

AS.197 (ECONOMY AND SOCIETY)

Courses

AS.197.101. Social Theories of the Economy I. 3 Credits.

The first semester of a two-semester readings course required for all students who have been admitted to the Moral and Political Economy major. The course will provide an intensive introduction to major writings on economic life since the late eighteenth century, with a focus on debates provoked by the rise of capitalism. In the first semester readings will focus on liberal theories of the market economy, from Adam Smith through Milton Friedman; and on dialectical theories of economic development, ranging from Hegel and Marx through Nancy Fraser and Stuart Hall. The class will meet for a group lecture and discussion on Tuesdays, and then in smaller tutorial groups focused on close readings on Thursdays.

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Citizens and Society (FA4), Democracy (FA4.1), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)
Writing Intensive

AS.197.102. Social Theories of the Economy II. 3 Credits.

The second semester of a two-semester readings course required for all students who have been admitted to the Moral and Political Economy major. The course provides an intensive introduction to major writings on economic life since the late eighteenth century, with a focus on debates provoked by the growth and development of capitalism. This semester will explore themes including the effects of the market economy on communal and religious life, the economic and political implications of rational choice theory, and the relationship between capitalism and colonialism. In the concluding weeks we will focus on major economic challenges and opportunities for the twenty-first century. The class will meet for a group lecture and discussion on Tuesdays, and then in smaller tutorial groups focused on close readings on Thursdays.

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Democracy (FA4.1), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

AS.197.210. Global Capitalism. 3 Credits.

We examine how capitalism has unfolded as a system over the past century around the world, with the goal of understanding whether there are realistic alternatives to our current social order. We ask what communism was, and why people fear it; why there is more poverty and inequality in the U.S. than other developed countries; how some developing countries have managed to become rich; and the recent rise of "neoliberalism."

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Citizens and Society (FA4), Ethics and Foundations (FA5)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

AS.197.212. Reading Seminar: Political Economy of Public Health and Gender. 3 Credits.

This course examines how conceptions of gender shape and are shaped by public policy in the U.S. We use varying theoretical and empirical perspectives to ask why gendered inequalities persist in access to health care, labor market opportunities and earnings, and other domains of social and economic life—as well as how they intersect with other axes of social difference, such as race, ethnicity, and sexuality. We place the U.S. in comparative perspective and examine how the relationship between gender and inequality varies across capitalist democracies.

Distribution Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Science and Data (FA2), Citizens and Society (FA4)

AS.197.250. Competition, Conflict, and Coordination: Microeconomics and Political Economy. 3 Credits.

Competition, Conflict, and Coordination is a reading seminar. It builds on and extends topics from elements of microeconomics and looks at modern, strategic models of how people, firms, and governments interact, seeing the importance and pervasiveness of external effects in people's decision-making and how they can result in coordination failures. We model exchange and examine how different rules affect the potential gains from cooperation and how unequally they are distributed. We draw on insights and evidence from behavioral economics to understand risk, cooperation, altruism, and trust. These insights help us to understand people's attitudes towards government policies like redistribution, taxation, and the funding of education. The course concludes with a basic introduction to mechanism design looking at applications like taxing behaviors governments want to curb (such as smoking and drinking), the provision of public goods, and designing policies when people have incentives to lie. It is strongly recommended that students have at least one semester of calculus.

Prerequisite(s): AS.180.101 AND AS.180.102

AS Foundational Abilities: Science and Data (FA2), Citizens and Society (FA4), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

AS.197.327. People, Power, and Pay: The Economics of the Workplace. 3 Credits.

We study the relationship between workers and employers in the employment contract, understanding the conflict of interest between the parties to the contract and the opportunities for gains from cooperation. We identify how power is exercised in the employer-worker relationship and we explore the role of technology and innovation, showing how monitoring technologies can make employment outcomes more efficient and more unequal. We examine how trust and reciprocity may substitute for monitoring and how workers may investigate alternative institutional arrangements to exert countervailing power to employers (unions, cooperatives, democratic participation).

Prerequisite(s): AS.180.101 AND AS.180.102

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Science and Data (FA2), Projects and Methods (FA6)

Writing Intensive

AS.197.328. The Ideological Sources of Modern Political Economy (Research Lab). 3 Credits.

We study the role ideas have played in the shaping of the modern political economic order. We identify and analyze the structure of such major ideological systems as classical liberalism, Marxism, Fascism, Nazism, Progressivism, Keynesianism, and neo-liberalism. We address why these ideas were developed, how they became politically influential, and what effects they had on the states in which they were implemented. This is a research lab where students will be trained how to critically analyze the origins and content of ideologies, to produce ideational explanations of political economic institutions, and to evaluate the truth value of ideas and the moral value of their political economic consequences. Students will cultivate the skills necessary for designing, pursuing, and presenting original research in intellectual history, political theory and political economy.

AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Ethics and Foundations (FA5), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

AS.197.330. Social Networks & Society. 3 Credits.

The well-known saying "It is not what you know, but who you know" captures nicely the importance of social networks in one's life chances. From revolutions and collective action to epidemics of contagious diseases, from market outcomes of innovative products to culture wars, social networks shape not only individuals but also society at large. This class will explore how social networks shape society via their impact on individuals, institutions, and structures. Social networks is a rich field of interdisciplinary inquiry, drawing from and contributing to diverse fields such as physics, mathematics, computer science, economics, epidemiology, sociology, and anthropology. This course will mostly stay in the realm of sociology, with a particular emphasis on methodological techniques for analyzing basic social network data.

Distribution Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Science and Data (FA2), Projects and Methods (FA6)

Writing Intensive

AS.197.498. MPE Honors Thesis I. 3 Credits.

The first semester of the Moral and Political Economy's year-long honors thesis course. This course is mandatory for senior Moral and Political Economy majors. Students enrolled in this course will complete their honors senior thesis under the supervision of both the thesis course instructor and a thesis advisor chosen by the student prior to registration for AS.197.498.

Distribution Area: Social and Behavioral Sciences

AS Foundational Abilities: Writing and Communication (FA1), Citizens and Society (FA4), Projects and Methods (FA6)

EN Foundational Abilities: Engagement with Society (FA4)

Writing Intensive

AS.197.501. Moral and Political Economy Research Assistantship. 1 Credit.

Research Assistantship for Undergraduate Moral and Political Economy Majors. In addition to assisting faculty with research projects, students are expected to attend several Research Assistant Training Sessions and participate in the broader research community of the Agora Institute.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Customized Academic Learning using the Customized Academic Learning form found in Student Self-Service: Registration > Online Forms.

AS Foundational Abilities: Science and Data (FA2), Projects and Methods (FA6)

AS.197.503. Summer Internship. 1 Credit.

This course allows Moral and Political Economy majors to receive summer credit for a research-oriented internship that addresses issues of economic, social, and political concern, under the direct supervision of a member of the Moral and Political Economy faculty. Students should receive written confirmation from a Moral and Political Economy faculty member to oversee their internship before registering for this course, and they should register for the section which is taught by their faculty supervisor.

AS Foundational Abilities: Citizens and Society (FA4), Projects and Methods (FA6)

AS.197.508. CES Summer Internship. 1 Credit.

One-credit course for students admitted into the Center for Economy and Society's funded internship program.

Prerequisite(s): You must request Customized Academic Learning using the Customized Academic Learning form found in Student Self-Service: Registration > Online Forms.

AS Foundational Abilities: Science and Data (FA2), Citizens and Society (FA4), Projects and Methods (FA6)