



UNSW Course Outline

ECON3106 Politics and Economics - 2024

Published on the 28 Jan 2024

General Course Information

Course Code : ECON3106

Year : 2024

Term : Term 1

Teaching Period : T1

Is a multi-term course? : No

Faculty : UNSW Business School

Academic Unit : School of Economics

Delivery Mode : In Person

Delivery Format : Standard

Delivery Location : Kensington

Campus : Sydney

Study Level : Undergraduate

Units of Credit : 6

Useful Links

[Handbook Class Timetable](#)

Course Details & Outcomes

Course Description

This course covers theory, evidence and current issues at the intersection between economics and political science. When so many economic decisions are taken by political actors, understanding the economy also means understanding the interactions between politics and

economics. Topics considered include economic theories of the state, regime changes and revolutions, voting theory, interest group politics, corruption, the democratic peace, and electoral competition.

Course Aims

This course is offered as part of the economics majors in the BCom and BEc degrees. A prerequisite for this course is ECON2101. ECON2112 is strongly encouraged as well, though not a required prerequisite. This course aims to build on basic theories and knowledge learnt in ECON1101 and ECON2101, and explores their applications to political and institutional issues.

Course Learning Outcomes

| Course Learning Outcomes | Program learning outcomes |
|---|---|
| CLO1 : Describe and critically analyse the effects of institutions on collective choice problems. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PL01 : Business Knowledge • PL02 : Problem Solving • PL03 : Business Communication • PL04 : Teamwork • PL05 : Responsible Business Practice • PL06 : Global and Cultural Competence |
| CLO2 : Evaluate and critically analyse different voting systems. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PL01 : Business Knowledge • PL02 : Problem Solving • PL07 : Leadership Development |
| CLO3 : Explain major ideas regarding causes and effects of political corruption. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PL01 : Business Knowledge • PL03 : Business Communication • PL04 : Teamwork • PL05 : Responsible Business Practice • PL06 : Global and Cultural Competence • PL07 : Leadership Development |
| CLO4 : Discuss the economic origins of dictatorship and democracy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PL01 : Business Knowledge • PL04 : Teamwork • PL05 : Responsible Business Practice • PL06 : Global and Cultural Competence • PL07 : Leadership Development |
| CLO5 : Identify causes of collective action failure. Appreciate institutions that favour efficient collective action. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PL01 : Business Knowledge • PL02 : Problem Solving • PL04 : Teamwork • PL05 : Responsible Business Practice • PL07 : Leadership Development |
| CLO6 : Appreciate advantages and contradictions of democratic methods. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PL02 : Problem Solving • PL05 : Responsible Business Practice • PL06 : Global and Cultural Competence • PL07 : Leadership Development |

| Course Learning Outcomes | Assessment Item |
|---|--|
| CLO1 : Describe and critically analyse the effects of institutions on collective choice problems. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutorial problem sets • Online Quiz • Readings Discussions • Final Exam |
| CLO2 : Evaluate and critically analyse different voting systems. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutorial problem sets • Online Quiz • Readings Discussions • Final Exam |
| CLO3 : Explain major ideas regarding causes and effects of political corruption. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutorial problem sets • Readings Discussions • Final Exam |
| CLO4 : Discuss the economic origins of dictatorship and democracy. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tutorial problem sets • Readings Discussions • Final Exam |
| CLO5 : Identify causes of collective action failure. Appreciate institutions that favour efficient collective action. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Quiz • Tutorial problem sets • Readings Discussions • Final Exam |
| CLO6 : Appreciate advantages and contradictions of democratic methods. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Online Quiz • Tutorial problem sets • Readings Discussions • Final Exam |

Learning and Teaching Technologies

Moodle - Learning Management System

Learning and Teaching in this course

LEARNING AND TEACHING ACTIVITIES

Some courses may involve undertaking online exams for which your own computer or digital devices will be required. Monitoring of online examinations will be conducted directly by University staff and is bound by the University's privacy and security requirements. Any data collected will be handled accordance with [UNSW policies and standards for data governance](#). For more information on how the University manages personal information please refer to the [UNSW Student Privacy Statement](#) and the [UNSW Privacy Policy](#).

Learning Activities and Teaching Strategies

The examinable content of the course is defined by the references given in the lecture schedule, the content of lectures, and the content of the tutorial program.

Lectures

The purpose of lectures is to provide a logical structure for the topics that make up the course; to emphasise the important concepts and methods of each topic; and to provide relevant examples to which the concepts and methods are applied.

Lectures for this course will be in-person and recordings of the lecture will be available on Moodle. Each week has two lectures (A and B). In total, a student of this course will typically spend around 3 hours per week engaging with the lectures. ATTENDANCE IS HIGHLY RECOMMENDED.

Tutorials

Tutorials are an integral part of the subject. Tutorial presentations, discussion and problems will build on the material discussed in class with the lecturer.

Out-of-Class Study

While students may have preferred individual learning strategies, most learning will be achieved outside of class time. Lectures can only provide a structure to assist your study, and tutorial time is limited.

An “ideal” strategy (on which the provision of the course materials is based) might include:

- Reading of the relevant chapter(s) of the text and any additional readings before the lecture. This will give you a general idea of the topic area.
- Attend lectures in-person (if possible). Here the context of the topic in the course and the important elements of the topic are explained.
- Active attendance at interactive consultations.
- Attending tutorials and attempting the tutorial questions.

Additional Course Information

Assessments

Assessment Structure

| Assessment Item | Weight | Relevant Dates | Program learning outcomes |
|---|--------|--|---|
| Tutorial problem sets Assessment Format: Individual | 18% | Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: Not Applicable | • PL01 : Business Knowledge • PL02 : Problem Solving • PL03 : Business Communication |
| Online Quiz Assessment Format: Individual | 20% | Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: Week 5 (See Moodle) | • PL01 : Business Knowledge • PL02 : Problem Solving • PL06 : Global and Cultural Competence |
| Readings Discussions Assessment Format: Individual | 20% | Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: Not Applicable | • PL01 : Business Knowledge • PL02 : Problem Solving • PL03 : Business Communication • PL04 : Teamwork • PL06 : Global and Cultural Competence • PL07 : Leadership Development |
| Final Exam Assessment Format: Individual | 42% | Start Date: Not Applicable Due Date: University Exam Period | • PL01 : Business Knowledge • PL02 : Problem Solving • PL03 : Business Communication • PL06 : Global and Cultural Competence |

Assessment Details

Tutorial problem sets

Assessment Overview

Students will be asked to complete 6 tutorial problem sets during the term.

Assesses: PL01, PL02, PL03

Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Describe and critically analyse the effects of institutions on collective choice problems.
- CL02 : Evaluate and critically analyse different voting systems.
- CL03 : Explain major ideas regarding causes and effects of political corruption.
- CL04 : Discuss the economic origins of dictatorship and democracy.
- CL05 : Identify causes of collective action failure. Appreciate institutions that favour efficient collective action.
- CL06 : Appreciate advantages and contradictions of democratic methods.

Detailed Assessment Description

Students will be asked to complete 6 tutorial problem sets during the term (3 percent each).

6 tutorial problem sets are due in Weeks 4, 5, 7, 8, 9 and 10, on Monday of each week by 10:00 am. The problems will be discussed in the tutorial in the ensuing week (see tutorial schedule).

Assessment Length

NA

Assignment submission Turnitin type

Not Applicable

Online Quiz

Assessment Overview

This assessment will be delivered as a Moodle quiz and will cover the contents of the first 5 weeks of content. The quiz will include multiple-choice questions and open-format questions. The quiz will last 1 hour.

Assesses: PLO1, PLO2, PLO6

Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Describe and critically analyse the effects of institutions on collective choice problems.
- CL02 : Evaluate and critically analyse different voting systems.
- CL05 : Identify causes of collective action failure. Appreciate institutions that favour efficient collective action.
- CL06 : Appreciate advantages and contradictions of democratic methods.

Detailed Assessment Description

Administered as a Moodle Quiz during week 5. The quiz will cover the contents of the first 5 weeks and will be described later during the term. The Quiz will be open-book and include multiple-choice questions (but not exclusively). It is expected that students will need a maximum of 1 hour to complete it. The quiz will be made available for a longer time window to allow for any technical issues.

Assessment Length

approx. 1 hour

Submission notes

See Moodle

Assignment submission Turnitin type

Not Applicable

Readings Discussions

Assessment Overview

Readings Discussions on predetermined topics will be held during tutorials (see tutorial schedule). A list of mandatory readings will be available. Students are encouraged to seek further readings. The tutor will be in charge of moderating the discussion.

Assesses: PLO1, PLO2, PLO3, PLO4, PLO6, PLO7

BCom students: myBCom course points for PLO4

Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Describe and critically analyse the effects of institutions on collective choice problems.
- CL02 : Evaluate and critically analyse different voting systems.
- CL03 : Explain major ideas regarding causes and effects of political corruption.
- CL04 : Discuss the economic origins of dictatorship and democracy.
- CL05 : Identify causes of collective action failure. Appreciate institutions that favour efficient collective action.
- CL06 : Appreciate advantages and contradictions of democratic methods.

Detailed Assessment Description

Readings Discussions on predetermined topics will be held during tutorials (see tutorial schedule). A list of mandatory readings will be available. Students are encouraged to seek further readings. The tutor will be in charge of moderating the discussion.

Students will be divided into groups of 3 or 4 students each, and each group will be responsible for leading the discussion on one of the readings following the tutor's advice. Valuable contributions to the discussion will be noted by the tutor who will allocate up to 20 marks per student for all four discussions. An active participation in 3 out of the 4 discussion is expected for full marks.

(BCom students: myBCom course points for PLO4)

Assessment Length

NA

Submission notes

See Moodle.

Assessment information

BCom students: myBCom course points for PL04

Assignment submission Turnitin type

Not Applicable

Final Exam

Assessment Overview

The exam duration will be 2 hours and held during the University Examination period. All material covered in the lectures and tutorial program is examinable.

Assesses: PL01, PL02, PL03, PL06

Course Learning Outcomes

- CL01 : Describe and critically analyse the effects of institutions on collective choice problems.
- CL02 : Evaluate and critically analyse different voting systems.
- CL03 : Explain major ideas regarding causes and effects of political corruption.
- CL04 : Discuss the economic origins of dictatorship and democracy.
- CL05 : Identify causes of collective action failure. Appreciate institutions that favour efficient collective action.
- CL06 : Appreciate advantages and contradictions of democratic methods.

Detailed Assessment Description

The format for the final exam, administered as a Moodle Quiz, will be described later during the term. The exam will be open-book and it is expected that students will need a maximum of 2 hours to complete it. The exam will be made available for a longer time window to allow for any technical issues.

A special set of exercises that provide preparation for the final exam will be posted on the course website towards the end of term, and discussed in tutorials. Students should note that, given changes in the course content, past exam papers for this subject are misleading. As outlined in the Learning Activities and Teaching Strategies, all material covered in the lectures and tutorial program is examinable.

Assessment Length

approx. 2 hours

Assignment submission Turnitin type

Not Applicable

General Assessment Information

Grading Basis

Standard

Requirements to pass course

In order to pass this course students must:

- Achieve a composite mark of at least 50 out of 100
- Engage actively in course learning activities and attempt all assessment requirements
- Meet any additional requirements specified in the assessment details
- Meet the specified attendance requirements of the course (see Schedule section)

Course Schedule

| Teaching Week/Module | Activity Type | Content |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---|
| Week 1 : 12 February - 18 February | Lecture | WEDNESDAY LECTURE: Introduction: Institutions and economics, theoretical and empirical evidence |
| | Lecture | THURSDAY LECTURE: Social Choice Theory I |
| Week 2 : 19 February - 25 February | Lecture | WEDNESDAY LECTURE: Social Choice Theory II |
| | Lecture | THURSDAY LECTURE: Ethics in Economics |
| | Tutorial | Review of Game Theory and Bayes' rule |
| Week 3 : 26 February - 3 March | Lecture | WEDNESDAY LECTURE: Median Voter Theorem and Redistributive Politics |
| | Lecture | TUESDAY LECTURE: Lobby and Corruption I |
| | Tutorial | Readings Discussions 1: Voting franchise and policy outcomes |
| Week 4 : 4 March - 10 March | Lecture | WEDNESDAY LECTURE: Lobby and Corruption II |
| | Lecture | THURSDAY LECTURE: Political Agency I: Retrospective voting and reputation |
| | Tutorial | Readings Discussions 2: Corruption and lobby |
| | Assessment | Problem Set 1: Due by Monday at 10:00am |
| Week 5 : 11 March - 17 March | Tutorial | Review of Problem Sets 1 & 2 |
| | Assessment | Problem Set 2: Due by Monday at 10:00am |
| | Assessment | ONLINE QUIZ: Choose a 1 hour window on the 17/03 starting between 14:00 and 17:00 |
| Week 6 : 18 March - 24 March | Topic | Flexibility Week - no lectures and no tutorials |
| Week 7 : 25 March - 31 March | Lecture | WEDNESDAY LECTURE: Political Agency II: Pandering |
| | Lecture | THURSDAY LECTURE: Media Bias (Demand) and Political Advertisement |
| | Tutorial | Readings Discussions 3: Political advertisement and media |
| | Assessment | Problem Set 3: Due by Monday at 10:00am |
| Week 8 : 1 April - 7 April | Lecture | WEDNESDAY LECTURE: Media Bias (Supply) |
| | Lecture | THURSDAY LECTURE: Conflict I |
| | Tutorial | Review of Problem Sets 3 and 4 |
| | Assessment | Problem Set 4: Due by Monday at 10:00am |
| Week 9 : 8 April - 14 April | Lecture | WEDNESDAY LECTURE: Conflict II |
| | Lecture | THURSDAY LECTURE: Autocracies and Non-democratic Regimes |
| | Tutorial | Readings Discussions 4: Conflict |
| | Assessment | Problem Set 5: Due by Monday at 10:00am |
| Week 10 : 15 April - 21 April | Lecture | WEDNESDAY LECTURE: Political Transitions: Revolutions and Coups |
| | Lecture | THURSDAY LECTURE: Institutions and Culture |
| | Tutorial | Review of Problem Sets 5 & 6 |
| | Assessment | Problem Set 6: Due by Monday at 10:00am |

Attendance Requirements

Students are strongly encouraged to attend all classes and review lecture recordings.

Course Resources

Prescribed Resources

The website for this course is on UNSW [Moodle](#).

A comprehensive reading list is available on Leganto via the course Moodle.

It is essential for the successful completion of this course that students work through all lectures and read all mandatory readings. The examination will focus on material presented and discussed in lectures,

Some material covered in lectures is accompanied by lecture notes available on the course Moodle via Leganto.

Course Evaluation and Development

Feedback is regularly sought from students and continual improvements are made based on this feedback. At the end of this course, you will be asked to complete the myExperience survey, which provides a key source of student evaluative feedback. Your input into this quality enhancement process is extremely valuable in assisting us to meet the needs of our students and provide an effective and enriching learning experience. The results of all surveys are carefully considered and do lead to action towards enhancing educational quality.

The School of Economics strives to be responsive to student feedback. If you would like more information on how the design of this course and changes made to it over time have taken students' needs and preferences into account, please contact the Director of Education at the School of Economics.

I appreciate student feedback because I am always looking for ways to improve your learning experience in this course. Below is a summary of the feedback from the previous student cohort in this course and our response to how we improved this year's course delivery.

Previous students told us that they thought that the best things about the course were:

- *Interesting and diverse range of topics*
- *Different to other ECON courses*
- *The content itself was really good to study because economic students are rarely exposed to such topics and it's quite practical and applicable to the real world*
- *An interesting and highly practical course*
- *The most interesting course I have done*

100% percent of them felt the course was *challenging and interesting, effective for developing technical skills* and *provided opportunities for active participation*.

They suggested that the course could be improved by:

- *More historical examples*
- *Greater emphasis on current political events*
- *Possibly make it more difficult*

I have responded to this feedback by planning on more historical examples and a bit more of current political events.

Consent for De-Identified Data to be Used for Secondary Research into Improving Student Experience

To enhance your student experience, researchers at UNSW conduct academic research that involves the use of de-identified student data, such as assessment outcomes, course grades, course engagement and participation, etc. Students of this course are being invited to provide their consent for their de-identified data to be shared with UNSW researchers for research purposes after the course is completed.

Providing consent for your de-identified data to be used in academic research is voluntary and not doing so will not have an impact on your course grades.

Researchers who want to access your de-identified data for future research projects will need to submit individual UNSW Ethics Applications for approval before they can access your data.

A full description of the research activities aims, risks associated with these activities and how your privacy and confidentiality will be protected at all times can be found [here](#).

If you **consent** to have your de-identified data used for academic research into improving student experience, you do not need to do anything. Your consent will be implied, and your data may be used for research in a format that will not individually identify you after the course is completed.

If you **do not consent** for this to happen, please email the [opt-out form](#) to seer@unsw.edu.au to opt-out from having your de-identified data used in this manner. If you complete the opt-out form, the information about you that was collected during this course will not be used in academic research.

Staff Details

| Position | Name | Email | Location | Phone | Availability | Equitable Learning Services Contact | Primary Contact |
|----------|-----------------|-------|----------|-------|--|-------------------------------------|-----------------|
| Lecturer | Federico Maserà | | QUAD3127 | | Thursday 5:00 - 6:00 pm and by appointment | No | Yes |

Other Useful Information

Academic Information

COURSE POLICIES AND SUPPORT

The Business School expects that you are familiar with the contents of this course outline and the UNSW and Business School learning expectations, rules, policies and support services as listed below:

- Program Learning Outcomes
- Academic Integrity and Plagiarism
- Student Responsibilities and Conduct
- Special Consideration
- Protocol for Viewing Final Exam Scripts
- Student Learning Support Services

Further information is provided on the [key policies and support](#) page.

Students may not circulate or post online any course materials such as handouts, exams, syllabi or similar resources from their courses without the written permission of their instructor.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

The Course Learning Outcomes (CLOs) – under the Outcomes tab – are what you should be able to demonstrate by the end of this course, if you participate fully in learning activities and successfully complete the assessment items.

CLOs also contribute to your achievement of the Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs), which are developed across the duration of a program. PLOs are, in turn, directly linked to [UNSW graduate capabilities](#). More information on Coursework PLOs is available on the [key policies and support](#) page. For PG Research PLOs, including MPDBS, please refer to the [UNSW HDR Learning Outcomes](#).

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

As a student at UNSW you are expected to display [academic integrity](#) in your work and interactions. Where a student breaches the [UNSW Student Code](#) with respect to academic integrity, the University may take disciplinary action under the Student Misconduct Procedure. To

assure academic integrity, you may be required to demonstrate reasoning, research and the process of constructing work submitted for assessment.

To assist you in understanding what academic integrity means, and how to ensure that you do comply with the UNSW Student Code, it is strongly recommended that you complete the [Working with Academic Integrity](#) module before submitting your first assessment task. It is a free, online self-paced Moodle module that should take about one hour to complete.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

SPECIAL CONSIDERATION

You can apply for special consideration when illness or other circumstances beyond your control interfere with your performance in a specific assessment task or tasks, including online exams. Students studying remotely who have exams scheduled between 10pm and 7am local time, are also able to apply for special consideration to sit a supplementary exam at a time outside of these hours.

Special consideration is primarily intended to provide you with an extra opportunity to demonstrate the level of performance of which you are capable. To apply, and for further information, see Special Consideration on the UNSW [Current Students](#) page.

Special consideration applications will be assessed centrally by the Case Review Team, who will update the online application with the outcome and add any relevant comments. The change to the status of the application immediately sends an email to the student and to the assessor with the outcome of the application.

Please note the following:

1. Applications can only be made through Online Services in myUNSW (see the UNSW [Current Students](#) page). Applications will not be accepted by teaching staff. The lecturer-in-charge/course coordinator will be automatically notified when your application is processed.
2. Applying for special consideration does not automatically mean that you will be granted a supplementary exam or other concession.
3. If you experience illness or misadventure in the lead up to an exam or assessment, you must submit an application for special consideration, either prior to the examination taking place, or prior to the assessment submission deadline, except where illness or misadventure prevent you from doing so.
4. If your circumstances stop you from applying before your exam or assessment due date, you

must apply within 3 working days of the assessment or the period covered by your supporting documentation.

5. Under the UNSW Fit To Sit/Submit rule, if you sit the exam/submit an assignment, you are declaring yourself well enough to do so and are cannot subsequently apply for special consideration.
6. If you become unwell on the day of – or during – an exam, you must stop working on your exam, advise your course coordinator or tutor and provide a medical certificate dated within 24 hours of the exam, with your special consideration application. For online exams, you must contact your course coordinator or tutor immediately via email, Moodle or chat and advise them you are unwell and submit screenshots of your conversation along with your medical certificate and application.
7. Special consideration requests do not allow the awarding of additional marks to students.

Further information on Business School policy and procedure can be found under “Special Consideration” on the [key policies and support](#) page.

LATE SUBMISSION PENALTIES

For assessments other than examinations, late submission will incur a penalty of 5% per day or part thereof (including weekends) from the due date and time. An assessment will not be accepted after 5 days (120 hours) of the original deadline unless special consideration has been approved. An assignment is considered late if the requested format, such as hard copy or electronic copy, has not been submitted on time or where the ‘wrong’ assignment has been submitted.

For assessments which account for 10% or less of the overall course grade, and where answers are immediately discussed or debriefed, the LIC may stipulate a different penalty. Details of such late penalties will be available on the course Moodle page.

FEEDBACK ON YOUR ASSESSMENT TASK PERFORMANCE

Feedback on student performance from formative and summative assessment tasks will be provided to students in a timely manner. Assessment tasks completed within the teaching period of a course, other than a final assessment, will be assessed and students provided with feedback, with or without a provisional result, within 10 working days of submission, under normal circumstances. Feedback on continuous assessment tasks (e.g. laboratory and studio-based, workplace-based, weekly quizzes) will be provided prior to the midpoint of the course.

Faculty-specific Information

PROTOCOL FOR VIEWING FINAL EXAM SCRIPTS

UNSW students have the right to view their final exam scripts, subject to a small number of very specific exemptions. The UNSW Business School has set a [protocol](#) under which students may view their final exam script. Individual schools within the Faculty may also set up additional local processes for viewing final exam scripts, so it is important that you check with your School.

If you are completing courses from the following schools, please note the additional school-specific information:

- Students in the **School of Accounting, Auditing & Taxation** who wish to view their final examination script should also refer to [this page](#).
- Students in the **School of Banking & Finance** should also refer to [this page](#).
- Students in the **School of Information Systems & Technology Management** should also refer to [this page](#).

COURSE EVALUATION AND DEVELOPMENT

Feedback is regularly sought from students and continual improvements are made based on this feedback. At the end of this course, you will be asked to complete the [myExperience survey](#), which provides a key source of student evaluative feedback. Your input into this quality enhancement process is extremely valuable in assisting us to meet the needs of our students and provide an effective and enriching learning experience. The results of all surveys are carefully considered and do lead to action towards enhancing educational quality.

QUALITY ASSURANCE

The Business School is actively monitoring student learning and quality of the student experience in all its programs. A random selection of completed assessment tasks may be used for quality assurance, such as to determine the extent to which program learning goals are being achieved. The information is required for accreditation purposes, and aggregated findings will be used to inform changes aimed at improving the quality of Business School programs. All material used for such processes will be treated as confidential.

TEACHING TIMES AND LOCATIONS

Please note that teaching times and locations are subject to change. Students are strongly

advised to refer to the [Class Timetable website](#) for the most up-to-date teaching times and locations.