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**Department of Political Science  
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO**

**Institutions and the Spatial Construction of the Political Economy  
POL 371H 1 S  
Spring 2010**

**Instructor:** Harald Bathelt  
**Office:** Sidney Smith Hall, Room 3121  
**Office Hours:** Tuesday, 2:30-4:30 PM  
(or by appointment)  
**Phone:** 416-946-0183  
**E-Mail:** [harald.bathelt@utoronto.ca](mailto:harald.bathelt@utoronto.ca)

**Lecture Hours:** Tuesday, 12:00-2:00 PM  
**Lecture Room:** SS 1069 (Sidney Smith Hall)

**Course Description:**

This course engages with topics that are closely linked to comparative industrial, comparative development and comparative politics. It investigates the role and functioning of institutions in the political economy, using a firm-centred perspective that addresses questions of industrial location and organisation, and the formation of industry networks at different spatial levels. The course explores in an interdisciplinary way how institutions are established in an economic context, how they change, how they impact economic action, and how they are influenced by political action at different scales. This is largely done in a conceptual way by introducing and discussing different theoretical bodies that help explain economic action and interaction. Through this, the course provides a framework for economic policy-making by exploring regularities in the behaviour of firms and other organizations. The course provides an excellent preparation for 4th-year undergraduate and graduate courses related to innovation studies, political economy and comparative industrial seminars.

The course applies a relational and spatial perspective of economic action which emphasises context, path-dependence and contingency. It explores the intentions, opportunities and constraints of economic agency by analysing the interdependencies between institutions and industrial organisation, interaction, innovation, and evolution at different levels, thus exploring the spatial construction of the political economy. Topics discussed in class will cover (i) a relational perspective of economic interaction in space, (ii) organisational options of production in the political economy, (iii) innovation, technological, and societal change at different spatial levels, (iv) an evolutionary perspective on economic interaction in space, and (v) issues of economic globalisation and regionalisation.

**Course Structure:**

Although the course is based on a lecture format, it will provide plenty of opportunities for active student participation in class discussions. Course evaluation will be based on a final exam and a research component, consisting of an annotated research proposal (2 pages plus annotated bibliography) and a research paper (10-15 pages double-spaced).

For the research assignment, students are expected to choose a topic from the context of the course, and apply it to the Canadian and/or US political economy. This should be done in a comparative setting, e.g. comparing two industries in the Canadian or US economy, or comparing the organisation/evolution of one industry across two or three North American regions. The *paper proposal* should provide an introduction to the topic, put forward the main question or problem to be addressed, and provide a first structure of the argument advanced. An annotated bibliography should also be attached that gives an overview of the sources to be used. It is expected that the *research paper* will later be developed from this proposal and the comments received on it. To conserve paper, please print all assignments double-sided.

Assignments are expected to be handed in on the due date in class. The due dates for the assignments are noted below. For lateness, a penalty of 3% per day will be deducted from the mark for the first 7 days. After this 7-day period, papers will no longer be accepted. Students are strongly advised to keep rough and draft work and hard copies of their research papers and assignments before submitting them to the Department. These should be kept until the marked assignments have been returned.

**Blackboard:**

The course uses the management system Blackboard which helps to establish efficient communication between instructor, teaching assistant, and student. One of its advantages is that students can access their marks at any time on an individual basis. Questions should be directed to the teaching assistants first. An answer will normally be provided within two days, except for the weekend. In urgent cases, students should discuss issues with the teaching assistant or instructor in person or by telephone.

To access the Blackboard-based course website, go to the UofT portal login page at <http://portal.utoronto.ca> and log in using your UTORid and password. If you need information on how to activate your UTORid and set your password for the first time, please go to <http://www.utorid.utoronto.ca>. The Help Desk at the Information Commons and telephone assistance under 416-978-HELP can also answer other related questions.

Once you have logged in to the portal using your UTORid and password, look for the “My Courses” module, where you will find the link to this course website along with links to all your other Blackboard-based courses. At times, the instructor or teaching assistant may decide to send out important course information by e-mail. To that end, all UofT students are required to have a valid UofT e-mail address. You are responsible for ensuring that your UofT e-mail address is set up AND properly entered in the ROSI system.

**Turnitin.com:**

The course also uses Turnitin.com, a web-based program to deter plagiarism. Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site. If, as a student, you object to using Turnitin.com, please see the course instructor to establish appropriate alternative arrangements for submission of your written assignments prior to the submission deadline.

Plagiarism is a serious offence and will be dealt with accordingly. For further clarification and information, please see the Blackboard-based course website and the University of Toronto's policy on Plagiarism at <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>.

Students should register with the course on the Turnitin.com website in the first week of classes. The information required for registration includes Class Section ID: 3022575 and Section Enrollment Password: pol371. The Class Name is "institutions & spatial political economy 2010".

**Accessibility Needs:**

The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accommodations for a disability, or have any accessibility concerns about the course, the classroom, or course materials, please contact Accessibility Services as soon as possible: [disability.services@utoronto.ca](mailto:disability.services@utoronto.ca) or <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>.

**Required Reading:**

POL 371H Course Kit (information to be provided by the instructor in the first week of classes; see also the information provided on the Blackboard-based course website)

Further details about the course and suggestions from students will be discussed in class.

**Course Evaluation:**

The course evaluation will be based on the following aspects:

- 20% paper proposal (2 pages plus annotated bibliography) (due week 6: February 9)
- 40% research paper (10-15 pages) (due week 11: March 23)
- 40% final exam

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**TOPICS: Spring Term 2010**

**A. Relational perspective of economic interaction in space**

1. Introduction: Political-economic geography and political economy
2. Institutions in the spatial political economy

**B. Organisational options of production in the political economy**

3. Classical view of industrial location and policy
4. Transaction cost theory, embeddedness, and networks
5. Firms and states
6. Industrial districts and creative milieus

**C. Innovation, technological, and societal change at different spatial levels**

7. Learning, knowledge creation, and lock-in
8. Innovation, product-cycles, and long waves
9. Innovation systems and regulation theory

**D. Evolutionary perspective on economic interaction in space**

10. Organisational ecology and start-up processes
11. Social construction of economic spaces

**E. Economic globalisation and regionalisation**

12. Relational economic action and globalisation

## Readings by Topic: Spring Term 2010

Readings marked by an asterisk (\*) are core readings on each topic which all students are required to read.

### 1. Introduction: Political-economic geography and political economy

\*Glassner, M. I. and Fahrer, C. (2004): Political Geography. 3rd Edition. New York: Wiley. Chapter 2: Personal space and territoriality, pp. 11-17 (ISBN 0-471-35266-7).

\*Glassner, M. I. and Fahrer, C. (2004): Political Geography. 3rd Edition. New York: Wiley. Chapter 4: State, nation and nation-state, pp. 31-40 (ISBN 0-471-35266-7).

\*Bathelt, H. and Glückler, J. (2003): Toward a relational economic geography. Journal of Economic Geography 3: 117-144 (ISSN 1468-2702).

Yeung, H. W.-c. (2005): Rethinking relational economic geography. Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers NS 30: 37-51.

### 2. Institutions in the spatial political economy

\*North, D. C. (1991): Institutions. Journal of Economic Perspectives 5: 97-112 (ISSN 0895-3309).

\*Hargadon, A. B. and Douglas, Y. (2001): When innovations meet institutions: Edison and the design of the electric light. Administrative Science Quarterly 46: 476-501 (ISSN 0001-8392).

### 3. Classical view of industrial location and policy

\*Dicken, P. and Lloyd, P. E. (1990): Location in Space: Theoretical Perspectives in Economic Geography. 3rd Edition. London, New York: Harper & Row. Chapter 2: A heterogeneous land surface, pp. 83-111 (ISBN 0-06-041677-7).

### 4. Transaction cost theory, embeddedness, and networks

\*Grabher, G. (1993): Rediscovering the social in the economics of interfirm relations. In: Grabher, G. (Ed.): The Embedded Firm. On the Socioeconomics of Industrial Networks. London, New York: Routledge, pp. 1-31 (ISBN 0-415-07374-X).

\*Uzzi, B. (1997): Social structure and competition in interfirm networks: the paradox of embeddedness. Administrative Science Quarterly 42: 35-67 (ISSN 0001-8392).

von Bernuth, C. and Bathelt, H. (2007): The organizational paradox in advertising and the reconfiguration of project cooperation. Geoforum 38: 545-557.

## 5. Firms and states

- \*Dicken, P. (2007): Global Shift: Mapping the Changing Contours of the World Economy. 5th Edition. New York: Guilford. Parts of chapter 5: ‘Webs of enterprise’: transnational corporations within networks of relationships, pp. 137-172 (ISBN 1-59385-436-6).
- \*Dicken, P. (2007): Global Shift: Mapping the Changing Contours of the World Economy. 5th Edition. New York: Guilford. Parts of chapter 8: Dynamics of conflict and collaboration: ‘both transnational corporations and states matter’, pp. 232-246 (ISBN 1-59385-436-6).

## 6. Industrial districts and creative milieus

- \*Belussi, F. (2003): The Changing Governance of IDs: The Entry of Multinationals in Local Nets. The Case of Montebelluna. Paper Presented at the Danish Research Unit on Industrial Dynamics Summer Conference, Copenhagen. Web Site: <http://www.druid.dk/conferences/summer2003/Papers/BELUSSI.pdf>.
- \*Maillat, D., Lecoq, B., Nemeti, F. and Pfister, M. (1995): Technology district and innovation: the case of the Swiss Jura. Regional Studies 29: 251-263 (ISSN 0034-3404).

## 7. Learning, knowledge creation, and lock-in

- \*Malecki, E. J. (1991): Technology and Economic Development: The Dynamics of Local, Regional, and National Change. Burnt Mill: Longman. Chapter 4: Technological capability: the core of economic development, pp. 113-159 (ISBN 0-582-01758-0).
- \*David, P. A. (1985): Clio and the economics of QWERTY. American Economic Review, Papers and Proceedings 75: 332-337.

## 8. Product-cycles, long waves, and innovation

- \*Dicken, P. (1998): Global Shift: Transforming the World Economy. 3rd Edition. New York: Guilford. Parts of chapter 5: Technology: the ‘great growling engine of change’, pp. 145-161 (ISBN 1-57230-303-4).
- \*Pavitt, K. (2005): Innovation process. In: Fagerberg, J., Mowery, D. C. and Nelson, R. R. (Eds.): The Oxford Handbook of Innovation. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 86-114 (ISBN 0-199-28680-9).

## 9. Innovation systems

- \*Archibugi, D., Howells, J. and Michie, J. (1999): Innovation systems and policy in a global economy. In: Archibugi, D., Howells, J. and Michie, J. (Eds.): Innovation Policy in a Global Economy. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-16 (ISBN 0-521-63361-3).

\*Asheim, B. T. and Isaksen, A. (1997): Location, agglomeration and innovation: Towards regional innovation systems in Norway? European Planning Studies 5: 299-330 (ISSN 0965-4313).

Bathelt, H. (2003): Geographies of production: Growth regimes in spatial perspective 1 – Innovation, institutions and social systems. Progress in Human Geography 27: 763-778.

## **10. Organisational ecology and start-up processes**

\*Hayter, R. (1997): The Dynamics of Industrial Location: The Factory, the Firm and the Production System. Chichester: Wiley. Chapter 9: Formation and function of new (and small) firms, pp. 215-244 (ISBN 0-471-97119-7).

\*Hannan, M. T. and Freeman, J. (1984): Structural inertia and organizational change. American Sociological Review 49: 149-164 (ISSN 0003-1224).

## **11. Social construction of economic spaces**

\*Storper, M. and Walker, R. (1989): The Capitalist Imperative. Territory, Technology, and Industrial Growth. New York, Oxford: Basil Blackwell. Chapter 3: How industries produce regions, pp. 70-98 (ISBN 0-631-16533-9).

\*Bathelt, H. (2007): Buzz-and-pipeline dynamics: toward a knowledge-based multiplier model of clusters. Geography Compass 1: 1282-1298 (ISSN 1749-8198).

Bathelt, H. (2001): Regional competence and economic recovery: divergent growth paths in Boston's high technology economy. Entrepreneurship and Regional Development 13: 287-314.

## **12. Relational economic action and globalisation**

\*Castells, M. (1996): The Information Age: Economy, Society and Culture. Volume I: The Rise of the Network Society. Malden: Blackwell. Parts of chapter 2: The informational economy and the process of globalization, pp. 92-115 (ISBN 1-55786-617-1).

\*Coe, N. M., Kelly, P. F. and Yeung, H. W. C. (2007): Economic Geography: A Contemporary Introduction. Malden: Blackwell. Chapter 4: Commodity chains, pp. 87-118 (ISBN 978-1-4051-3219-0).

Pauly, L. W. (2006): Global finance and political order. In: Stubbs, R. and Underhill, G. R. D. (Eds.): Political Economy and the Changing Global Order. 3rd Edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 135-144 (ISBN 0-19-541989-8).