Course Description:

As is perhaps to be expected in the case of a complex political phenomenon subjected to intense politicization, the welfare state has been variously and often erroneously interpreted. It is certainly the case that the consensus and conditions that supported the welfare state in earlier decades have dissolved, but the meaning of this remains far from clear. As we will see, the welfare state was always plural, deriving from a number of different social, ideological, and institutional sources. In its various manifestations, meanwhile, it stood from the outset as a response to fundamentally different economic, social, and political dilemmas, though overlap certainly existed from one welfare ‘world’ to the other. However, in the face of powerful changes which surfaced during the final third of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first, the argument has been made in many quarters that the welfare state has become irrelevant or, worse, a hindrance to progress. Evaluating such a claim will draw us deeply into the following questions. What contribution, if any, did the welfare state make to the functioning of advanced European polities? Is welfarism in Europe on the way out, or are the reports of its death greatly exaggerated? Are the pressures for retrenchment directed at the whole of the welfare state, or just at certain of its component parts? Should the welfare state be abandoned, either in whole or in part? The attempt to treat these questions will also shed light on such related matters as citizenship, ideology, and economic development.

Assignments and Grading:

In addition to keeping up with the weekly readings, you will be required to provide one substantial presentation and submit two take-home examinations over the course of the term. I will also expect active, informed, and consistent participation from the members of the seminar. The breakdown of the grade will be as follows:

(a) presentation (15 minutes maximum): 20%;
(b) seminar participation: 20%;
(c) mid-term take-home exam (6-8 pages; 12 pages for graduate students): 20%;
(d) final take-home exam (12-14 pages; 20 pages for graduate students): 40%.
Book Available for Purchase at the Campus Bookstore:


Readings

Unit One: Modernity and the Welfare State
(January 17, 24)


Unit Two: The Different Welfare Worlds

A. Theory
(January 31)
Gosta Esping-Andersen, *The Three Worlds of Welfare Capitalism* (Princeton University Press, 1991), chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (pp. 105-11, 133-8), and 6 (pp. 144-50, 157-8,).

B. Social Democratic
(February 7)

C. Liberal
(February 16)


**Mid-Term Take-Home Exam Due in Class on February 16th.**

D. **Conservative Corporatist**

(February 28, March 7)


**Unit Three: Reforming the Welfare States**

A. **Forces for Change:**

(March 14)


B. **Neo-conservatism and the Sources of Social and Institutional Resistance:**

(March 21, 28)


C. Third Ways, New Ways, No Ways:
(April 4, 11)


**Final Take-Home Exam Due April 29th at 5 pm.**