

State Formation and Political Development, Spring 2020

Syllabus version 1.0 – Subject to change before the start of semester

Course Number: POL 994.001

Tuesday, 3:30-6:00pm

Location: TBD

Instructor: David N. Lopez, Ph.D.

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Office: Room 331, 19 W 4TH Street

Office hours: TBD

This seminar will introduce students to the study of state formation and political development in comparative-historical perspective. The course will focus on answering whether and to what extent historical trajectories shape contemporary political and policy outcomes around the world. Some questions motivating this course include (but are not limited to): What is “the State,” really? And where do states come from? What sort of institutional features characterize states? Why are some states better at collecting taxes and providing public goods than others? Why does nationalism and ethnic identity emerge as a more potent feature of politics in some countries than in others? What accounts for cross-national differences in corruption in politics? How do historical legacies shape patterns of political inclusion, democracy and economic inequality over time? The course covers different regional contexts, from Europe and Latin America to Sub-Saharan Africa but also explores the United States as a “comparative” case study. By the end of the course, students will be able to analyze the causes and consequences of a range of political outcomes through the lens of state formation.

While the seminar is oriented around political science scholarship, including behavioral and political economy approaches,¹ students will also wrestle with macro-historical and sociological perspectives to understanding the rise of states and political transformation around the world. The course structure is organized around three interconnected phenomena: 1) the rise of the modern nation-state, 2) the development of state institutions (i.e. the census, mass education, tax regimes) and state capacity, and 3) how these institutions shape politics to this day. The end of the course will focus on the normative implications of the relationship between state formation and political development.

Course structure: Each weekly meeting will be 2.5 hours in length. In the first part of the class, the instructor will spend 30-45 minutes presenting the literature and existing knowledge about the week’s topic to motivate discussion. We will then discuss the required reading assignments for about 45 minutes followed by a short 5-minute break. After the break, we will reconvene to hear and discuss student presentations.

Course evaluation: The grading of student performance will be based on the following components:

- **Class participation and presentations (50%).** Each meeting will cover a set of papers and book chapters. Typically, and when possible, the readings will include one or two theoretical

¹ This seminar revisits classic readings on core topics and questions of comparative politics that students may have studied in other courses. As the adage goes, to know where we’re going we have to know where we’ve been. However, the bulk of readings will be drawn from more recent scholarship.

(less “scientific”) readings that are foundational and one or two more applied readings (e.g., “scientific”) leveraging statistical and/or qualitative evidence on a puzzle/outcome related to the week’s topic. Students are expected to discuss the readings listed as “Required.” Each student will have to make one 10-20 minute long in-class presentation about the reading materials listed in the syllabus as “Presentation.” The presentations will be allocated based on the number of students taking the class and the difficulty/length of the assigned papers. In addition, your grade in this component will depend on your weekly participation in class discussions. While formally not required, students are strongly encouraged to read the articles assigned for presentations even if they are not presenting.

- **Analytical essay and proposal memo (50%).** You will be asked to write one 10-page essay. The essay should consider one particular problem related to the reading materials covered in the class and discuss the problem from the point of view of a certain case-study. Can the theories you learned explain some puzzling phenomenon in a particular historical or current case? What is missing in the given theories? Could we make informed/educated predictions about political developments in the analyzed case on the basis of the knowledge that you have accumulated? How much do theories of state formation and political development matter to addressing your puzzle versus more general institutional and behavioral principles of political science? In the middle of the semester, students will **submit a one-page memo (10%)** on their proposed essay topic. The essay will be due on the last meeting of the semester where each student will give a brief presentation on their essay topic followed by questions and a brief discussion.

Conceptualizing the State and its Origins

Week 1. Introduction and Course Overview – January 28

Week 2. Fundamentals and Theoretical Approaches – February 4

What is the State? What is State Formation? What is Political Development? Why should we care about studying these topics and integrating them in 2019?

Required:

Vu, Tuong. 2010. “Studying the State through State Formation.” *World Politics* 62 (01): 148–175.

Morgan, Kimberly J. 2014. “Comparative Politics and American Political Development.” In *Oxford Handbook of American Political Development*, edited by Richard Valelly, Suzanne Mettler, and Robert Lieberman. Vol. 1. Oxford University Press.

Bourdieu, Pierre, Loic J. D. Wacquant, and Samar Farage. 1994. “Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field.” *Sociological Theory* 12 (1): 1–18.

Week 3. Violence and State Formation – February 11

The Fiscal-Military Foundations of Modern States

Required:

Tilly, Charles. 1985. "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." In *Bringing the State Back In*, edited by Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol. Cambridge University Press.

Centeno, Miguel Angel. 1997. "Blood and Debt: War and Taxation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America." *American Journal of Sociology* 102 (6): 1565–1605.

Presentation:

Abramson, Scott F. 2017. "The Economic Origins of the Territorial State." *International Organization* 71 (1): 97–130.

Week 4. Nations, Nationalism, and Political Identity – March 10

Required:

Hobsbawm, Eric. 2012. "Mass-Producing Traditions: Europe, 1870–1914." In *The Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, 263–308. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Ranger, Terence. 2012. "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa." In *The Invention of Tradition*, edited by Eric Hobsbawm and Terence Ranger, 211–62. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Presentation:

Robinson, Amanda Lea. 2014. "National Versus Ethnic Identification in Africa: Modernization, Colonial Legacy, and the Origins of Territorial Nationalism." *World Politics* 66 (4): 709–46.

Module 2: State Capacity and Institutions

Week 5. Fiscal Capacity: Taxation – February 18

Required:

Levi, Margaret. 1989. *Of Rule and Revenue*. University of California Press. pp. 1-70

Kiser, Edgar, and Steven M. Karceski. 2017. "Political Economy of Taxation." *Annual Review of Political Science* 20 (1): 75–92.

Presentation:

Foa, Roberto Stefan, and Anna Nemirovskaya. 2016. "How State Capacity Varies within Frontier States: A Multicountry Subnational Analysis: Frontier States and State Capacity." *Governance* 29 (3): 411–32.

Week 6. Information Capacity: The Census – February 25

Required Readings:

Emigh, Rebecca Jean, Dylan Riley, and Patricia Ahmed. 2016. *Antecedents of Censuses from Medieval to Nation States: How Societies and States Count*. Palgrave Macmillan US. pp. 5-18, 19-55, 145-172

Loveman, Mara. 2013. "Census Taking and Nation Making in Nineteenth-Century Latin America." In *State and Nation Making in Latin America and Spain: Republics of the Possible*, edited by Miguel A. Centeno and Agustin E. Ferraro, 329–55. Cambridge University Press.

Presentation:

Lee, Melissa M., and Nan Zhang. 2016. "Legibility and the Informational Foundations of State Capacity." *The Journal of Politics* 79 (1): 118–32.

Lieberman, Evan S., and Prerna Singh. 2017. "Census Enumeration and Group Conflict: A Global Analysis of the Consequences of Counting." *World Politics* 69 (1): 1–53.

Week 7. Education – March 3

Proposal Memos Due In-class

Required:

Green, Andy. 2013. *Education and State Formation: Europe, East Asia and the USA*. Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 82-114, 170-203

Caruso, Marcelo. 2010. "Literacy and Suffrage: The Politicisation of Schooling in Postcolonial Hispanic America (1810-1850)." *Paedagogica Historica* 46 (4): 463–78.

Presentation:

Beadie, Nancy. "War, Education and State Formation: Problems of Territorial and Political Integration in the United States, 1848–1912." *Paedagogica Historica* 52 (1/2): 58–75.

Abad, Leticia Arroyo. 2016. "The Limits of the Estado Docente: Education and Political Participation in Peru, 1876-1940." *Revista de Historia Economica - Journal of Iberian and Latin American Economic History* 34 (1): 81–109.

Week 8. NO CLASS - March 17 (Spring Recess March 16 – 22)

Module 3: Political, Social, and Economic Outcomes of State Formation

Week 9. State Formation and Democratization – March 24

Required:

López-Alves, Fernando. 2000. *State Formation and Democracy in Latin America, 1810-1900*. Duke University Press. pp.

Presentation:

Bentzen, Jeanet Sinding, Jacob Gerner Hariri, and James A. Robinson. 2015. "The Indigenous Roots of Representative Democracy." SSRN Scholarly Paper ID 2610490. Rochester, NY: Social Science Research Network.

Week 10. Economic Development – April 7

Required:

Besley, Timothy, and Torsten Persson. 2011. *Pillars of Prosperity: The Political Economics of Development Clusters: The Political Economics of Development Clusters*. Princeton University Press. pp. 1-39, 302-332

Rothstein, Bo. 1998. "State Building and Capitalism: The Rise of the Swedish Bureaucracy." *Scandinavian Political Studies* 21 (4): 287–306.

Haber, Stephen H. 1991. "Industrial Concentration and the Capital Markets: A Comparative Study of Brazil, Mexico, and the United States, 1830–1930." *The Journal of Economic History* 51 (3): 559–80.

Week 11. Public Goods, Social Welfare, and Inequality – March 31

Required:

McDonagh, Eileen. 2015. "Ripples from the First Wave: The Monarchical Origins of the Welfare State." *Perspectives on Politics* 13 (04): 992–1016.

Mares, Isabela, and Matthew E. Carnes. 2009. "Social Policy in Developing Countries." *Annual Review of Political Science* 12 (1): 93–113.

Presentation:

Prerna Singh, and Matthias vom Hau. 2016. "Ethnicity in Time: Politics, History, and the Relationship between Ethnic Diversity and Public Goods Provision." *Comparative Political Studies* 49 (10): 1303–40.

Week 12. Crime and Corruption – April 14

Required:

Wallis, John Joseph. 2006. "The Concept of Systematic Corruption in American History." In *Corruption and Reform: Lessons from America's Economic History*, edited by Edward L. Glaeser and Claudia Goldin. University of Chicago Press.

Gambetta, Diego. 1993. *The Sicilian Mafia: the Business of Private Protection*. Harvard University Press. Chapter 1, "The Market," pp. 15-33, Chapter 4, "The Origins," pp. 75-99

Presentation:

Bustikova, Lenka, and Cristina Corduneanu-Huci. 2017. "Patronage, Trust, and State Capacity: The Historical Trajectories of Clientelism." *World Politics* 69 (2): 277–326.

Uslaner, Eric M., and Bo Rothstein. 2016. "The Historical Roots of Corruption: State Building, Economic Inequality, and Mass Education." *Comparative Politics* 48 (2): 227–48.

Module 4: Unpacking State Formation and Political Development in the U.S.

Week 13. Historical Foundations of U.S. Political and Economic Inequality – April 21

Avidit Acharya, Matthew Blackwell, and Maya Sen. 2018. *Deep Roots: How Slavery Still Shapes Southern Politics*. Princeton Studies in Political Behavior 6. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Presentation:

Desmond, Matthew. 2019. "American Capitalism Is Brutal. You Can Trace That to the Plantation." *The New York Times*, August 14, 2019, sec. Magazine.
<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/08/14/magazine/slavery-capitalism.html>.

Week 14. Geographies of Political Culture in the U.S. – April 28

Cramer, Katherine J. 2016. *The Politics of Resentment: Rural Consciousness in Wisconsin and the Rise of Scott Walker*. University of Chicago Press.

Presentation:

Roediger, David R. 2017. "The Wages of Whiteness." In *Class*, 41–55. John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.

Week 15. Presentations – May 5

Depending on enrollment, each student will give a presentation briefly summarizing their analytical essay for 5-10 minutes while other students note questions they may have during discussion. The remainder of the meeting will be open for questions.