



College of Europe
Collège d'Europe

Brugge



Natolin

ECTS CARD

STUDY PROGRAMME

European Interdisciplinary Studies, Natolin campus (Advanced Academic Master)

YEAR

2023-2024

COURSE TITLE

The Political Economy of Welfare States in Europe

SEMESTER

2

COURSE PROFESSOR(S)

GÓRA Marek

ACADEMIC ASSISTANT(S)

BOGUSŁAWSKI Jan

COURSE TYPE

Specialist Course

MAJOR(S)

EPAP

ECTS CREDITS

4

TEACHING HOURS

20

INDIVIDUAL & GROUP STUDY TIME

80

TUTORIAL(S)

COEFFICIENT

1

LANGUAGE(S)

EN

COURSE OBJECTIVE

Understanding challenges of the 21st century for the functioning of welfare state institutions.

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Students can identify and define key political economy problems (particular focus on social policy).
- Students know the concept of welfare state and its historical developments (variety of approaches to the concept of welfare state; particular focus on the European approach).
- Students understand the role of individual and social interests.
- Students are aware of possible market failures as well as government failures.
- Students are aware of policy tradeoffs within social policy and in general within the welfare state – especially a possible tradeoff: equity vs. efficiency.
- Students are aware of the existence of losers and gainers of all possible regulations.
- Students know the role of social policy in the general framework of the welfare state.
- Students can apply the general knowledge on political economy to selected specific areas of the welfare state.
- Students understand changing challenges to various elements of the welfare state.
- Students know key elements of demographic background of the welfare state and its financing.
- Students know the welfare state requires constant development and adjustment to changing demographic, social and economic environment; the welfare state as it was created in the 20th century is not automatically granted forever.

- Students are able to create their own view on selected political economy and welfare state related problems,
- Students are able to formulate arguments for their view, be able to confront the arguments in discussions and hopefully be open for arguments of the others.

RECOMMENDED PREPARATION

Background reading (sources to be recommended by course professor).

TEACHING METHOD(S)

The approach will combine lectures with class presentations.

ASSESSMENT METHOD AND CRITERIA

- Individual presentation on a topic chosen by a student out of the area covered by the course; leading a discussion after the presentation; participation in discussions following other students' presentations (25%)
- Oral exam (75%)

The College of Europe reserves the right to change the delivery and assessment of the course in case of circumstances beyond the reasonable control of the College (*force majeure*). Any communication from the campus administration in this regard takes precedence over the information provided in this ECTS card.

Retake examinations, i.e. exams passed in the second examination session, will have the same format as those taken during the first exam session. The only exception concerns oral exams, which are replaced in the second exam session by written exams. When a student takes an examination during the second session, the final mark for the course is based solely on the result of the retake examination. No other element of evaluation which would have been taken into consideration in the calculation of the final mark during the first examination session will be considered in the second session.

COURSE CONTENTS

- Historical roots of the welfare state
- Demographic, social and economic background of the welfare state
- Institutions and their financing methods
- Interests of individuals, groups, the entire society
- The state; taxation; ideologies
- Regulations: over-regulation, under-regulation, ill-regulations and their combinations
- Public vs. private
- Tax wedge and distortions
- Social solidarity versus individualism
- Open and hidden burden on generations
- The labour market
- Healthcare
- Old-age pension system
- Non-old-age pensions

- Social assistance
- Mandatory and voluntary participation in social system, charity, free riding
- Distribution of wealth and its consequences
- Social and other types of redistribution
- Transparent individualism with redistribution on the top of individual income
- Intergenerational fairness as a direction for the 21st century welfare state
- Presentations

COURSE MATERIALS (readings and other learning resources/tools)

General reading list and recommended readings relevant to the topic in hand.