

Political Economy

BPEP-UB 9012

NYU London: Fall 2022

Instructor Information

- Dr. Nicole Baerg
- nicole.baerg@nyu.edu
- Office hours: **Wednesday 15:00-16:00 Online and by appointment**

Course Details

- Class times: **Thursdays, 1:00-3:45 pm**
- All times are BST/GMT (Daylight Saving Time ends 31 October).
- Location: Room TBA

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.

Assignments / Activities	Description of Assignment	% of Final Grade	Due
Class Participation	<i>Class participation including quizzes on class readings</i>	10%	Ongoing during term time
Problem Set 1	<i>Politics as preference aggregation</i>	20%	September 16, 2022

Assignments / Activities	Description of Assignment	% of Final Grade	Due
Problem Set 2	<i>Electoral politics and voting behaviour</i>	20%	October 7th, 2022
Problem Set 3	<i>Partisan politics, electoral agency, and political selection</i>	20%	October 27th, 2022
Problem Set 4	<i>Legislative and Committee decision making</i>	20%	November 17th, 2022
Critical Thinking Assignment	<i>Unseen academic paper with multiple choice questions to be answered individually by the student – please bring laptop to class</i>	10%	December 1th, 2022

Assessment Expectations

Letter Grade	Grade Percentage	Description
A-range	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-range	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
C-range	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
D-range	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

Letter Grade	Grade Percentage	Description
F	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

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](#)
- 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
<p>Session 1</p> <p>September 1</p>	<p>Introduction, Basic Tools, and Approach</p>	<p>Diermeyer, Daniel and Keith Krehbiel. (2003). "Institutionalism as a Methodology." <i>Journal of Theoretical Politics</i> 15(2): 123-144.</p> <p>Schnellenbach, Jan, and Christian Schubert. "Behavioral political economy: A survey." <i>European Journal of Political Economy</i> 40 (2015): 395-417.</p>	<p>1st Assignment distributed</p>
<p>Session 2</p> <p>September 8</p>	<p>Voters</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>	

Week/ Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p>Session 3</p> <p>September 15</p>	<p>Electoral Competition</p>	<p>Barrilleaux, Charles, Thomas Holbrook, and Laura Langer. "Electoral competition, legislative balance, and American state welfare policy." <i>American Journal of Political Science</i> (2002): 415-427.</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>	
<p>Session 4</p> <p>September 16</p>	<p>Enfranchisement and Regimes</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, 1800-1845." <i>Journal of Democracy</i>. 37(1): 5-20.</p>	<p>1st Assignment due</p>

Week/ Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p>Session 5</p> <p>September 22</p>	<p>Presidential and Parliamentary Systems</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>2nd Assignment distributed</p>
<p>Session 6</p> <p>September 29</p>	<p>Electoral Systems</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>Session 7</p> <p>October 6</p>	<p>Politics in Non-democracies</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></p>	
<p>Session 8</p> <p>October 7</p>	<p>Intra-party Politics</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): 100-107.</p>	<p>2nd Assignment due</p>

Week/ Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p>Session 9</p> <p>October 13</p>	<p>Lobbying</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>	<p>3rd Assignment distributed</p>
<p>Session 10</p> <p>October 20</p>	<p>Personal Politics</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>	

Week/ Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p>Session 11</p> <p>October 27</p>	<p>Committees</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 1077-1088.</p>	<p>3rd Assignment due</p>
<p>Session 12</p> <p>November 3</p>	<p>Uncertainty</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>	<p>4th Assignment distributed</p>

Week/ Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
<p>Session 13</p> <p>November 10</p>	<p>Accountability</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>Session 14</p> <p>November 17</p>	<p>Bureaucracy</p>	<p>Huber, John D., and Charles R. Shipan. (2006). "Politics, delegation, and bureaucracy." <i>The Oxford handbook of political science</i>.</p> <p>Lewis, David E. (2007). "Testing Pendleton's Premise: Do Political Appointees Make Worse Bureaucrats?." <i>The Journal of Politics</i> 69.4 1073-1088.</p>	<p>4th Assignment due</p>

Week/ Date	Topic	Reading	Assignment Due
Critical Thinking Assignment December 1		<i>Students are given a previously unseen academic article and are expected to answer a series of multiple questions about its content and links to the course materials. Students are expected to work independently.</i>	

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 a class participation, quizzes on the readings, and a final critical thinking assignment.

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**.

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.

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) 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 Researcher in Data Science at the Bank of England as well as a Senior Lecturer (Associate Professor) 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](#).