Professor Nicholas C. Wheeler  
Office: SWKT 770  
Office Hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays, 9-10:30 AM, and by appointment  
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Course Description:

The modern state is one of the key units of analysis for students of comparative politics and international relations and remains the predominant form of political organization in the world today. Moreover, U.S. state-building efforts in Iraq and Afghanistan and European efforts to transform post-socialist states in Eastern Europe and the Balkans demonstrate the salience of the issue for theorists and practitioners alike. In this course, we will examine the processes and pressures that led to the formation of centralized states in the early modern period and then attempt to transport those same ideas and theories to other locales and time periods in Eastern Europe, Latin America, Africa, and Asia.

Requirements:

All assigned readings listed on the schedule below are required. In order to effectively understand and synthesize the material in the course it is imperative that you come prepared to participate in each class session. Each week we will discuss the assigned readings in a seminar-format (not a lecture course) and therefore I expect that everyone will be prepared to contribute and discuss the readings/topics each class. Failure to adequately prepare or willingly contribute to our weekly discussions will limit your ability to comprehend and synthesize the class materials into your own original argument.

The main goal for this course is to assist you in developing, articulating and presenting an original and innovative argument that fits within the broader theoretical debates in comparative politics. In short, this course will emphasize the importance of writing a clear and concise argument for a variety of different audiences and purposes and the assignments will assist you in this endeavor.

Assignments:

Guidelines for each of the assignments will be discussed in class. Due to the shortness of the term and importance of having adequate time to conduct peer-review, late papers will be docked a letter grade for every 24 hours they are late after the due date. Papers will be turned in during class on the assigned due date.
The first formal assignment will be to write a short introductory essay addressing your interests in the development of the modern state and your qualifications/background as a researcher that you will use in the development of a research project aimed at understanding the state-building process. (Due Date- May 2\textsuperscript{nd})

The second assignment will be to develop a prospectus outlining your initial idea/topic and why it is relevant to the broader discussion of modern state formation. This assignment will include developing an original research question, a description of your data collection process, theoretical orientation and a preliminary bibliography. In short, this assignment is intended to assist you in developing a specific and cohesive research topic and a valuable exercise in preparation for graduate school. Examples of this type of work will be distributed in class. (Due Date- May 9\textsuperscript{th})

Third, you will also be required to compose a review essay (addressing the class readings assigned as well as outside material) that addresses the literature that is relevant to your project and then present your review to the class. This review essay will assist you in developing a better understanding of the literature addressing your specific topic/region and assist you with developing your own theoretical contribution. (Due Date- May 16\textsuperscript{th})

The fourth assignment is the development of the theoretical model used to explain the variation in your study/research. This paper will include the definition and operationalization of your variables as well as the development of the casual mechanisms that you argue produce the changes in your dependent variable. In short, this paper is where you provide an audience with the logic of your argument and clarify what it is that want to prove to us with your research. (Due Date- May 23\textsuperscript{rd})

In addition, you will be expected to present your review of the literature on your topic as well as an overview of your theoretical model during a roundtable discussion in class. This process is a simulation of what it is like to present your own work on a panel at a professional conference. See dates below for roundtable discussions. (Due Date, TBD)

Finally, you will be required to submit a paper detailing your research findings (consider this a draft of the main body of your paper). These papers will be reviewed by one of your classmates (I will make the peer review assignments) and myself. This assignment will require you to begin your research early and also allow me to assist you with project as it moves along, thus guaranteeing that you are not compiling new research the final week of the semester. (Due Date- June 1\textsuperscript{st})

The final research project should consist of 25-30 pages (double-spaced) and represent the best work of your career here in the department. It should consist of a brief review of the current literature in the context of your own original argument and research. While I encourage you to discuss your research topic with your
classmates and myself over the course of the semester, this is not a group or collaborative project, but rather the work must be your own (see note below about academic integrity). I would also recommend that you consult the campus writing center if you need advice or assistance with structuring the paper. Please note that the final capstone paper must have a grade of at least a C- for the capstone to count towards the political science major. (Due Date- June 13th)

Grading (% of Overall Grade):

Introductory Essay/Participation (10%)
Paper Prospectus (15%)
Review Essay/Presentation (15%)
Theory Paper- (20%)
Findings Paper and Peer Comments (15%)
Final Research Project (25%)

Academic Integrity:

While all students sign the honor code, there are still specific skills most students need to master over time in order to correctly cite sources, especially in this new age of the internet; as well as deal with the stress and strain of college life without resorting to cheating. Please know that as your professor I will notice instances of cheating on exams or plagiarizing on papers. General information about the honor code can be found at honorcode.byu.edu. Details about Academic Honesty are found at http://honorcode.byu.edu/content/academic-honesty-details.

Writing submitted for credit at BYU must consist of the student's own ideas presented in sentences and paragraphs of his or her own construction. The work of other writers or speakers may be included when appropriate (as in a research paper or book review), but such material must support the student's own work (not substitute for it) and must be clearly identified by appropriate introduction and punctuation and by footnoting or other standard referencing.

The substitution of another person's work for the student's own or the inclusion of another person's work without adequate acknowledgment (whether done intentionally or not) is known as plagiarism. It is a violation of academic, ethical, and legal standards and can result in a failing grade not only for the paper but also for the course in which the paper is written. In extreme cases, it can justify expulsion from the University. Because of the seriousness of the possible consequences, students who wonder if their papers are within these guidelines should visit the Writing Lab or consult a faculty member who specializes in the teaching of writing or who specializes in the subject discussed in the paper. Useful books to consult on the topic include the current Harbrace College Handbook, the MLA Handbook, and James D. Lester's Writing Research Papers.

All students in this class are expected to adhere to the University's Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy. The availability and convenience of accessing
information electronically has transformed the study of political phenomena but also requires more diligence on the part of scholars/students producing such work. Therefore, I consider it important to clarify the course policy regarding plagiarism and other forms of academic misconduct. Students must completely and unambiguously cite the sources that they use or draw upon in developing new ideas, theories and explanations that they present to their peers and the broader scholarly community (including this class). Failure to do so constitutes plagiarism and will result in a failing grade for the course and notification will be given to the University’s Honor Code Office. In addition, other forms of academic misconduct (cheating, fabrication of material, etc.) outlined in the Academic Honesty Policy will also result in a possible failing grade for the assignment or course. If you have any concerns or remaining doubts regarding the different forms of academic misconduct please come and discuss them with me.

Class Conduct:

Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU’s policy against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university but to students as well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender-based discrimination, please talk to an administrative official and contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895 or 367-5689 (24-hours); or contact the Honor Code Office at 422-2847.

Special Assistance:

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere which reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the Services for Students with Disabilities Office (422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordinated with the student and instructor by the SSD office. If you need assistance or if you feel you have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment Office at 422-5895, D-282 ASB.

Required Texts:

There are seven required texts for this course and all are available at the BYU bookstore.


All other texts listed will be available via databases located through the Library’s website (i.e. JSTOR, INFOTRAC, etc.) and the class website on Blackboard.

**Reading and Assignment Schedule (Subject to Change):**

**4/27- Introduction and Class Overview**

Recommended Reading:


**Section I: Concepts and Theories**

**4/29- Examining the Foundations of States: Power, Society and Institutional Design**

**Assigned Readings:**


**5/2- Developing the State as a Concept and Common Definitions**

**Introductory Essay Due**

**Assigned Readings:**

Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States*, (Wiley-Blackwell, 2007), Ch. 1

5/4- Measuring State Autonomy, State Capacity and Effectiveness

Assigned Readings:


5/6- Formulating Research Questions/Writing and Editing Research Proposals

Assigned Readings:

John Gerring, Social Science Methodology: A Critical Framework, Chs. 8-10.

5/9- Examining the Origins of the Modern European State

**Research Proposal Due

Assigned Readings:


5/11- Explaining Variations among European States: Institutional Origins and Patterns of Centralization

Assigned Readings:

5/13- Harnessing the Power of a Good Critique: Constructing Literature Reviews and Giving Constructive Feedback

Assigned Readings:


5/16- State-building Patterns in Latin America
**Literature Review Due**

Assigned Readings:


5/18- The State in Latin America: War, Society and Institutional Development Roundtable I

Assigned Readings:


5/20- Concepts, Validity and Mechanisms: Theoretical Sophistication and Establishing Causation Roundtable II

Assigned Readings:

John Gerring, *Social Science Methodology: A Critical Framework*, Chs. 3-7

5/23- Examining the Origins of the Modern State in Africa
**Theory Paper Due**

Assigned Readings:

5/25- Explaining Variation among African States
Roundtable III

Assigned Readings:


5/27- International State-building and Chronically Weak States

Assigned Readings:


5/30- Memorial Day (No Class)
Writing/Research Day

6/1- Non-European Models of State-building: Comparative Developments in the Middle East and Asia
**Findings Papers Due**

Assigned Readings:


6/3- States and Society in the Middle East
Roundtable IV

Assigned Readings:

6/6- Examining the Modern Asian State

**Assigned Readings:**


Eiko Ikegami, *The Taming of the Samurai: Honorific Individualism and the Making of Modern Japan* (Harvard University Press, 1995), Ch. 1 & 7

6/8- Reconstructing States and Markets: Variations in Post-Socialist States and Political Economies

**Roundtable V**

**Assigned Readings:**


6/10- Post-Socialist States and Economies (cont’d)

**Assigned Readings:**


6/13- Conclusion

**Final Papers Due**

**Assigned Readings:**