



Viking Economics: Learning from Scandinavia

8 credits - Spring Quarter 2018 - CRN: 30448

Mondays and Wednesdays, 6-10pm - Sem2 C1105 (main room)

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INTRODUCTION

With consistently high rankings in quality of life surveys, public health statistics, educational attainment, and entrepreneurship, Scandinavian democracies routinely outperform the United States in many measures of socioeconomic success. Sweden, Denmark, and Norway all made the top five in a recent *US News* list of countries with “best quality of life” (The US was eighteenth); the World Economic Forum ranks these countries, along with Iceland, in the top six “most inclusive economies,” while *Forbes* puts Sweden and Denmark ahead of the US in its list of “Best Countries for Business”; Norway, Denmark, and Iceland take the top three slots in the UN’s 2017 *World Happiness Report*; and a 2017 study in the medical journal *The Lancet* puts four Scandinavian countries in the top spots for best health care. The modern-day descendants of the vikings are flourishing!

People interested in political science, geography, and political philosophy should join us for this one-quarter program, in which we pose the questions: how do these countries achieve such positive results, what can we learn from them, and why do these Scandinavian models seem to be so difficult for us to envision for the U.S.? To find answers, we will study the roots of modern liberal thought, focusing on a crucial division within it. To understand Scandinavian politics better, students will join an affinity group focused on a particular country and conduct research, writing a paper and participating in a student-led final presentation on the social democratic institutions of that country. The group presentation will be substantial, and each group will design a full evening’s activities to teach their findings to the class. Faculty will provide structured support to prepare students for the end-of-quarter symposium, including workshops on student research and writing skills, as well as lectures and seminars designed to provide important intellectual contexts in human geography, political science, and philosophy.

Credits may be awarded in regional geography, political economy, and political science/philosophy.

GUIDING QUESTIONS

Apart from those outlined above, these additional questions will guide our scholarship this quarter:

- What is “social democracy”?
- How is it distinct from “democracy” as commonly understood?
- What does the theory of social democracy have to offer us in terms of understanding interpersonal relationships, economics, and human nature?
- What can we learn from social democratic practices, which have emerged in different times, in different places, in different cultures, and in different political contexts?
- What societal ills can social democratic governance help to cure, and what new societal challenges can it create?
- What role has democratic socialism played in the United States, historically, and how might it continue to play a role in the present and future of US politics?

MAJOR READINGS & SCREENINGS

The texts and films noted below will be supplemented with other book chapters, articles, and excerpts selected by faculty members. Students will also have other major readings that they select as part of their research project.

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Lakey, G. 2016. *Viking Economics*. (Melville House. ISBN: 9781612196213)

Locke, J. *Second Treatise of Government*. (Hackett. ISBN: 9780486408934)

Paine, T. *Rights of Man* (Dover. ISBN: 9780486408934)

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS/PROJECTS

In this program, students will complete a 3000-3500 word (roughly, 12-15 page) research paper, focusing on one aspect of a particular Scandinavian country's social democratic institutions and the social philosophies that inform that country's practices. Each student will also join a group of peers focusing on that particular country and develop, together, a full evening of teaching/learning material to present to the class during the last three weeks of the quarter. Individuals and groups will be supported by regular, structured class time for writing workshops and group planning sessions.

PORTFOLIO

You are required to keep an organized portfolio. It will be turned on the final day of class and returned during your evaluation conference. The portfolio must be divided into labeled sections and organized chronologically within each section. These are the labeled sections your portfolio should contain:

1. Syllabus and signed Program Covenant
2. Your detailed lecture and reading notes
3. Workshop handouts with notes
4. Any/all readings downloaded from Canvas or distributed in class with any margin notes and/or highlighted passages of importance
5. Final Research Paper and Bibliography
6. All drafts of the Research Paper and Bibliography
7. Research notes and documents
8. A draft student self-evaluation (required for full credit)

A student evaluation of faculty is also required, submitted to the online system before evaluation conferences. You can keep this confidential until after your credits are posted (this is recommended).

EVALUATIONS

You will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- Successful completion of all assignments, workshops, and other requirements
- Full attendance and excellent preparation for, and full participation in, all program activities
- The quality of ideas and the writing in your papers
- Demonstration of understanding of program content
- Adherence to the syllabus and the program constitution

SPRING 2018 TENTATIVE SCHEDULE: This schedule is subject to change to better meet the needs of program participants, including the addition of and/or alteration of readings and noted class activities.

Students are **required** to check the CANVAS site every Friday by 5 pm to confirm scheduling and assignments for the week ahead.

WEEK, READINGS	CLASS DATE AND ACTIVITIES	READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS DUE
Week 1 <u>Read:</u> <i>Viking Economics</i> (Intro - Ch. 4)	Monday, April 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evergreen program model, “flipped class,” student-centered learning Presentation: Viking Geography (John on Scandinavia) 	<u>Handout and discuss:</u> Syllabus, Covenant, Calendar, and other program documents.
	Wednesday, April 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Library visit/orientation Stephen: Intro to Philosophy & Normative Inquiry Seminar 	<u>Read:</u> <i>Viking Economics</i> (Intro - Ch. 4) – Be sure to take notes on subjects of interest!
Week 2 <u>Read:</u> <i>Viking Economics</i> (Ch. 5 - End)	Monday, April 9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture: Political Philosophy: Methods & Questions In-class reading and seminar 	<u>Read:</u> <i>Viking Economics</i> (Ch. 5 - End) – Be sure to take notes on subjects of interest! <u>DUE:</u> Initial research questions draft
	Wednesday, April 11 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Workshop to identify key points of interest from the text & develop final research questions Seminar 	<u>DUE:</u> <i>Viking Economics</i> reading notes and notes on specific items of interest
Week 3 <u>Read:</u> Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i>	Monday, April 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture on Locke and the Social Contract (Stephen) Seminar 	<u>Read:</u> Locke, <i>Second Treatise</i> <u>DUE:</u> Topic proposal (Intro paragraph + research questions) & Bibliography of at least 4-5 good sources
	Wednesday, April 18 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing Workshop Group Caucuses 	Presentation of writing by assigned students
Week 4 <u>Read:</u> Paine, <i>Rights of Man</i>	Monday, April 23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture on Paine (Stephen) Seminar 	<u>Read:</u> Paine, <i>Rights of Man</i> <u>DUE:</u> First essay iteration (group A)
	Wednesday, April 25 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing Workshop (in groups) Group Caucuses 	Presentation of writing by assigned students
Week 5 <u>Read:</u> Rawls (copy to be provided)	Monday, April 30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lecture on Rawls (Stephen) Seminar 	<u>DUE:</u> First essay iteration (group B) Peer review (group A)
	Wednesday, May 2 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Writing Workshop (in groups) Group Caucuses 	Presentation of writing by assigned students
Week 6	Monday, May 7	<u>DUE:</u> Second essay iteration (group A)

<u>Read:</u> Rawls, Okin (photocopies to be provided)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture on the limits of liberalism (Stephen) • Seminar 	Peer review (group B)
	Wednesday, May 9 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Workshop (in groups) • Seminar 	Presentation of writing by assigned students
Week 7 <u>Read:</u> Taylor, “Atomism” (copy to be provided)	Monday, May 14 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lecture on Social Atomism (Stephen) • Seminar 	<u>DUE:</u> Second essay iteration (group B) Peer review (group A)
	Wednesday, May 16 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing Workshop (in groups) • Group Caucuses 	Presentation of writing by assigned students
Week 8 <u>Read:</u> (Student group determined)	Monday, May 21 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STUDENT-LED CLASS SESSION 	<u>DUE:</u> Third essay iteration (group A) Peer review (group B)
	Wednesday, May 23 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STUDENT-LED CLASS SESSION 	
Week 9 <u>Read:</u> (Student group determined)	Monday, May 28 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NO CLASS – MEMORIAL DAY 	
	Wednesday, May 30 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STUDENT-LED CLASS SESSION 	<u>DUE:</u> Third essay iteration (group B) Peer review (group A)
Week 10 <u>Read:</u> (Student group determined)	Monday, June 4 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • STUDENT-LED CLASS SESSION 	
	Wednesday, June 6 <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Program Review • Potluck, Final Thoughts 	<u>DUE:</u> Portfolio with Final Research Essay
	Monday, June 11-Thursday, June 14	Evaluation Conference

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