Mariely López-Santana  
Thursdays: 4:30-7:10 pm  
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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND OBJECTIVES
After a long period of marginalization, in the 1970s and 1980s social scientists turned their attention to the “State” (for instance, this line of inquiry is exemplified by the edited volume *Bringing the State Back In*). To explore and understand different dimensions of the State, this course is organized around four main axes: (1) origins, expansion, and consolidation of the nation-State around the world; (2) State-society relations; (3) State-market relations; and (4) State failure. By exploring these four axes, we will also study key subjects, such as nationalism, state structures, welfare states, and rentier states.

By the close of this course, students should:
- Be able to identify, summarize, and evaluate fundamental questions and discussions on the comparative study of States.
- Be able to analyze and critique applications of the comparative method to the study of States.
- Be able to concisely summarize, connect, and evaluate the research by discussing a variety of topics, writing memos, and being a resident expert.
- Develop their research, analytical, and writing skills by writing a research paper.
- Apply the theories and concepts to a specific case.

TECHNOLOGY AND COURSE WEBSITE
Access to MyMason, Blackboard, and GMU email are required to participate successfully in this course. Please make sure to update your computer and prepare yourself to begin using the online format BEFORE the first day of class. Become familiar with the attributes of Blackboard and online learning. In the menu bar to the left you will find all the tools you need to become familiar with for this course. Take time to learn each. Make sure you run a system check a few days before class.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
Students are expected to complete all course requirements and submit all their work by the specified deadlines. The instructor will deduct half a letter grade (e.g., from A+ to A, etc.) for every day that the assignment is late.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS
1) Class Attendance and Participation (10%):
   -- Students are required to attend all classes online and participate on the discussion board every week. Discussion board responses are due on Thursdays at 7 pm (note that the prompt will be posted on Tuesdays at 3 pm).

   -- Absence from more than one class—unless a student has a documented emergency—will result in the reduction of ten points from the “class attendance and participation” grade for each missed session. Employer extra-hour demands, vacation, and travel do not constitute documented emergencies.

   -- Students are expected to complete the assigned readings prior to class and to be prepared for seminar discussion. Students should arrive to class with extensive notes and prepared questions for the week’s readings.
2) Multi-step Assignment:

2.1) Memos (6% * 3= 18%):
-- Students are required to write 3 memos (1-3 pages, 12 font, single-space). The memos should present a concise summary of the week's readings.

-- The final paragraph should be more critical and/or analytical by taking up specific arguments, comparing the positions of different authors, raising questions of evidence or content, or drawing attention to particular strengths and weaknesses in the texts.

-- Your grade will suffer if you do not cover: 1) every reading assigned that week, and 2) every step explained above (i.e., summaries, analytical/critical paragraph, and discussion questions).

-- Memos are due on the by 3pm the day prior to class (i.e., Wednesday). Please e-mail your memo to the whole class.

2.2) Discussion Board (4% * 3=12%):
-- Having selected the 3 dates for your memos, then during those 3 classes you will be responsible for designing and posting an entry on the discussion board. For some examples, refer to the Discussion Board Examples.

-- Discussion Board entries are due at 3.00 pm on Tuesdays.

2.3.A) Case Study (10%)
-- Part of your responsibility for one of the selected sessions is to present a case study. You may only select the topics with an asterisk. For this part of this assignment, you will research a specific country which exemplifies and/or illustrates the discussion covered by the readings. For instance, when covering developmental states, you might want to research the case of South Korea; or when covering rentier states, you might want to cover the Saudi Arabian case. You can do a “live” power presentation; alternatively, you can select another type of medium to present your findings (e.g., podcast, narrated power point, video, blog entry).

2.3.B.) Reaction Paper (10%*2=20)
-- After completing step 2.2, you will have to write a short paper. Format: 5-7 pages, double spaced, 12 font. The paper will be due the on Thursdays at 7, the week after you write your memo.

-- For guidelines on how write a reaction paper for this class, refer to the last section of the syllabus.

3) Mid-term Abstract and Presentation (5%) & Final Research Paper (25%)
-- For your final paper, you will be working with one type of State (e.g., welfare, developmental, rentier, predatory), and you will be completing a literature review. Ultimately, the goal of this exercise is for you to become extremely familiar with the origins, evolution, and current status of this type of state, as well as the debates surrounding this type of state. You can illustrate your arguments by focusing on a particular case. Still, it is important that you have a precise research question that will allow you to establish the boundaries of your paper (and research).

-- Mid-term abstract (deadline: Oct. 22). You should cover the following points: What type of State are you going to be focusing on? What is your research question/puzzle? What is the objective of the paper? Include, at least, 5 sources. Length: 1 page single spaced. Each student has 10 minutes to present his/her project.

-- Final research paper: length 20-25 pages (not including the bibliography), double-spaced.
COURSE READINGS AND SCHEDULE

The reading may prove overwhelming at times. Remember--*skimming* is an important professional skill. If you are writing on the topic in question, you are well advised to read all of the required readings. If you are unable to keep up, be sure to (at least) identify for each reading: 1) the main question(s) the authors seek to answer, 2) the DV, the IVs, and the causal argument, 3) how the authors go about answering the question (methodology, data, etc.), and 4) conclusion. Useful resources to expand your knowledge are book reviews (published by most academic journals; search JSTOR). Finally, you should take advantage of your peers’ memos.

Books are marked with an asterisk. All are available online via the GMU library. In addition, we will be reading some journal articles, as well as chapters from *The Oxford Handbook of the Transformation of the State*. 2015 (edited by Leibfried, Huber, Lange, Levy, Nullmeier, and Stephens) (available online via GMU library).

SCHEDULE AND READINGS (subject to change)


| Week 3. Sept. 10 | Presentations. Select one of the following philosophers:
| Theories of the State: The “Classics” and Contemporary Accounts | 1) Socrates, Plato, and Aristoteles
| How did classic and contemporary theorists approach the State? This section will explore with this question. | 2) Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau
| Instructions: | 3) Foucault
| – Research the writings of your chosen philosophers. The following questions should structure your research and presentation. | 4) Polanyi
| 1) What is the State? Or, how do they understand the State?; | 5) Gerschenkron
| 2) What are the functions of the State?; | 6) Olson’s “Criminal Metaphor”

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### Week 4. Sept. 17

**The Emergence of the Westphalian System: The European cases**

To explain the creation, expansion, and consolidation of the State around the world, many scholars have pointed at war and trade as key variables. This session explores this topic.

- Nature of its relationship to the State?
- What is the problem this philosopher is concerned with? Can the State solve this issue? (e.g., weak provision of public goods, anarchy, power dynamics).


If you have read Tilly, then read:


### Week 5. Sept. 24

**The Emergence of the Westphalian System: Africa and Latin America**

**State & Society in Developing Countries**

This session focuses on the obstacles faced by developing countries regarding state building and “state strength.”

* Herbst, Jeffrey. *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control*.

If you have read Herbst, then read: Schenoni, Luis. “Bringing War Back In: Victory and State Formation in Latin America” (posted on BB)


### Week 6. Oct. 1

**On State Structures**

This session focuses on the issue of concentration and dispersion of power in states. More specifically, we will explore the following question: why do some states select centralized arrangements, while others implement decentralized approaches?

- Research William Riker’s contribution.

* Ziblatt, Daniel. *Structuring the State: The Formation of Italy and Germany and the Puzzle of Federalism*. Chs. 1, 2, and 7 (each student must select one of the following chapters of Ziblatt’s book: Ch. 3, 4, 5, or 6)

Ch. 14 Oxford Handbook

### Week 7. Oct. 8

**Nationalism and Nation-Building**


### Week 8. Oct. 15

**Growing Public and the First Movers**

Select one of these books. Also, select a policy area and concentrate on that policy area.

* De Swaan, Abram. 1988. *In Care of the State*. (yet, this is not available through the library).

Week 9. Oct. 22
State & Society & Abstracts

Week 10. Oct. 29
*State, Society, & Markets I*
In this session, we will start to explore the relationship between states and markets. You will find that an important part of the story is the role of “society” in promoting (or hindering) processes of development.

Week 11. Nov. 5
*State, Society, & Markets II*
This session focuses on developmental (exemplified by countries in East Asia) and authoritarian bureaucratic (exemplified by Latin American cases) states. In addition, we will be covering Import Substitution Industrialization.

Week 12. Nov. 12
*Oil and the State*
Many scholars have pointed at the emergence and consolidation of rentier states in countries with natural resources. To understand a specific type of authoritarian state, this session explores the resource curse.

Week 13. Nov. 19
*State Failure and Violence*

Week 13. Dec. 3rd
Dec. 10th

**POLICIES**

1) **Academic Integrity, Plagiarism and Cheating:** Just one thought about it: it is unacceptable and I will report all alleged violations to the Honor Committee. GMU has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. If you fail to follow these principles, I will not hesitate to report any alleged violation to the Honor Committee, “Cheating and attempted cheating, plagiarism, lying, and stealing academic

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work and related material constitute Honor Code violation. To maintain an academic community according to these standards, students and faculty must report all alleged violations."

Cheating includes “double submissions.” Plagiarism includes copying assignments from fellow students (or another person), buying papers on the Internet, borrowing papers from ‘secret archives,’ NOT CITING THE SOURCES OF IDEAS, QUOTES, ETC (pay attention to online resources) and copying and pasting from the Internet or other sources. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students or websites, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. For more details, see: http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/pdfs/catalog_0809.pdf. When in doubt (of any kind) please ask for guidance and clarification.

2) GMU Email Accounts: Students must activate and use their GMU email account to receive important University information, including messages related to this class.

3) Religious Holidays: If you anticipate you will have a conflict due to religious holidays, please inform me within the first two weeks of class. This is especially important if you have to turn in an assignment the day you cannot attend the class.

4) Special Needs: Please address any special needs or special accommodations with me at the beginning of the semester or as soon as you become aware of your needs. Those seeking accommodations based on disability, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (703) 993-2474. Any student with documented learning disabilities or other conditions that may affect academic performance should: 1) make sure this documentation is on file with the Office of Disability Services (SUB I, Rm. 222; 993-2474; www.gmu.edu/student/drc) to determine the accommodations you might need; and 2) talk with me to discuss reasonable accommodations.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

** The University Catalog (http://catalog.gmu.edu) is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university affairs.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Writing Center: http://writingcenter.gmu.edu
Counseling and Psychological Services: http://caps.gmu.edu
Writing Center: http://writingcenter.gmu.edu
University Libraries: “Ask a Librarian” http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html

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AN ‘ATTACK PLAN’: ANALYZING THE READINGS AND WRITING YOUR SHORT PAPER

COMPLETING THE READING:
Pay attention to the key DV and IVs and how they relate to each other, as well as to the adequacy of the methods, methodology, and evidence. In addition, consider how one piece connects to another (compare and contrast answers and approaches to the question). Some of the questions that you might want to think about are: Are the variables adequately conceptualized? Are they adequately operationalized? Is the evidence adequate to sustain the argument? Are the concepts clear? What is the theory that links the variables? Is it a credible answer? Was the research design adequate (given the nature of the questions and the nature of the evidence)? Were the measures chosen to evaluate concepts adequate?
ADDRESSING THE TOPIC AS A WHOLE:
Identify and evaluate the key debates and how each piece relates to another. Explore why and how the debate/literature has evolved (e.g., methodologically, empirically, theoretically, conceptually), OR how the readings assess a topic from different perspectives.

WRITING THE REACTION PAPER:
A good starting point to start thinking about the topic of your paper is to refer to the last paragraph of your memo.

Your paper should present a clear and concise question/thesis/puzzle; therefore, it is not a long literature review (i.e., a long memo), but a reaction/argumentative paper. Make sure you state your question, thesis, and objectives within the first two pages (I prefer the use of the first person, e.g., “In this paper, I will…”).

The paper should present the results (can include data and/or new readings) of your own assessment of the readings. The paper, for example, can focus on theories or research design, and you may present original alternatives to the theories. Feel free to discuss your thesis with the professor.

I expect sophisticated arguments and/or analytical/empirical solutions; thus, a good paper will move beyond “this is a bad argument because it does not address X factor” OR “this is a bad argument because it is disorganized and too complicated.” In this way, you should develop an argument and/or offer precise solutions on how to solve this problem/question from an analytical, theoretical and/or empirical perspective.

“Less is more”: I encourage you to focus on a specific argument/thesis (vs. a paper that covers a bunch of topics).

This rubric is extremely helpful to think about the goals and components of this reaction paper: http://assessment.arizona.edu/sites/default/files/CriticalThinking.pdf