

Econ 484b. Political Economy: Separatism and Annexation

Day / time: T 1:30 - 3:20 pm

Course Type: Undergraduate

Course term: Spring

Not offered

Year: 2017

Instructor(s): [Eric Weese](#)

Permission of the instructor required

This seminar focuses on changes in national and subnational boundaries, voluntary and otherwise. It is intended for students with an interest in political economy. The emphasis will be on the explanatory power of relatively simple models, and understanding the material does not require any previous exposure to political economy or political science. Topics will include colonialism, decolonization, and more recent independence movements. Comparisons will be made between national and subnational jurisdictions. In particular, to what extent are the incentives facing municipalities or provinces the same as those facing nations, and can the same sorts of models be used to analyze changes in boundaries at both levels?

The first half of the course introduces the basic economic incentives leading to larger or smaller political jurisdictions. In addition to discussing theoretically optimal structures we will examine the reasons why the actual organization of jurisdictions may be inefficient, and what sorts of limits there are to this inefficiency. The second half of the course applies the models covered in the first half to a series of issues, such as problematic colonial boundaries in Africa, the apparent success of very small countries, and the role of democracy in recent municipal amalgamations in Canada, Japan, and elsewhere. Readings are mainly from economics journals, but also include some historical accounts and related documents.

Prerequisite: Intermediate Microeconomics

Semester offered: Not offered

Undergrad Course Category: Political Economy

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