There are three parts to this reading list and course. Part I is an introduction to some of the basic themes of the course, viz., the significant differences between political economy and mainstream economics and the existence both of different theories of political economy and of various ways of understanding those differences. Part II covers the basic concepts and methods of the principle “schools” encompassed by contemporary political economy: Marxist, classical, post-Keynesian, radical, institutionalist, Austrian, feminist, and postcolonial. Finally, in Part III we will discuss the different consequences of these theories by examining some specific issues and themes: justice, households, income inequality and politics, and alternatives to capitalism.

READINGS

You need to purchase three books for this course: the Field Guide to the U.S. Economy by Jonathan Teller-Elsberg et al., Economical Writing by Deirdre McCloskey, and Introduction to Political Economy, by Charles Sackrey et al. All of the remaining readings are available on Electronic Reserve.

ORGANIZATION

The course will be conducted as a combination of lecture and seminar. Therefore, it is important for all students to complete the assigned readings before each session and to participate in the classroom discussions.

GRADING

There will be no examinations in this course. Instead, students will prepare weekly papers, each approximately 450-500 words, due each Tuesday in class. The purpose of the papers is to “grapple” with the readings—to formulate the main themes, to raise the interesting issues, to pose the key questions—in preparation for the classroom discussions. I will be looking for serious, thoughtful, and well-written critical engagements with the readings. The other assignment is an essay, 8 to 10 pages, on a recent book in political economy. Students should choose a book from the Political Economy Reading List, and then write a critical essay that addresses the key issues raised by the author and relates the author’s treatment of those issues to the readings, lectures, and discussions in the course. Students should feel free to contact me—in person, by office telephone, or by email—to discuss book choices, ways of addressing the book’s main themes, and other possible references. You need to choose the book by 8 April. The essay itself is due during the regularly scheduled final exam period.

The following journals regularly publish articles in political economy:
PART I: INTRODUCTION TO POLITICAL ECONOMY

“THE FACTS”
15 and 17 January


Updates to the Field Guide [http://www.fguide.org]

POLITICAL ECONOMY AND MAINSTREAM ECONOMICS
22 January


WRITING POLITICAL ECONOMY
24 January


PART II: THEORIES OF POLITICAL ECONOMY

MARXIAN
29 and 31 January and 5 and 7 February


CLASSICAL
12 and 14 February


POST-KEYNESIAN
19 and 21 February


RADICAL
26 and 28 February


INSTITUTIONAL
11 and 13 March


**AUSTRIAN**
18 and 20 March


**FEMINIST**
25 and 27 March


**POSTCOLONIAL**
1 and 3 April


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**PART III: ISSUES IN POLITICAL ECONOMY**

**JUSTICE**
8 April

• book choice due

**HOUSEHOLD**

10 April

(Northampton, MA: Edward Elgar, 2000)


**INCOME DISTRIBUTION & POLITICS**

15 April


**ALTERNATIVES**

17, 22, and 24 April


(Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2006)


29 April

• final paper due (by 12:30 pm, 9 May)