

Publication Trends in Political Economy Scholarship 2011-2020

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Abstract

Political economy occupies a unique place at the intersection of economics and political science, being an essential part of both disciplines, as well as an area that offers special insight into issues of continuing importance in public finance and policy. This article uses journal publications to rank institutions by research productivity in political economy. An incidental byproduct is a ranking of individual scholars. Ranking methodology is developed based on the established literature. Implications for the future evolution of political economy as an interdisciplinary field are suggested and discussed.

1. Introduction

This paper ranks political economy scholars and their institutions by research productivity over the 2011-2020 decade, counting scholarly artifacts published or reviewed in the related field journals *Constitutional Political Economy (CPE)*, *Economics of Governance (EoG)*, the *European Journal of Political Economy (EJPE)*, *Kyklos*, and *Public Choice (PC)*. This past decade has been a period marked by both political and economic turmoil and renewed interest in, or frustration with, public policy and political institutions. Keynesian economics is often cited as a justification for policy responses to the Great Recession and its aftermath. The overwhelming appeal to policy makers of discredited Keynesian policy was predicted by Buchanan & Tullock (1962) in *The Calculus of Consent*, and more particularly by Buchanan & Wagner (1977) in *Democracy in Deficit*, two of the seminal texts of modern political economy.

Constitutional Political Economy was established in 1990 by founding co-editors Richard E. Wagner and Viktor J. Vanberg, initially published by George Mason University's Center for Study of Public Choice. Alan Hamlin, Dennis Mueller, and Peter Ordeshook co-edited *CPE* until 2013, when they were succeeded by the current co-editors, Roger D. Congleton of West Virginia University and Stefan Voigt of the Universität Hamburg.

Economics of Governance (EoG) is edited by Amihai Glazer of the University of California Irvine and Mattias Polborn of the University of Illinois Urbana–Champaign. The journal began publication in 2000. The *European Journal of Political Economy (EJPE)* has published since 1985 and is edited by Professors Toke Aidt of Cambridge, Vincenzo Galasso of Bocconi University, Thomas Stratmann of George Mason University, and Jan-Egbert Sturm of the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology ETH Zürich.

Kyklos was founded by Edgar Salin in 1947 at the Universität Basel where he served as Professor of National Economy and ultimate as Rector. *Kyklos's* current editors are Reiner Eichenberger of the Université de Fribourg, Alois Stutzer of the Universität Basel, and David Stadelmann of the Universität Bayreuth. Bruno S. Frey and René L. Frey of Basel are honorary editors.

Public Choice was founded in 1966 as *Papers on Non-Market Decision Making*, edited by Gordon Tullock, acquiring its present title in 1968. Tullock continued to edit *Public Choice* for over twenty years, until the editorship was assumed jointly by Charles K. Rowley and Robert D. Tollison. They were succeeded in turn by the current editor, William F. Shugart II. Tullock co-authored one of the field's seminal texts (Buchanan

& Tullock 1962), which the Nobel committee cited as justification for the award to Buchanan. Tullock continued to make important contributions to the field until his death in 2014. Unlike Coase and Buchanan, Tullock was never honored as a Nobel laureate in economics though he was perennially shortlisted. He remains one of a select group for whom being honored would have enhanced the prestige and credibility of the prize itself. *Public Choice* similarly contributed to establishing its eponymous field as an academic discipline.

As will be seen below, institutions with graduate programs emphasizing political economy appropriately and expectedly rank very high. Geographic diversity is very broad, dominated by North America first, and Europe second, particularly Germany. Government and other non-academic institutions are also well represented.

2. Methodology And Literature Review

The literature ranking academic programs in the social sciences dates to Fusfeld's (1956) study of Allied Social Science Associations meeting programs, Cleary & Edwards's (1960) study of *American Economic Review* articles, and Yotopoulos's (1961) study which included publications in the *AER*, the *Journal of Political Economy*, and the *Quarterly Journal of Economics*.

The second generation of ranking articles were similarly limited to the top three economics journals. Siegfried (1972) and Moore (1973) ranked doctoral programs in economics by faculty publications. Hogan (1973) ranked economics doctoral programs with refereed publications by their graduates for 1960-1969. Smith & Gold (1976) and Niemi (1975) ranked Southern economics departments, reflecting what was then an emerging emphasis on research by the region's leading institutions. Ladd & Lipsett (1979) surveyed departmental reputation, but objective, reproduceable methodologies have always dominated the ranking literature.

The third generation of ranking studies typically relied on broader samples of approximately 24-40 publications. These included Graves, Marchand, & Thompson (1982), Medoff (1989), Berger & Scott (1990), Conroy, Dusansky, & Kildegard (1995), Miller, Tien, & Peebler (1996), Scott & Mitias (1996), Dusansky & Vernon (1998), and Feinberg, Grilliches, & Einav (1998). Graves, Marchand, & Thompson (1982) also presented regression analyses to identify determinants of program performance. Many of these papers also sought to address limitations of earlier studies in a growing body of literature. Laband & Piette's (1994) journal rankings were used in some of these studies to motivate a more comprehensive selection of top journals. Tschirhart (1989) and Tremblay, Tremblay, & Lee (1990) ranked departments by subfield. Medoff (1989) and Palacios-Huerta & Volij (2004) ranked individual scholars rather than departments. A number of alternative rankings of European and international programs were presented in the inaugural issue of the *Journal of the European Economic Association*: Combes & Linnemer (2003), Coupe (2003), Kalaitzidakis, Mamuneas, & Stengos (2003), and Lubrano et al (2003). Ellison (2002) proposed a model to explain how journal article characteristics evolved over time.

More focused on political economy, Durden & Marlin (1990) studied 1973-1987 publications in *Public Choice* and the *Journal of Law & Economics*. Miller, Tien, & Peebler (1996) ranked political science departments. Sobel & Taylor (2004) constructed rankings based on thirty years of publications in *Public Choice*, finding that leading authors changed frequently, as would be expected in a rapidly-progressing field, but that George Mason University consistently provided the largest share of contributions. Congleton, Marsella, & Cardazzi (2022) studied articles in *Constitutional Political Economy*.

Constitutional Political Economy, *Economics of Governance*, and *Kyklos* are quarterly journals that consistently produced four issues annually over the 2011-2020 decade. The *European Journal of Political Economy* published four quarterly issues in 2011 and 2012, with an additional supplementary issue in 2011. From 2012-2015 the *EJPE* published four single-issue volumes each year, with an extra supplemental volume in 2014 and a double volume in 2015. Since 2016, the *EJPE* has published five volumes annually, with a supplemental volume in 2016. *Public Choice* is essentially a quarterly journal, but over the decade it published two volumes annually, each consisting of two combined issues, numbered 1-2 and 3-4, thus every issue in this period was a double issue. Including articles, book reviews, and books reviewed in the five journals, the 208 journal issues over the decade account for 2,596 scholarly artifacts contributed by 3,179 authors with 4,741 distinct instances of authorship or co-authorship. Each journal's impact factor has enjoyed an upward trend as shown in table 1.

Table 1 Journal Impact Factors¹ and Alternative Impact Metrics 2014-2021

Year	<i>Constitutional Political Economy</i>	<i>Economics of Governance</i>	<i>European Journal of Political Economy</i>	<i>Kyklos</i>	<i>Public Choice</i>
2014	0.73	0.91	2.07	1.57	1.09
2015	0.66	0.42	1.72	1.02	1.21
2016	0.68	0.79	1.55	1.00	0.97
2017	0.37	0.94	1.47	1.31	1.16
2018	0.61	0.45	1.90	1.70	0.88
2019	0.64	0.77	1.76	1.81	0.87
2020	0.63	0.97	2.35	1.60	1.52
2021	0.83	1.00	2.53	1.96	1.91
SJR ²	0.275	.285	1.127	1.012	0.844
h-index ³	29	27	86	61	86
Notes:					
¹ Impact factors are based on citations in Scopus-indexed journals.					
² SJR = SCImago Journal Rank is a weighted impact factor weighting citations by the importance of the journals where cited.					
³ The h-index is the greatest h such that h articles published in the journal have been cited at least h times.					

Table 1 impact factors are the average number of times articles or other artifacts published during the preceding two calendar years were cited in the current year, for example, the 2021 impact factor is the ratio of the number of 2021 cites of articles published in 2019 and 2020, divided by the total number of articles published in 2019-2020.

In computing the rankings in tables 2 through 5, books reviewed were treated as equivalent to an article. Unweighted rankings attribute one equal point to each appearance of an author or coauthor[1]. Individual rankings presented in table 2 strictly ignore any part of a scholar's output not published or reviewed in the three journals. Books reviewed are double counted if they were reviewed in more than one journal. The larger an institution's departments of political science, economics, related social sciences, law school, etc., the stronger represented its political economy scholars are likely to be, and the weaker any potential bias from ignoring unreviewed books or articles in other journals.

[1] Some studies counted article pages, even weighting publications by page size. The rationale was that for longer articles, editors must appraise the value of the contribution more highly. While this argument is

intuitive, it is also asymmetric, since some of the most important contributions are notable for their concision. Furthermore there would be no good way to include books reviewed. The present article counts each artifact once for weighted rank, and each instance of co-authorship once for unweighted rank.

3. Ranking Scholars

Scholars are ranked by number of publications in Table 2. Two ranks are provided, one based on each appearance as an author or co-author (unweighted), and one where each article is equally-apportioned among co-authors if any (weighted). The unweighted rank and article count double-counts co-authored articles, so for ranking institutions, the weighted article count is more meaningful.

Table 2
Scholar Rank

	<i>Scholar</i>	<i>Weighted Rank</i>	<i>Weighted Article Count</i>	<i>Unweighted Rank</i>	<i>Unweighted Article Count</i>
1	Congleton, Roger D.	1	21.50	2	25
2	Holcombe, Randall G.	2	18.50	3	21
3	Potrafke, Niklas	3	16.83	1	27
4	Wagner, Richard E.	4	16.33	4	20
5	Munger, Michael C.	5	15.92	3	21
6	Salter, Alexander W.	6	13.33	7	15
7	Bjørnskov, Christian	7	10.17	5	18
8	Sandler, Todd	8	9.83	6	16
9	Voigt, Stefan	8	9.83	5	18
10	Boettke, Peter J.	9	8.83	8	14
11	Tridimas, George	10	8.33	11	9
12	Brennan, Geoffrey	11	7.00	12	8
13	Mueller, Dennis C.	11	7.00	12	8
14	Aligică, Paul Dragos	12	6.83	11	9
15	Kurrild-Klitgaard, Peter	13	6.75	12	8
16	Hillman, Arye L.	14	6.58	10	10
17	Padovano, Fabio	15	6.33	9	11
18	Young, Andrew T.	16	6.00	10	10
19	Lee, Dwight R.	16	6.00	11	9
20	Thomas, Diana W.	16	6.00	11	9
21	Ferrero, Mario	16	6.00	14	6
22	Williamson, Claudia R.	17	5.83	11	9
23	Baskaran, Thushyanthan	18	5.75	12	8

	<i>Scholar</i>	<i>Weighted Rank</i>	<i>Weighted Article Count</i>	<i>Unweighted Rank</i>	<i>Unweighted Article Count</i>
24	Hall, Joshua C.	19	5.50	11	9
25	Stratmann, Thomas	20	5.42	10	10
26	Tollison, Robert D.	21	5.33	12	8
27	Gersbach, Hans	21	5.33	13	7
28	Koyama, Mark	21	5.33	14	6
29	Paldam, Martin	21	5.33	12	8
30	McCannon, Bryan C.	22	5.25	12	8
31	Coyne, Christopher J.	23	5.08	12	8
32	Fink, Alexander	24	5.00	14	6
33	Yamamura, Eiji	25	5.00	15	5
34	Heckelman, Jac C.	26	4.83	13	7
35	Vahabi, Mehrdad	27	4.67	14	6
36	Feld, Lars P.	28	4.50	12	8
37	López, Edward J.	28	4.50	14	6
38	Schnellenbach, Jan	28	4.50	14	6
39	Xeferis, Dimitrios	28	4.50	14	6
40	Skarbek, David	28	4.50	15	5
41	Vanberg, Viktor J.	28	4.50	15	5
42	Leeson, Peter T.	28	4.50	13	7
43	Berggren, Niclas	29	4.42	11	9
44	Pecorino, Paul	30	4.33	15	5
45	de Haan, Jakob	31	4.17	10	10
46	Thomas, Michael D.	31	4.17	14	6
47	Dreher, Axel	32	4.08	11	9
48	Adam, Antonis	33	4.00	12	8

	<i>Scholar</i>	<i>Weighted Rank</i>	<i>Weighted Article Count</i>	<i>Unweighted Rank</i>	<i>Unweighted Article Count</i>
49	Libman, Alexander	33	4.00	12	8
50	Hessami, Zohal	33	4.00	14	6
51	Miller, Nicholas R.	33	4.00	16	4

Other ranked scholars are listed in Appendix I.

4. Ranking Programs

The real value in ranking publication output is to rank departments and institutions. Institutional affiliation indicated on the article, i.e., at the time of publication, was always used. Institutional rankings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
Institution Rank

	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Weighted Rank</i>	<i>Weighted Article Count</i>	<i>Unweighted Rank</i>	<i>Unweighted Article Count</i>
1	George Mason University	1	112.75	1	164
2	West Virginia University	2	52.25	3	76
3	Ludwig Maximilians Universität München	3	40.83	2	80
4	Duke University	4	35.45	4	55
5	Florida State University	5	28.39	6	39
6	Universität Konstanz	6	25.08	5	41
7	Texas Tech University	7	22.53	12	31
8	Bar-Ilan University	8	21.42	7	38
9	Aarhus Universitet	9	20.83	10	34
10	Sapienza Università di Roma	10	19.92	8	36
11	King's College London	11	19.67	16	25
12	Universität Hamburg	12	18.67	9	35
13	London School of Economics & Political Science	13	16.75	9	35
14	New York University	14	16.42	13	30
15	Ruprecht Karls Universität Heidelberg	15	15.83	13	30
16	University of Texas Dallas	16	15.68	11	32
17	Australian National University	17	14.83	19	22
18	Rijksuniversiteit Groningen	18	13.50	14	29
19	Swiss Federal Institute of Technology ETH Zürich	18	13.50	20	22
20	Clemson University	19	13.00	22	20
21	University of California Irvine	20	12.83	18	23
22	Creighton University	21	12.80	18	23
23	Georgetown University	22	12.33	20	22
24	World Bank	23	12.08	17	24

	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Weighted Rank</i>	<i>Weighted Article Count</i>	<i>Unweighted Rank</i>	<i>Unweighted Article Count</i>
25	Universität Zürich	24	11.83	22	20
26	University of Copenhagen	25	11.75	28	14
27	Albert Ludwigs Universität Freiburg	26	11.58	16	25
28	University of Chicago	27	11.42	21	21
29	European Central Bank	28	11.35	15	27
30	Utah State University	29	11.17	24	18
31	Westfälische Wilhelms Universität Münster	30	10.83	26	16
32	Universitat de Barcelona	31	10.58	23	19
33	Norwegian Business School BI	31	10.58	24	18
34	Universität Wien	32	10.50	26	16
35	Universität St Gallen	33	10.33	25	17
36	Harvard University	34	10.17	28	14
37	Universidade do Minho	35	10.08	21	21
38	Charles University Prague	36	10.00	25	17
39	Oxford University	36	10.00	27	15
40	University of Ioannina	37	9.83	21	21
41	Università Commerciale Luigi Bocconi	37	9.83	22	20
42	Philipps Universität Marburg	38	9.67	23	19
43	Universität Siegen	39	9.58	28	14
44	Université de Rennes	40	9.17	24	18
45	Deakin University	41	9.08	21	21
46	Cambridge University	42	9.06	27	15
47	Universität Mannheim	43	8.83	25	17
48	Stanford University	44	8.75	23	19
49	Southern Methodist University	45	8.40	30	12
50	Russian NRU HSE University	46	8.33	22	20

	<i>Institution</i>	<i>Weighted Rank</i>	<i>Weighted Article Count</i>	<i>Unweighted Rank</i>	<i>Unweighted Article Count</i>
51	De Nederlandsche Bank	47	8.17	25	17
52	Troy University	47	8.17	32	10
53	University of Southern California	48	8.08	28	14
54	University of Tennessee Chattanooga	49	8.03	28	14
55	Western Carolina University	50	8.00	32	10

The distribution of articles by country is given in Table 4. Thirty-seven percent of scholarly artifacts originated in the U.S., with fourteen percent from Germany, six percent each from Italy and the UK, and four percent from France.

Table 4
Geographic Distribution

	<i>Country</i>	<i>Weighted Rank</i>	<i>Weighted Article Count</i>	<i>Unweighted Rank</i>	<i>Unweighted Article Count</i>
1	USA	1	962.51	1	1592
2	Germany	2	366.14	2	708
3	UK	3	168.45	3	305
4	Italy	4	147.87	3	305
5	France	5	100.87	4	186
6	Spain	6	77.50	5	159
7	Switzerland	7	71.87	6	131
8	Australia	8	57.82	8	109
9	Canada	9	55.17	9	91
10	Netherlands	10	53.07	7	113
11	Denmark	11	49.45	10	82
12	Sweden	12	42.40	11	81
13	Israel	13	41.83	12	77
14	Japan	14	39.67	15	66
15	Norway	15	37.67	14	69
16	Austria	16	37.08	12	77
17	Belgium	17	27.70	13	71
18	China	18	25.73	17	53
19	Greece	19	23.83	16	57
20	Portugal	20	16.67	18	37
21	Finland	21	15.67	20	28
22	Korea	22	14.92	21	27
23	Czech Republic	23	14.75	19	29
24	Ireland	24	12.83	23	22
25	Turkey	25	11.50	22	24
26	India	26	11.33	25	20

	<i>Country</i>	<i>Weighted Rank</i>	<i>Weighted Article Count</i>	<i>Unweighted Rank</i>	<i>Unweighted Article Count</i>
27	Russia	27	8.67	24	21
28	Singapore	28	8.17	26	15
29	Brazil	29	6.33	27	12
30	Poland	29	6.33	26	15
31	Chile	30	6.25	27	12
32	Taiwan	31	5.33	27	12
33	New Zealand	32	4.58	28	10
34	Cyprus	33	4.50	32	6
35	Luxembourg	34	4.25	30	8
36	United Arab Emirates	35	4.17	29	9

Table 5 shows the distribution of U.S.-produced artifacts by state. There appears to be a roughly equal division between red and blue states.

Table 5
Geographic Distribution within the USA

	<i>State</i>	<i>Weighted Rank</i>	<i>Weighted Article Count</i>	<i>Unweighted Rank</i>	<i>Unweighted Article Count</i>
1	Virginia	1	132.14	1	196
2	California	2	87.92	2	159
3	Texas	3	73.27	3	123
4	New York	4	61.41	4	107
5	North Carolina	5	56.21	6	88
6	District of Columbia	6	55.21	5	103
7	West Virginia	7	52.25	7	76
8	Florida	8	44.06	8	65
9	Pennsylvania	9	37.67	9	62
10	Massachusetts	10	32.86	10	61
11	Illinois	11	25.90	11	47
12	Georgia	12	24.25	11	47
13	Alabama	13	21.33	12	34
14	Tennessee	14	19.82	13	32
15	Maryland	15	18.90	15	28
16	South Carolina	16	18.42	15	28
17	Connecticut	16	18.42	18	24
18	Indiana	17	16.75	14	31
19	Michigan	18	15.87	16	27
20	Ohio	19	15.17	21	21
21	Utah	20	14.50	19	23
22	Nebraska	21	13.47	17	25
23	Missouri	21	12.37	20	22
24	Arizona	22	8.83	22	15
25	Rhode Island	23	8.00	24	13
26	Colorado	24	6.50	23	14

	<i>State</i>	<i>Weighted Rank</i>	<i>Weighted Article Count</i>	<i>Unweighted Rank</i>	<i>Unweighted Article Count</i>
27	Minnesota	25	5.83	27	8
28	Oklahoma	25	5.83	26	9
29	New Hampshire	26	5.75	25	10
30	Kentucky	27	5.70	24	13
31	Louisiana	28	5.33	24	13

It may surprise some readers that though the rankings are dominated by research universities, a number of regional comprehensive and teaching institutions also appear, as well as one intergovernmental development bank and two central banks. Other institutions are listed in Appendix II.

5. Conclusion

The top of the rankings may surprise some. GMU scholars have averaged over ten artifacts each year in the five political economy journals in this study—more than the next three schools combined. Scholars from West Virginia University have published more than five each year on average. Scholars from Munich averaged more than three, with Duke producing nearly as many. Scholars from Florida State, Konstanz, Texas Tech, Bar-Ilan, and Aarhus producing more than two on average, with the University of Rome and King's College London producing nearly as many.

The top 50 is dominated by research universities, as would be expected, though a number of regional comprehensive, teaching, or liberal arts institutions are also represented. Some institutions are lower ranked here also because political economy scholars are not as well represented on their faculties, though certain individuals are highly prolific. This bias tends to be reinforced by the natural tendency of individuals on hiring committees to overvalue and then select for their own specialization, as opposed to remedying departmental deficiencies or expanding into a growing field.

Declarations

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