Objectives

PlSc 450 is an advanced course in the major designed to do four things:

• Answer one of the most significant questions of the social sciences today: what causes some countries to enjoy the rule of law and strong property rights, and thus strong economic development and democracy
• Hone your research and writing skills enough that you can write a journal-quality article (C+ grade or higher)
• Teach you how to present the results of your work in a professional setting
• Teach you how to interact in a Zion community of scholars
• Fulfill university requirements for advanced writing

The course will help you achieve these objectives through a series of subject-oriented readings, lectures, and class discussions; a collaborative effort at comparative analysis; written and oral peer reviews; a formal presentation of your research; and a guided research paper, including a formal proposal, rough draft, and final draft.

Required texts (available in bookstore)


All other required readings are found on Blackboard under Course Materials

Prerequisites

PlSc 200, PlSc 150 or 350

Assignments

Paper – 50%
• Research question (1%)
• Proposal (14%)
• Rough draft (15%)
• Final draft (20%)

Readings – 25%
• Reading (15%)
• Occasional assignments & quizzes (5%)
• Presenter/discussion leader (5%)

Oral presentation – 10%

Peer reviews – 15%
• Written (10%)
• Participation (5%)

All written assignments are due at the beginning of class on the day scheduled. The one exception is the final draft of your paper, which is due at the start of the final exam. Assignments may be turned in late to the dropbox in 745 SWKT, but they will lose a half grade before 5 p.m. on the day they are due and a full grade for every 24 hour period thereafter.

Assignments and Research Paper – 50%

For this class, you are required to write a student journal-quality paper of approximately
10,000 words (around 30 pages of double-spaced, 12-point font) that attempts to explain why one or more countries have the rule of law and property rights or do not. The paper will speak to and draw from the work of your fellow students with the goal of achieving a general theory. Most of you should plan on writing a comparative historical analysis of one or two countries; but if you convince me you can instead conduct a statistical analysis. Unless you obtain special permission from me, it must be an analytical paper (one that tries to provide and test a causal theory) and it must study one or more countries besides the United States. A significant aspect of the paper must be original and creative.

- **Research question (1%)** Early in the semester you will need to select your tentative research question and write it up in 1-2 double-spaced paragraphs that introduce the subject and, in one crucial sentence, state the question.
- **Proposal (14%)** Having chosen your research question and done significant preliminary research, you will prepare a maximum 2-page, single-spaced proposal that several of your peers and I critique. The proposal will roughly conform to guidelines for the ORCA Grant.
- **Rough draft (15%)** On the date indicated, you will submit a polished (if partial) draft of your paper, with bibliography and everything else you can possibly write up to that point. One of your peers and I will critique this draft.
- **Final draft (20%)** The final draft is due by Wednesday, April 20, at 11 a.m. in the dropbox in 745 SWKT.

**Readings – 25%**
A schedule of readings follows this section. Your reading is the foundation for learning in this class.

- **Reading/conferencing (15%)** Each day that readings are due, you will need to summarize/critique them by writing one paragraph for each chapter or article you have read. Skimming is encouraged, but not at the expense of comprehension. We will also have a few conference days. On these days you will meet together with other students to discuss your ongoing work, unless you opt to meet individually with Prof. Hawkins; attendance is mandatory and counts as a day of reading. If you complete the online course evaluation, I will allow you to drop a full day of readings/conferencing.
- **Occasional assignments & quizzes (5%)** We will have occasional short, written assignments and quizzes based on the readings or as needed. These will be announced in class and are not usually in the syllabus schedule.
- **Presenter/Discussion leader (5%)** Answering our main research question is difficult. To make our work truly comparative, we will begin most of our classes with a 15-minute segment for discussing our individual projects. At least once during the semester you will be asked to lead this discussion, often by presenting your own work. The selection will be random or voluntary; you should come prepared to direct the presentation or discussion each day we meet, and you may be asked to present twice.

**Oral presentation – 10%**
After the class submits the rough draft, everyone will be asked to formally present the results of their research to the rest of the class. This assignment has a highly practical emphasis and is designed to train you for professional and academic work where these presentations are commonplace. You will have 12 minutes to present, with 5 minutes afterwards to answer questions. You will be graded on your personal appearance and poise; the appropriate use of audio-visual aids; the content, organization, and clarity of your information; and your ability to answer questions effectively.

**Peer reviews – 15%**
- **Written (10%)** You will write two reviews of your peers’ work. The first will involve grading your peers’ research proposals and will require lots of work but relatively little writing. The second will be a formal written review of your peers’ rough draft, about 1½ single-spaced pages. Due dates are in the syllabus, and details will be
forthcoming.

- **Class participation (5%)** Participation in discussions is important, especially in order to make effective the collaborative aspect of our class. Your participation should be regular, thoughtful, and considerate.

**On-line course evaluation**

The university asks you to complete the on-line course evaluation at the end of the semester. The results of this evaluation are very important to me and my department, and I use your written comments to improve the class. If you do the evaluation, I will compensate you by dropping your reading grade for one day or, if you split it up, two chapters or articles.

**Extra credit and making up assignments**

I accept legitimate excuses for tardiness and absence. These generally include illness, conflicting school assignments, and other events beyond your control. If this happens, you will need to come speak with me in person so that we can make a fair arrangement. There is no extra credit, but if you do the on-line course evaluation at the end of the semester, I will let you skip up to a full day of readings without penalty. You should save this free day for personal matters that may arise. If you need to miss additional assignments for personal reasons, remember that you can turn in your work late with a penalty. The exception to this rule is the oral presentation, which because of our tight schedule cannot be postponed. You may also turn in any assignment early.

**University Policies**

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. See http://www.byu.edu/honorcode for specific examples of intentional, inadvertent plagiarism.

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 your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at D-282 ASB (367-5689 24 hours); or contact the Honor Code Office in 4440 WSC (422-2847).

Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmosphere which reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect your performance in this course, you should get in touch with the University Accessibility Center (2170 WSC, 422-2767). This office can evaluate your disability and assist the professor in arranging for reasonable accommodations.

**My own policy on honesty and plagiarism**

Dishonesty is offensive and a violation of the Honor Code. Do your own work except on assignments where group work is allowed. Cheating on assignments will be punished as I feel is appropriate, including failing you in the course. Plagiarism—unacknowledged borrowing of other people’s creative work—is a particularly pernicious form of dishonesty at a university and a terrible thing to do in your paper this semester. Please remember that plagiarism may get you failed, even if it results from carelessness. Always provide references to the sources of your ideas and data, and never reprint large pieces of published material without using appropriate punctuation (quotation marks or, for more than a few lines of cited text, indentation). Even if you properly cite direct quotes, it is inappropriate (not to mention bad writing) to let them constitute the bulk of your assignment.
## Reading and Assignment Schedule

(N&T is North & Thomas; all other readings are on Blackboard)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
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<tr>
<td>Jan. 4</td>
<td>Introduction: what makes a publishable paper, basic concepts, start thinking about research question</td>
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<td>Research question (rough)</td>
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<td>--syllabus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>--Alchian et al. on various websites (in-class)</td>
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<td>--Carothers, pp. 95-97</td>
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<td></td>
<td>--N&amp;T Chap. 1, pp. 1-8</td>
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<td>--Mauro</td>
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<td>--De Soto, Chap. 1</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Definitions/why the rule of law matters</td>
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<td>11</td>
<td>The origins of modern property rights, I</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td><em>Conference with Prof. Hawkins</em></td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>How to write proposals</td>
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<td>20</td>
<td>The origins of modern property rights, II</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>What the paper should look like</td>
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<td>27</td>
<td>The theoretical challenge</td>
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<td>Research question (final)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>--Sample ORCA proposals</td>
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<td>--N&amp;T, pp. 91-158</td>
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<td>Feb. 1</td>
<td>Origins of the modern state, classic work</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Origins of the modern state, the latest work</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td><em>Conference with Prof. Hawkins</em></td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Sample exercise in historical institutionalist research</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Quantitative research: the colonial origins of economic development</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td><em>Conference with Prof. Hawkins</em></td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Presidents Day—Monday instruction day—no class</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>Quantitative research: corruption</td>
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<td></td>
<td>--Treisman</td>
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<td></td>
<td>--Golden and Chang</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 1</td>
<td>How to grade a proposal</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>Conference with Prof. Hawkins</em></td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>Non-rational-choice theories</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Fixing corruption: practical policy issues</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>TBA</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Review of sentence-level writing</td>
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<td>--Hacker manual (review as needed)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>--online packet, including exercises</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Review of paragraph-level writing and paper formatting</td>
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<td>24</td>
<td>How to do presentations; how to write a formal peer review</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Rough draft of paper (2 copies)</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>Apr. 1</td>
<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>Presentations</td>
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<td>15-16</td>
<td>Reading Days</td>
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<td>Apr 20</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>(Mon)</td>
<td>Final paper (1 copy) due 11 a.m. in 745 SWKT</td>
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<td>11-2pm</td>
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Definitions/why the rule of law matters
Classic definition and explanation of property rights by a noted economist. Ideologically tinged, but useful. Just read the first part of this until you have the definition clear.

We will read the rest of this article later in the semester. For now, just read pages 95-97 to learn the classic definition of the rule of law.

Political corruption is defined by social scientists as the abuse of public property for private gain. Compare this to a standard definition of corruption you find in a dictionary. How is the definition of political corruption related to this broader concept?

Introductory chapter to de Soto’s widely read book on why capitalist economics doesn’t work well in many developing countries; emphasizes the existence of an inclusive set of property rights as upheld by law.

A classic early study of corruption and how it messes up economic growth by undermining investment

North and Thomas, Chap. 1 (pp. 1-8).
Theoretical overview of North and Thomas’ basic argument about the role of institutions in modern capitalist development. A classic book that we will read over the next week.

The origins of modern property rights
North and Thomas—Chapter 2 and all of Part II (pp. 9-89).
The first half of the historical argument, focusing on medieval Europe generally and the rise of institutions required for modern capitalism.

North and Thomas – Part III (pp. 91-158).
The second half of the historical argument, focusing on a series of country studies.

The theoretical challenge
A critique of North’s initially functionalist ideas. Bates points out that the causes for these institutions’ origins are not necessarily the same as the functions that the institutions perform today.

A widely cited case study of property rights development through state institutions in England and their consequences. While a condensed version of some of North’s other arguments, it also provides a nice model for your capstone paper if you are writing a history of the rule of law in a country. And it begins to respond to critics of North’s initially functionalist theory.

A somewhat more refined response to Bates and others, representing North’s latest (if still incomplete) thinking on this subject of the actual origins of economic institutions. More theoretical and less historical. This is from North’s last book and is widely cited because of its largely theoretical, rather than empirical approach.
Origins of the modern state, classic work

Hintze, Otto. 1975 []. Military organization and the organization of the state. In Historical Essays
A classic, early attempt to explain the rise of modern states—and hence, perhaps, the rule of law. Hintze’s explanation, emphasizing the competitive pressures of war, is still the baseline theory today.

Tilly, Charles. 1985. War making and state making as organized crime. In Bringing the State Back in, eds. Theda Skocpol, Dietrich Rueschmeyer, and Evans.
Tilly, a sociologist who spent much of his life writing about the origins of the modern state, wrote several articles and books laying out a revised version of Hintze’s basic argument. This is one of the most accessible and widely read.

Origins of the modern state, the latest work

This represents the state-of-the-art in studies of the origins of modern states. It nicely reviews the existing literature (including the pieces you’ve already read) and presents a rather convincing theory that is probably the best you’ll find. Think of this as the one to beat (or confirm).

Sample exercise in historical institutionalist research

This comes from a classic, basic history of Chile; it discusses the colonial history of Chile (that is, prior to its independence) and is designed to be read by an undergraduate audience. Chile is one of the few countries in Latin America with strong rule of law and low corruption. What clues to Chile’s success do you find in this chapter, especially in light of the theories you have read thus far?

Quantitative research: the colonial origins of economic development

This article epitomizes the current strain of quantitative research by economists on the historical origins of modern economic development, but looking now at developing countries. Note the previous arguments (Engerman and Sokoloff, as well as Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson’s previous article) and the general argument they are all making. While focused on modern patterns of growth (especially the reversal that took place between 1500 and the present), they are really offering a historically specific, non-functionalist theory on the origins of modern institutions of property rights in developing countries.

Another piece in this latest series of quantitative work on the causes of corruption/rule of law/development that looks at colonial origins, this time by a group of sociologists and historians. It introduces an important modification of the basic theory of resources endowments and gives you a sense of the cutting edge in this area of study if you are doing a quantitative paper.

Quantitative research: corruption

Treisman, Daniel. 2007. “What have we learned about the causes of corruption from ten years of cross-national research?” Annual Review of Political Science. 10: 211-44.
Treisman (see below) wrote one of the earliest and most widely cited quantitative studies of the causes of corruption. Here he updates his original findings and compares a score of other studies, thereby allowing you to digest a lot of scholarly literature at once.

A more recent quantitative piece attempting to test theories of corruption. This one introduces a new and, to my thinking, lackluster institutional variable on the personal vote. But it does represent a fairly typical attempt by political scientists to contribute to this quantitative vein of work. Note that both Golden and Treisman work at UCLA—apparently the place to go if you want to study corruption.

For other quantitative studies that largely ignore historical factors:


For other studies that consider historical/cultural factors:


A widely cited quantitative study on the causes of corruption. While heavily focused on current factors that reinforce corruption, it does work a bit of historical argumentation into the list of independent variables. Note that, like many who quantitatively analyze the causes of corruption, Treisman ignores the implications of Mauro’s (1995) findings and includes level of economic development as an independent variable.

**Non-rational-choice theories**

Centeno, Miguel Angel. TBA.

**Fixing corruption: practical policy issues**


These are helpful ruminations on the difficulties of implementing the rule of law, as well as some basic guidelines that practitioners and aid programs currently follow. Carothers is a higher-up in the policy community with significant experience at democracy and rule-of-law promotion; he is a regular contributor to academic/policy journals such as Journal of Democracy.


De Soto’s optimistic take on the political challenge and some possible strategies for implementing more inclusive and effective property rights regimes.