

# Political Economy

**BPEP-UB 9012 L01**

**BPEP-UB 9012 L02**

NYU London: Fall 2021

## **Instruction Mode: In-person**

If you are enrolled in this course 100% remotely and are not a Study Away student at NYU London, please make sure that you've completed the online academic orientation via Brightspace so you are aware of site-specific support structure, policies and procedures. Please contact [nyul.academics@nyu.edu](mailto:nyul.academics@nyu.edu) if you have trouble accessing the Brightspace site.

## **Instructor Information**

- Dr. Nicole Baerg
- [nicole.baerg@nyu.edu](mailto:nicole.baerg@nyu.edu)
- Office hours: Wednesday 15:00-16:00 Online and by appointment

## **Course Details**

- **Section L01: Tuesdays, 1:00-3:45 pm**
- **Section L02: Thursdays, 1:00-3:45 pm**
- All times are BST/GMT (Daylight Saving Time ends 31 October).
- Location: Room 102
- **Seat Assignments: If you are attending in person, you will be assigned a seat on the first day and are expected to use that seat for the entire semester due to NYU COVID-19 safety protocol.**

## **Prerequisites**

**This course is only open to Stern BPE Students.**

Prerequisite: ECON-UB 1: Microeconomics with Algebra or ECON-UB 2: Microeconomics with Calculus and MATH-UA 121: Calculus I or equivalent. Must be a sophomore or above standing to enroll

## **Course Description**

Students are introduced to the intellectual foundations of the field of political economy and are shown the political economy approach (as it is taught in both economics and political science). The topics covered include the analysis of voters' behavior, political parties, electoral competitions, committees, lobbies, the political labor market, the provision of public goods, the theory of bureaucracy, rent seeking, regulatory capture, and commitment and time (in)consistency. Focus will be both on theoretical and well as empirical findings in the literature. Students are expected to work through mathematical treatment relating to models of social choice and political economy as well as understand empirical treatment of these same topics. Empirically we will look at time series cross sectional econometric models, longitudinal survey data, experimental approaches, as well as the application of big data to political and economic phenomenon.

## **Course Objectives**

**Students will require, use and develop the following key skills:**

- Transfer of ideas: students will gain understanding of the modern political economy toolbox and approach including Condorcet paradox, median voter theorem, voter enfranchisement, candidate entry, committee decision making, and Richard-Meltzer model.
- Students will start to learn to advance their own research ideas in a positivist framework and with an eye towards future independent research
- Classes involve not only lectures but also activities and group discussions
- Students will conduct problem sets and replicate key theoretical models in political economy
- Students will also learn how to report on and discuss key topics in the field

## **Assessment Components**

If you are an NYU London study-away student, you are expected to attend in person. If you are accessing the class remotely, you must attend synchronously.

<b>Assignments / Activities</b>	<b>Description of Assignment</b>	<b>% of Final Grade</b>	<b>Due</b>
Problem Set 1	<i>Politics as preference aggregation</i>	20%	<b>September 29, 2021</b>
Problem Set 2	<i>Electoral politics and voting behaviour</i>	20%	<b>October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021</b>
Problem Set 3	<i>Partisan politics, electoral agency, and political selection</i>	20%	<b>November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021</b>
Problem Set 4	<i>Legislative and Committee decision making</i>	20%	<b>December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021</b>

<b>Assignments / Activities</b>	<b>Description of Assignment</b>	<b>% of Final Grade</b>	<b>Due</b>
Critical Review Podcast	<p>A critical review is a detailed commentary on and critical evaluation of weekly texts presented in a podcast. You can use all or most of the articles in a given week. Attention should be paid to evaluation and questioning the research rather than just summary of the articles although sufficient understanding of the material is necessary to do this well. Your podcast must be at least 5 minutes in length (no more than 10 minutes total). You can do it alone, or in groups of 2 or 3 students.</p> <p>Your podcast MUST include all of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An introduction</li> <li>• Some introduction music</li> <li>• A statement of an empirical or theoretical problem or puzzle in the literature</li> <li>• A critical review of the literature on this puzzle and explanation of what we already know</li> <li>• A probing conversation about future research and what is missing</li> <li>• All group members should speak</li> </ul>	20%	<b>December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021</b>

## Assessment Expectations

Letter Grade	Grade Percentage	Description
<b>A-range</b>	A = 93-100% A- = 90-92%	The student makes excellent use of empirical and theoretical material and offers structured arguments in his/her work. The student writes comprehensive essays/exam questions and his/her work shows strong evidence of critical thought and extensive reading
<b>B-range</b>	B+ = 87-89% B = 84-86% B- = 80-83%	The candidate shows a good understanding of the problem and has demonstrated the ability to formulate and execute a coherent research strategy
<b>C-range</b>	C+ = 77-79% C = 74-76% C- = 70-73%	The work is acceptable and shows a basic grasp of the research problem. However, the work fails to organize findings coherently and is in need of improvement
<b>D-range</b>	D+ = 67-69% D = 65-66%	The work passes because some relevant points are made. However, there may be a problem of poor definition, lack of critical awareness, poor research
<b>F</b>	F = below 65%	The work shows that the research problem is not understood; there is little or no critical awareness and the research is clearly negligible

\*Please note, Stern Business courses will adhere to the Stern Grading

## Course Materials

### Required Text(s) & Materials

- Merlo, Antonio. *Political Economy and Policy Analysis*. Routledge, 2018.

### Optional Text(s) & Materials

- De Mesquita, Ethan Bueno. *Political Economy for Public Policy*. Princeton University Press, 2016.
- Clark, William Roberts, Matt Golder, and Sona Nadenichek Golder. *Principles of Comparative Politics*. CQ Press, 2017.
- The material in these books is complemented with research papers.

## Resources

- Access your course materials: [Brightspace](#) or annotate your readings using Perusall code **BAERG-6RDBA**
- NYU London and Living in London Info: [LDN](#)
- Databases, journal articles, and more: [Bobst Library](#)
- Assistance with strengthening your writing: [NYU Writing Center](#) (nyu.mywconline.com)
- Obtain 24/7 technology assistance: [IT Help Desk](#)

## Course Schedule

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<b>Session 1</b>  September 7 (Section L01)  September 2 (Section L02)	<b>Introduction, Basic Tools, and Approach</b>	<i>Chapters 1, 2, 3</i>  Diermeyer, Daniel and Keith Krehbiel. (2003). "Institutionalism as a Methodology." <i>Journal of Theoretical Politics</i> 15(2): 123-144.	

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p><b>Session 2</b></p> <p>September 9 (Section L01)</p> <p>September 14 (Section L02)</p>	<p><b>Voters</b></p>	<p><i>Chapter 4</i></p> <p>Ansolabehere, Stephen, and David M. Konisky. (2006). "The introduction of voter registration and its effect on turnout." <i>Political Analysis</i>: 83-100</p> <p>Alvarez, R. Michael, Ines Levin, Peter Mair, and Alexander Trechsel. (2014). "Party preferences in the digital age: The impact of voting advice applications." <i>Party Politics</i> 20(2): 227-236</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Assignment distributed <b>September 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (both sections)</b></p>
<p><b>Session 3</b></p> <p>September 16 (Section L01)</p> <p>September 21 (Section L02)</p>	<p><b>Electoral Competition</b></p>	<p><i>Chapter 5</i></p> <p>Grimmer, Justin, Solomon Messing, and Sean J. Westwood. (2012). "How words and money cultivate a personal vote: The effect of legislator credit claiming on constituent credit allocation." <i>American Political Science Review</i>: 703-719.</p>	

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p><b>Session 4</b></p> <p>September 23 (Section L01)</p> <p>September 28 (Section L02)</p>	<p><b>Enfranchisement and Regimes</b></p>	<p>Acemoglu, Daron and James A. Robinson. (2000). "Why Did the West Extend the Franchise? Democracy, Inequality and Growth in Historical Perspective." <i>The Quarterly Journal of Economics</i>, 115: 1167-1199.</p> <p>Svolik, Milan. (2013). "Learning to Love Democracy: Electoral Accountability and the Success of Democracy." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i>. 57(3): 685-702.</p> <p>Spirling, Arthur. (2016). "Democratization and Linguistic Complexity: The Effect of Franchise Extension on Parliamentary Discourse, 1832–1915," <i>Journal of Politics</i>, 78(1): 120-136 Replication Link</p>	<p>1<sup>st</sup> Assignment due <b>September 29, 2021</b> <b>(both sections)</b></p>



Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p><b>Session 5</b></p> <p>September 30 (Section L01)</p> <p>October 5 (Section L02)</p>	<p><b>Presidential and Parliamentary Systems</b></p>	<p><i>Chapter 6</i></p> <p>Frye, Timothy. (1997). "The Politics of Institutional Choice: Post-Communist Presidencies." <i>Comparative Political Studies</i>, 30: 523-552.</p> <p>Catalinac, Amy. (2017). "Positioning under Alternative Electoral Systems: Evidence from Japanese Candidate Election Manifestos." <i>American Political Science Review</i>. 1-18.</p>	<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Assignment distributed <b>October 6, 2021 (both sections)</b></p>
<p><b>Session 6</b></p> <p>October 7 (Section L01)</p> <p>October 12 (Section L02)</p>	<p><b>Electoral Systems</b></p>	<p>Boix, Carles. (1999). "Setting the rules of the game: the choice of electoral systems in advanced democracies." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 93(03): 609-624. (theoretical)</p> <p>Lizzeri, Alessandro, and Nicola Persico. (2001). "The Provision of Public Goods under Alternative Electoral Incentives." <i>American Economic Review</i> 91: 225–239. (theoretical)</p>	

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p><b>Session 7</b></p> <p>October 14 (Section L01)</p> <p>October 19 (Section L02)</p>	<p><b>Politics in Non-democracies</b></p>	<p>Gandhi Jenn and E. Lust-Okar (2009). Elections under authoritarianism. <i>Annual Review of Political Science</i>, 2, 115-44.</p> <p>Reuter, Ora John and G. Robertson (2012). Subnational appointments in authoritarian regimes: Evidence from Russian gubernatorial appointments. <i>Journal of Politics</i>, 74(4).</p> <p>Pan, Jennifer and Alexandra A. Siegel. (2020). "How Saudi Crackdowns Fail to Silence Online Dissent." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 114: 109-125.</p>	<p>2<sup>nd</sup> Assignment Due <b>October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2021</b> <b>(both sections)</b></p>

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p><b>Session 8</b></p> <p>October 21 (Section L01)</p> <p>October 26 (Section L02)</p>	<p><b>Intra-party Politics</b></p>	<p>Kemahlioglu, Ozge. (2011). "Jobs in politicians' backyards: Party leadership competition and patronage." <i>Journal of Theoretical Politics</i> 23(4): 480-509.</p> <p>Kirkland, Justin H., and Jonathan B. Slapin. (2017). "Ideology and strategic party disloyalty in the US house of representatives." <i>Electoral Studies</i> 49: 26-37.</p> <p>Shih, Victor, Christopher Adolph, and Mingxing Liu. (2012). "Getting ahead in the communist party: explaining the advancement of central committee members in China." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 106(01): 166-187.</p>	<p>3<sup>rd</sup> Assignment Distributed <b>October 27<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (both sections)</b></p>

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p><b>Session 9</b></p> <p>October 28 (Section L01)</p> <p>November 2 (Section L02)</p>	<p><i>Chapter 7</i></p>	<p>Grossman, Gene M., and Ethan Helpman. (1994). "Protection for Sale." <i>American Economic Review</i>, 84 (4): 833–850.</p> <p>Bonica, Adam. (2016). "Avenues of Influence: On the Political Expenditures of Corporations and Their Directors and Executives." <i>Business and Politics</i>, vol. 18, no. 4, pp. 367–394.</p> <p>Weschle, Simon. (2021). "Parliamentary Positions and Politicians' Private Sector Earnings: Evidence from the UK House of Commons." <i>The Journal of Politics</i> 83.2 000-000.</p>	

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p><b>Session 10</b></p> <p>November 4 (Section L01)</p> <p>November 9 (Section L02)</p>	<p><i>Chapter 8</i></p>	<p>Eggers, Andrew C., and Jens Hainmueller. (2009). "MPs for sale? Returns to office in postwar British politics." <i>American Political Science Review</i>: 513-533.</p> <p>Cruz, Cesi, Julien Labonne, and Pablo Querubin. (2017). "Politician family networks and electoral outcomes: Evidence from the Philippines." <i>American Economic Review</i> 107.10: 3006-37</p> <p>Ritchie, Melinda N., and Hye Young You. (2021) "Women's advancement in politics: evidence from congressional staff." <i>The Journal of Politics</i> 83.2: 000-000.</p>	<p>3<sup>rd</sup> Assignment due, <b>November 10, 2021</b> <b>(both sections)</b></p>

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p><b>Session 11</b></p> <p>November 11 (Section L01)</p> <p>November 16 (Section L02)</p>	<p><b>Committees</b></p>	<p>Cirone, Alexandra, and Brenda Van Coppenolle. (2018) "Cabinets, committees, and careers: the causal effect of committee service." <i>The Journal of Politics</i> 80.3 948-963.</p> <p>Riboni, Alessandro, and Francisco J. Ruge-Murcia. (2010) "Monetary policy by committee: consensus, chairman dominance, or simple majority?." <i>The Quarterly Journal of Economics</i> 125.1 363-416.</p> <p>Caillaud, Bernard, and Jean Tirole. (2007) "Consensus building: How to persuade a group." <i>American Economic Review</i> 97.5 1877-1900.</p>	<p>4th Assignment distributed, <b>November 17, 2021 (both sections)</b></p>

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p><b>Session 12</b></p> <p>November 18 (Section L01)</p> <p>November 23 (Section L02)</p> <p><b>*** Note that November 25 is a NYU Holiday</b></p>	<p><b>Uncertainty</b></p>	<p>Baker, Scott R., et al. (2014). "Why has US policy uncertainty risen since 1960?." <i>American Economic Review</i> 104.5: 56-60.</p> <p>Hyytinen, Ari, et al. "Public employees as politicians: Evidence from close elections." <i>American Political Science Review</i> 112.1 (2018): 68-81.</p> <p>Beazer, Quintin H. (2012). "Bureaucratic discretion, business investment, and uncertainty." <i>The Journal of Politics</i> 74.3 637-652.</p>	

Week/Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p><b>Session 13</b></p> <p>November 30 (Section L02)</p> <p>December 2 (Section L01)</p> <p>*** Note that November 25 is a NYU Holiday</p>	<p><b>Accountability</b></p>	<p>Kayser, Mark Andreas, and Michael Peress. (2012). "Benchmarking across Borders: Electoral Accountability and the Necessity of Comparison." <i>American Political Science Review</i>. 106(3): 661-684.</p> <p>Alt, James, Bueno de Mesquita, Ethan, and Shanna Rose. (2011). "Disentangling Accountability and Competence in Elections: Evidence from U.S. Term Limits." <i>The Journal of Politics</i>. 73(01): 171-186.</p> <p>Dal Bo, Ernesto, and Martin Rossi. (2011). "Term Length and the Effort of Politicians." <i>Review of Economic Studies</i>. 78: 1237-63.</p>	<p>4th Assignment due <b>December 10<sup>th</sup>, 2021</b> <b>(both sections)</b></p>



<b>Week/Date</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Assignment Due</b>
<b>Session 14</b>  December 7 (Section L02)  December 9 (Section L01)	<b>Bureaucracy</b>	Huber, John D., and Charles R. Shipan. (2006). "Politics, delegation, and bureaucracy." <i>The Oxford handbook of political science</i> .  Lewis, David E. (2007). "Testing Pendleton's Premise: Do Political Appointees Make Worse Bureaucrats?." <i>The Journal of Politics</i> 69.4 1073-1088.  Baerg, Nicole Rae, Julia Gray, and Jakob Willisch. (2021). "Opportunistic, not Optimal Delegation: The Political Origins of Central Bank Independence." <i>Comparative Political Studies</i> 54.6: 956-988.	
<b>Final Assessment</b>			Critical Review podcast due, <b>December 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021 (both sections)</b>

## Topics & Assignments

The assignments for this class include **4 problem sets** that you can complete in groups to the size of your liking as well as a podcast of no less than two and no more than 3 people. Problem sets are distributed to both sections on the same date and returned on the same date. Grades for the problem sets are determined by **marking your shown work** (how you arrive at the answer) in addition to getting the correct answer, so please make sure that you **show all of your work**.

Final Assessment is done by assessing a **critical review podcast**. Students using Apple computers can use GarageBand, a free audio editing software. Other examples of free online audio editing software that can be used on Windows or Google devices include Audacity, Soundtrap (free for 14 days, then premium) and Beautiful Audio Editor. Podcasts must be no more than 5 min and no less than 10 min. NPR has a [guide for making podcasts](#) that is useful. You must upload your podcast, your script, and a bibliography.

## Course Policies

### Classroom Etiquette

To optimize the learning experience in a blended learning environment, please consider the following:

- Please do not eat during class and minimize any other distracting noises (e.g. rustling of papers and leaving the classroom before the break, unless absolutely necessary).
- Mobile phones should be turned off or in silent mode during class time.
- Make sure to let your classmates finish speaking before you do.
- If deemed necessary by the study away site (ie COVID related need), synchronous class sessions may be recorded and archived for other students to view. This will be announced at the beginning of class time.
- Students should be respectful and courteous at all times to all participants in class.

### Final exams

Final exams must be taken at their designated times. Should there be a conflict between your final exams, please bring this to the attention of the London Academics team ([nyul.academics@nyu.edu](mailto:nyul.academics@nyu.edu)). Final exams may not be taken early, and students should not plan to leave the site before the end of the finals period.

### Academic Honesty, Plagiarism and Late Work

Students at Global Academic Centers must follow the [University and school policies](#).

You can find details on these topics and more on this section of our NYUL website (<https://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/academic-policies.html>) and on the Policies and Procedures section of the NYU website for students studying away at global sites (<https://www.nyu.edu/academics/studying-abroad/upperclassmen-semester-academic-year-study-away/academic-resources/policies-and-procedures.html>).

### Attendance

Key information on NYU London's absence policy, how to report absences, and what kinds of absences can be excused can be found on our [website](http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html) (<http://www.nyu.edu/london/academics/attendance-policy.html>)

**To ensure the integrity of the academic experience, class attendance is required and expected promptly when class begins.** These rules apply to class excursions and activities as well.

Members of any religious group may, without penalty, excuse themselves from classes when required in compliance with their religious obligations, but must follow NYU London's absence reporting procedure. Please note that an absence is only excused for the holiday but not for any days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday. See also [University Calendar Policy on Religious Holidays](#)

## **Moses Accommodations Statement**

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented and registered disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Student Accessibility (+1 212-998-4980 or [mosescsd@nyu.edu](mailto:mosescsd@nyu.edu)) for further information. Students who are requesting academic accommodations are advised to reach out to the Moses Center as early as possible in the semester for assistance.

## **Inclusivity Policies and Priorities**

NYU's Office of Global Programs and NYU's global sites are committed to equity, diversity, and inclusion. In order to nurture a more inclusive global university, NYU affirms the value of sharing differing perspectives and encourages open dialogue through a variety of pedagogical approaches. Our goal is to make all students feel included and welcome in all aspects of academic life, including our syllabi, classrooms, and educational activities/spaces.

## **Pronouns and Name Pronunciation (Albert and Zoom)**

You can edit your pronoun and name pronunciation information on your Albert account, making it visible for faculty and staff. Information on how to do this can be found on the [Pronouns and Name Pronunciation web page](#), and for more information on how to make these changes in Zoom, please see the [Personalizing Zoom Display Names website](#).

## **Bias Response**

The New York University Bias Response Line provides a mechanism through which members of our community can share or report experiences and concerns of bias, discrimination, or harassing behavior that may occur within our community. For more information, including how to report an incident, visit the [Bias Response Line website](#).

## **Your Lecturer**

Dr. Nicole Baerg (she/her/hers) is a Senior Lecturer at the University of Essex. She has a number of publications on political economy including a book published by Oxford University Press titled [Crafting Consensus: Why Central Bankers Change Their Speech and How Speech Changes the Economy](#) as well as publications in *Comparative Political Studies*, *Economics and Politics*, *Political Research and Methods* and others. More information can be found on her [website](#).