Labor and Globalization (PSC 190-15)

Lectures: Wednesday/Friday 2:20-3:35 p.m.  
1957 E Street, NW  
Room 113

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Office Hours: Monday/Friday 3:40-4:55,  
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In this course, we will explore how economic globalization affects organized labor in countries around the world. We will pay special attention the importance of politics in mediating the effects of the global economy on the organizational strength and bargaining power of unions.

The course divides into three parts. In Part I, we will examine the concept of economic globalization and explore Mancur Olson’s theory of collective action. In Part II, we will discuss the basic pillars of labor’s organizational and bargaining strength and the extent to which globalization has undermined that strength in advanced industrial democracies. In Part III, we will investigate whether economic reforms designed to expand trade and facilitate foreign direct investment have transformed the relationship between unions and governments in developing countries.

Course Requirements

1) Three in-class exams (25% each)  
2) Final paper (25%)
Required Reading

Students will read approximately 100 pages per week. Copies of the reading materials will be placed on reserve at the Gelman Library. The following books, of which we will read substantial portions, will also be available for purchase at the campus bookstore:


In addition to being held on reserve, copies of required readings that are not available for purchase at the bookstore will be uploaded to the course website.

Please note that purchasing all of the required books for this course from the campus bookstore can get expensive, and that many new and quality used copies are available online. Do not hesitate to shop around!

Exams

The core set of assignments for this course is a series of three exams. The exams will test your knowledge of reading materials presented in each section of the course. Each exam will consist of some combination of multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, and short essay questions.

There will be no makeup exams. Only students presenting a letter from a physician, psychologist, member of the clergy, or other qualified professional verifying illness, a death in the family, or exceptional life circumstances will be exempted from this rule.

Final Paper

You will be required to write a five to seven page final paper that presents an argumentative response to the bestseller assigned in the course (for Spring 2006: Friedman’s The World is Flat). You are to use the academic writings presented in the course to critique the bestseller, use the
bestseller to critique the academic writings presented in the course, or some combination thereof.

This paper should be an argumentative essay, not a book report. I will provide ‘guideline questions’ that you may use to aid in constructing your essays; however, you are encouraged to be creative in developing the central questions and arguments for your paper. Students with original questions will, on average, receive better marks than those that mimic the guideline questions or questions by other students.

You should draw on as many readings as apply to the central question addressed in your essay.

I encourage you to discuss ideas for your paper with me during office hours. I am also willing to review drafts of papers, but only during office hours and not over e-mail.

The papers should be no more than 7 pages in length. Pages must be double-spaced with 12 point Times New Roman font and one-inch margins on all sides. The penalty for papers that violate these guidelines is an automatic one-half letter grade deduction.

This paper is due the Wednesday following the last day of class (May 3). Papers submitted late, for any reason, will receive a one-half letter grade deduction per day. Papers submitted after Monday, May 8 will automatically receive a failing grade. Students presenting a letter from a physician, psychologist, member of the clergy, or other qualified professional verifying illness, a death in the family, or exceptional life circumstances will be exempted from this rule.
Part I: Introduction

Week 1: What is Globalization? How might it affect labor? (Jan 18 & 20)

- Beth Simmons, ‘The Internationalization of Capital’
- Dani Rodrik, Has Globalization Gone Too Far?, chapters 1-3

Week 2: Collective Action (Jan 25 & 27)

- Karl Marx, ‘The Communist Manifesto’
- Mancur Olson, The Logic of Collective Action, chapters 1-4 (skim pp 22-33)
- Mancur Olson, The Rise and Decline of Nations, pp. 53-58

Part II: Labor and Globalization in the OECD

A. Three Sources of Union Strength

Week 3: Labor Market Centralization (Feb 1 & 3)

- Lars Calmfors and Jon Driffil, ‘Bargaining Structure, Corporatism, and Macroeconomic Performance’
- Bruce Western, Between Class and Market, chapter 3

Week 4: Unemployment Insurance: The Ghent System (Feb 8 & 10)

- Bo Rothstein, ‘Labor Market Institutions and Working-class Strength’
- Bruce Western, Between Class and Market, chapter 4

Week 5: Political Ties (Feb 15 & 17)

- Bruce Western, Between Class and Market, chapter 5

B. How and To What Extent Does Globalization Affect Union Strength?

Week 6: Labor Market Institutions (Feb 22 & 24)

- Bruce Western, Between Class and Market, chapters 9-11

**First Exam: Wednesday, February 22**

Week 7: Convergence/Divergence (Mar 1 & 3)

- Wallerstein and Golden, ‘Postwar Wage Setting in the Nordic Countries’
- Soskice, ‘Divergent Production Regimes: Coordinated and Uncoordinated Market Economies in the 1980s and 1990s’
- Kitschelt, et. al., ‘Convergence and Divergence in Advanced Capitalist Democracies’
Week 8: Social Democracy (Mar 8 & 10)

- Geoffrey Garrett, Partisan Politics in the Global Economy, entire (skim chapters 4 & 5)

Week 9: Bargaining Power and Industrial Conflict (Mar 22 & 24)

- Michael Shalev, ‘The Resurgence of Labor Quiescence’
- George Tsebelis and Peter Lange, ‘Strikes Around the World: A Game Theoretic Approach’

Part III: Labor and Development in a Global Economy

Week 10: Labor Repression and Economic Growth: The East Asian ‘Model’ (Mar 29 & 31)

- Frederic Deyo, Beneath the Miracle: Labor Subordination and the New Asian Industrialism.
- Gary Fields, ‘Changing Labor Market Conditions and Economic Development in Hong Kong, the Republic of Korea, Singapore, and Taiwan, China’

**Second exam: Wednesday, Mar 29**

Week 11: Labor Protest and Investment (April 5 & 7)

- Guillermo O’Donnell, ‘Reflections on the Patterns of Change in the Bureaucratic-Authoritarian State’
- Karl DeSchweinitz, ‘Industrialization, Labor Controls, and Democracy’

Week 12: Unions, Politics and Economic Restructuring, Part I (Apr 12 & 14)

- John Pencavel, ‘The Legal Framework for Collective Bargaining in Developing Countries’
- Victoria Murillo, Labor Unions, Partisan Coalitions, and Market Reforms in Latin America, Chapters 1, 2, and 8.

Week 13: Unions, Politics and Economic Restructuring, Part II (Apr 19 & 21)

- Patrick Heller, The Labor of Development, pp 1-21 and chapters 1, and 5-7

Week 14: Conclusion: How Flat? (Apr 26 & 28)

- Thomas Friedman, The World is Flat, entire

**Third Exam: Wednesday, April 26**

**Final Paper Due Wednesday, May 3**