscal Redistribution in Latin America since the XIX Century. In Bertola and Williamson Has Inequality in Latin America Changed Direction?


**Session 14**

**[Monday May 7]**


Mares, Isabela and Matthew Carnes 2009 Social Policy in Developing Countries *Annual Review or Political Science* 12: 93-113.


Rojo, Guadalupe 2017 Drawing the line between vote banking and clientelism. Social capital and local public goods in the slums of Argentina.


**Closing remarks; comments on final paper.**

**Exam Week**

**Final paper due Thursday May 17 via NYU Classes**

**Your Instructor**