Modern Political Economy:

**Basics**

**Introduction**

*General outline of contents and structure of the course; requirements for Teilnahme- and Leistungsscheine*

**From Smith and Ricardo to Marx… and back: History of Economic Thought**

*Format: lecture; topic: history of thought on (political) economy*

**Classical Approach:**


**Marxism:**


**Keynesianism:**


**Nature of the Beast: New Political Economy**

*Format: lecture; topic: locating NPE in the context of economics, political science, and (traditional) political economy*


**All that is real, is rational; and all that is rational is real”: Rational Choice**

*Format: lecture; topic: basic paradigms and methods in NPE: rational choice, game theory*

**alternative:**


**In search of the Volonté Générale; Social Choice, Game Theory**

*Format: lecture; topic: basic paradigms and methods in NPE: social/public choice*


*alternative:*

**Elements and Models**

**Ideological or opportunist policy? Electoral Cycles**

*Format: seminar; input to theoretical background; presentation prepared by students; topic: the logic of political decision-making / decision-makers and their (strategic) interaction with voters in electoral cycles*


**Institutions matter, really? But How?**

*Format: seminar; discussion of last session; input to theoretical background; presentation and discussion prepared by student; topic: institutions; their role in rational choice approaches to political science as rules/norms/procedures designed by rational actors and then limiting/impacting upon the choices of rational actors*


**The Shadow of the Vampire: Interest Groups and Media**

*Format: seminar; discussion of last session; input to theoretical background; presentation prepared by students; topic: the role of interest groups and media in decision making procedures as intermediary system between economic, governmental and societal actors; their interests, strategies and impact on the creation of binding decisions on interest groups:*


**critical:**

- Van Winden, Frans (1999): On the economic theory of interest groups: Towards a group frame of reference in political economics, Public Choice 100, 1-29

**on media:**

Applications

„Man kann die Pferde zur Tränke führen, aber saufen müssen sie selbst“ Economic Growth

Format: seminar; discussion of last session; input to theoretical background; presentation prepared by students; topic: significance of growth as political aim for different types of political/economic actors and voters, effect of growth on decision making


In the long run we are all dead! Public Spending and Public Debt

Format: seminar; discussion of last session; input to theoretical background; presentation prepared by students; topic: structure of public expenditure; political competition in the field of different expenditure categories; impact on decision making; motivation and effects of deficit spending on the field of political decision making procedures

Public Spending:


Public Debt:


Trade

Format: seminar; discussion of last session; input to theoretical background; presentation prepared by students; topic: Is it sufficient to classify free trade as either a political manifestation of economic rationality or as an economic policy reflecting socio-political interests?


Spätromische Dekadenz? Inequality and Redistribution

Format: seminar; discussion of last session; input to theoretical background; presentation prepared by students; topic: interests of social groups effecting redistribution and structure of public expenditure; role in decision making

International Cooperation

Format: seminar; discussion of last session; input to theoretical background; presentation prepared by students; topic: interaction of national and international level in terms of political economy, effect of international bargaining on national decision making


Handshake or Iron fist? Democracy and Dictatorship

Format: seminar; discussion of last session; input to theoretical background; presentation prepared by students; topic: Is the type of political system relevant for political economy’s function and logic?; critical discussion of familiar normative approaches


“Now this is not the end. It is not even the beginning of the end. But it is, perhaps, the end of the beginning”