RPOS 572 Topics in Comparative Public Policy

Foreign Economic Policy: the Aid Donations, Trade Preferences, and Lending of Industrialized States

Spring Semester 2009
Wednesdays, 5.45pm in DR115

Instructor: Dr Holly Jarman
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Office Hours: 304 Milne Hall, Wed 4.30-5.30, please email for appointments at other times.

Course Summary:

This class deals with how developed countries behave towards developing countries. Why do industrialized countries feel the need to give grants, loans and special trade preferences to developing countries? What factors determine how these resources are distributed? The course tackles these questions by analyzing some broad themes: part one places the course in the context of a post-9/11 world, part two examines domestic pressure for change, and part three deals with multiple levels of policymaking. Finally, we look at three case studies: plans to fix the ailing international financial system, the role of foreign economic policy in preventing the spread of AIDS, and the changing trade relationships between China and other industrialized states. By the end of the course, you should have an appreciation of the underlying structural and cultural differences between modern industrial countries and how these affect the allocation of aid, finance, and trade preferences.

Class Schedule:

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What I Expect From You

Please come to class prepared. Readings on this list are assigned for a specific date. There is no one set book to buy for this class, but all readings have been made available online via Blackboard. Please complete the readings and come to class ready to discuss, debate and disagree with the arguments they contain, with your fellow classmates, and me!

We will try to follow current policy developments as much as possible in class, so it is highly recommended that you get into the habit of reading articles on foreign economic policy from quality news sources such as the Financial Times, the Economist, the Nation, the New York Times and the Washington Post, etc. This will help a great deal in getting to grips with the material we cover.

There are no prerequisites for this course. The course is graded A-E. Formal requirements are as follows:

Blog Posts and Comments: 30% of your grade
Research Paper: 40% of your grade
Class Participation: 30% of your grade

Blog Posts and Comments – The Blackboard site for this course at https://bls.its.albany.edu/webct/logon/250812279001 has the facility for you to post blog entries related to trade, aid, and finance policy. I encourage you to contribute to this blog in the form of reading summaries, comments on things happening in the news, useful data you find, or anything else that strikes you as interesting on these topics. At the end of term, you will be graded on your contribution to this blog – both in terms of your own posts and your comments on the posts of others.

Research Paper – As a final assessment you are required to submit a short research paper on any foreign economic policy topic of your choice. Detailed information about what the paper should contain will be made available on Blackboard and we can discuss any questions you have in class. You will start by selecting possible research questions and flesh out the paper as the semester progresses. You will have two opportunities to get feedback on your plan by handing a draft to me in class, which will be returned with comments. The final plan is then due at the end of term.

Draft Research Paper Deadline 2: March 18th 2009
Final Research Paper Deadline: April 29th 2009

The University takes a strong stance against cheating and plagiarism. Students found to have cheated on any assignment or to have plagiarized another’s work will receive an “E” for the entire course. University policies regarding academic integrity may be found at http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html

What You Can Expect From Me

During my weekly office hours I will be available to discuss any queries. If you are having problems with the readings or with following discussions in class, please come and talk to me,
sooner rather than later. Similarly, please come and see me at the start of the semester if you require special arrangements for class assignments.

Please note I do not give special consideration for late papers or missed classes without written instructions to do so from the graduate dean. Papers which are late without permission will be graded 0.

List of Readings (these are made available on Blackboard)

Wednesday January 21st: Aid…and altruism?

Also, familiarize yourself with the OECD’s Donor Aid Charts, (link on Blackboard).

Wednesday January 28th: Debt and Development

Listen to “The Credit Squeeze Explained” (link on Blackboard).

Wednesday February 4th: Trade and Growth


Wednesday February 11th: Interest Groups


**Wednesday February 25th: Parties and Elections**


Also, read up on trade and the 2008 election at [http://www.cfr.org/publication/14762/](http://www.cfr.org/publication/14762/)

**Wednesday March 4th: Bureaucracy**


**Wednesday March 11th: Capitalism and the Welfare State**


**Wednesday March 18th: Citizens, Movements & Protest**


**Wednesday March 25th: Multilevel Policymaking**


**Wednesday April 1st: Case Study 1- Fixing Global Finance**


G20 communiqué, November 2008 (link on Blackboard).

**Wednesday April 15th: Case Study 2- Aid Against AIDS**


**Wednesday April 22nd: Case Study 3- Trading with China**


**Wednesday April 29th: Making Progress**
