

**Political Science 3391G**  
**Understanding the State**  
**Winter Term, 2013**

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Office hours: Th 10:30-12, or by appointment

**Course Description:** Political theorists and analysts have long explored the nature and role of the state. The state is arguably central to our purposes as students of political science, but we continue to struggle to make sense of it. What is the state? Does it even exist? Does thinking in terms of the state add anything to our understanding of political authority? Why have political scientists varied so greatly over time in their evaluation and use of the state concept? What is the best way to conceive of state-society relations? How do states come about, and why has the state model been so successful? Is the state now on the way out? This course will set the ambitious agenda of examining (a) the sources in Western history and political philosophy of the concept of the state, (b) the major theoretical approaches to studying the state; (c) the changing status of the state over time within the discipline of political science, and (d) the nature of the process of state formation. The aim is to appeal to the interests, and extend the intellectual preparation, of students from across the discipline.

**Course Requirements and Grading:**

- (a) Seven one-page commentary papers, prepared for the beginning of class, which will frame points of interest, establish initial critical responses, and raise key questions for group consideration (10% total);
- (b) Frequent, well-informed participation (10%);
- (c) One research paper, 10-12 pages, due on Monday, April 1<sup>st</sup> (40%);
- (d) A final exam, based on advance preparation (40%).

**Books Available for Purchase:**

Brian Nelson, *The Making of the Modern State: A Theoretical Evolution* (Palgrave, 2006).

Colin Hay, Michael Lister, and David Marsh, eds., *The State: Theories and Issues* (Palgrave, 2006).

**Readings**

**The Sources of the State Concept I: From the Ancients to the Middle Ages** (January 17)

Brian Nelson, *The Making of the Modern State*, chapters 1-4.

**The Sources of the State Concept II: Early Modern Considerations** (January 24)

Nelson, *The Making of the Modern State*, chapter 5.

Christopher Pierson, *The Modern State* (Routledge, 2011), pp. 29-40

Daniel Philpott, "Sovereignty," in George Klosko, ed., *The Oxford Handbook of the History of Political Theory* (Oxford University Press, 2011).

David Runciman, "The Concept of the State: The Sovereignty of a Fiction," in Quentin Skinner and Bo Strath, eds., *States and Citizens: History, Theory, Prospects* (Cambridge University Press, 2003).

### **The Sources of the State Concept III: Hegel and Marx** (January 31)

Nelson, *The Making of the Modern State*, chapter 6, and chapter 7 (pp. 107-14).

Karl Marx, "The German Ideology," in Robert C. Tucker, ed., *The Marx-Engels Reader* (WW Norton & Co., 1978), pp. 149-63, 186-8.

Colin Hay et al., *The State: Theories and Issues*, chapter 3.

### **The Sources of the State Concept IV: Weber and Elitism** (February 7)

Nelson, *The Making of the Modern State*, chapter 7 (pp. 114-24).

Max Weber, "Politics as a Vocation," in H.H. Gerth and C. Wright Mills, eds., *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (Oxford University Press, 1958), pp. 77-87.

Max Weber, Guenther Roth and Claus Wittich, eds., *Economy and Society: An Outline of Interpretive Sociology* (Bedminster Press, 1968), pp. 956-83.

Hay, *The State: Theories and Issues*, chapter 2.

### **Pluralism, Behaviouralism, and the Sidelining of the State** (February 14, 28)

Nelson, *The Making of the Modern State*, chapter 8.

Hay, *The State: Theories and Issues*, chapter 1.

John G. Gunnell, "The Declination of the 'State' and the Origins of American Pluralism," in James Farr, John S. Dryzek, and Stephen T. Leonard, eds., *Political Science in History: Research Programs and Political Traditions* (Cambridge University Press, 1995).

David Easton, *The Political System: an Inquiry into the State of Political Science* (Knopf, 1953), chapter 4.

David Easton, "An Approach to the Analysis of Political Systems." *World Politics* vol. 9, no. 3 (April 1957).

Jens Bartelson, *The Critique of the State* (Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 88-113.

### **The Return of the State** (March 7)

Theda Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back In: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research," in Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds., *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge University Press, 1985).

Michael Mann, "The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms, and Results." *European Journal of Sociology* vol. 25 (1984).

Gabriel A. Almond, "The Return to the State." *American Political Science Review* vol. 82, no. 3 (1988).

### **State Formation** (March 14)

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

Thomas Ertman, "State Formation and State Building in Europe," in Thomas Janoski, Robert Alford, Alexander Hicks, and Mildred A. Schwartz, eds., *The Handbook of Political Sociology: States, Civil Societies, and Globalization* (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Pierson, *The Modern State*, pp. 40-51.

Miguel Centeno, "Blood and Debt: War and Taxation in Nineteenth-Century Latin America." *American Journal of Sociology* vol. 102, no. 6 (May 1997).

### **Rational Choice and the New Institutionalisms** (March 21)

Hay, chapters 4 and 5.

Hendrik Spruyt, "Institutional Selection in International Relations: State Anarchy as Order." *International Organization* (1994).

### **New and Critical Approaches: Feminism, Environmentalism, Post-Structuralism** (March 28)

Hay, chapters 6, 7, and 8.

Michel Foucault, "Questions of Method," in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality* (University of Chicago Press, 1991).

### **Globalization, Governance, and the Viability of the State** (April 4, 11)

Hay, chapters 9, 10, 11, 12, and Conclusion.

Steven Pressman, "A Post Keynesian Theory of the State," in Steven Pressman, ed., *Alternative Theories of the State* (Palgrave Macmillan, 2006).

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**APPENDIX TO UNDERGRADUATE COURSE OUTLINES  
DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**Prerequisite checking - the student's responsibility**

"Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites."

**Essay course requirements**

With the exception of 1000-level courses, most courses in the Department of Political Science are essay courses. Total written assignments (excluding examinations) will be at least 3,000 words in Politics 1020E, at least 5,000 words in a full course numbered 2000 or above, and at least 2,500 words in a half course numbered 2000 or above.

**Use of Personal Response Systems ("Clickers")**

"Personal Response Systems ("clickers") may be used in some classes. If clickers are to be used in a class, it is the responsibility of the student to ensure that the device is activated and functional. Students must see their instructor if they have any concerns about whether the clicker is malfunctioning.

Students must use only their own clicker. If clicker records are used to compute a portion of the course grade:

- the use of somebody else's clicker in class constitutes a scholastic offence,
- the possession of a clicker belonging to another student will be interpreted as an attempt to commit a scholastic offence."

**Security and Confidentiality of Student Work** (refer to current *Western Academic Calendar* (<http://www.westerncalendar.uwo.ca/>))

"**Submitting or Returning Student Assignments, Tests and Exams** - All student assignments, tests and exams will be handled in a secure and confidential manner. Particularly in this respect, leaving student work unattended in public areas for pickup is not permitted."

**Duplication of work**

Undergraduate students who submit similar assignments on closely related topics in two different courses must obtain the consent of both instructors prior to the submission of the assignment. If prior approval is not obtained, each instructor reserves the right not to accept the assignment.

**Grade adjustments**

In order to ensure that comparable standards are applied in political science courses, the Department may require instructors to adjust final marks to conform to Departmental guidelines.

**Academic Offences**

"Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/appeals/scholoff.pdf>."

## Submission of Course Requirements

ESSAYS, ASSIGNMENTS, TAKE-HOME EXAMS **MUST** BE SUBMITTED ACCORDING TO PROCEDURES SPECIFIED BY YOUR INSTRUCTOR (I.E., IN CLASS, DURING OFFICE HOURS, TA'S OFFICE HOURS) OR UNDER THE INSTRUCTOR'S OFFICE DOOR.

THE MAIN OFFICE DOES NOT DATE-STAMP OR ACCEPT ANY OF THE ABOVE.

Note: Information excerpted and quoted above are Senate regulations from the Handbook of Scholarship and Academic Policy. <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/>

Students registered in Social Science should refer to <http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/> <http://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/havingproblems.asp> for information on Medical Policy, Term Tests, Final Examinations, Late Assignments, Short Absences, Extended Absences, Documentation and other Academic Concerns. Non-Social Science students should refer to their home faculty's academic counselling office.

## Plagiarism

"Plagiarism: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence." (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

**Plagiarism Checking:** "All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com ( <http://www.turnitin.com> )."

**Multiple-choice tests/exams:** "Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating."

Note: Information excerpted and quoted above are Senate regulations from the Handbook of Scholarship and Academic Policy. <http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/handbook/>

### **PLAGIARISM\***

In writing scholarly papers, you must keep firmly in mind the need to avoid plagiarism. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged borrowing of another writer's words or ideas. Different forms of writing require different types of acknowledgement. The following rules pertain to the acknowledgements necessary in academic papers.

**A. In using another writer's words, you must both place the words in quotation marks and acknowledge that the words are those of another writer.**

You are plagiarizing if you use a sequence of words, a sentence or a paragraph taken from other writers without acknowledging them to be theirs. Acknowledgement is indicated either by (1) mentioning the author and work from which the words are borrowed in the text of your paper; or by (2) placing a footnote number at the end of the quotation in your text, and including a correspondingly numbered footnote at the bottom of the page (or in a separate reference section at the end of your essay). This footnote should indicate author, title of the work, place and date of publication, and page number.

Method (2) given above is usually preferable for academic essays because it provides the reader with more information about your sources and leaves your text uncluttered with parenthetical and tangential references. In either case words taken from another author must be enclosed in quotation marks or set off from your text by single spacing and indentation in such a way that they cannot be mistaken for your own words. Note that you cannot avoid indicating quotation simply by changing a word or phrase in a sentence or paragraph which is not your own.

**B. In adopting other writers' ideas, you must acknowledge that they are theirs.**

You are plagiarizing if you adopt, summarize, or paraphrase other writers' trains of argument, ideas or sequences of ideas without acknowledging their authorship according to the method of acknowledgement given in 'A' above. Since the words are your own, they need not be enclosed in quotation marks. Be certain, however, that the words you use are entirely your own; where you must use words or phrases from your source, these should be enclosed in quotation marks, as in 'A' above.

Clearly, it is possible for you to formulate arguments or ideas independently of another writer who has expounded the same ideas, and whom you have not read. Where you got your ideas is the important consideration here. Do not be afraid to present an argument or idea without acknowledgement to another writer, if you have arrived at it entirely independently. Acknowledge it if you have derived it from a source outside your own thinking on the subject.

In short, use of acknowledgements and, when necessary, quotation marks is necessary to distinguish clearly between what is yours and what is not. Since the rules have been explained to you, if you fail to make this distinction your instructor very likely will do so for you, and they will be forced to regard your omission as intentional literary theft. Plagiarism is a serious offence which may result in a student's receiving an 'F' in a course or, in extreme cases in their suspension from the University.

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Adopted by the council of the Faculty of Social Science, October, 1970; approved by the Dept. of History August 13, 1991

**Accessibility at Western:** Please contact [poliscie@uwo.ca](mailto:poliscie@uwo.ca) if you require any information in plain text format, or if any other accommodation can make the course material and/or physical space accessible to you.

**Mental Health at Western:** If you or someone you know is experiencing distress, there are several resources here at Western to assist you. Please visit <http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for more information on these resources and on mental health.