This course introduces students to theories and concepts of political sociology through utilizing them to make sense of major developments in our contemporary world.

Part I of the course explores scholarship on the relationship between State and Economy. We begin with Marxist approaches that help us understand our current economic crisis by contextualizing it within a larger history of capitalist crises from the Great Depression to the Great Recession. We then proceed to examine two major state projects in the contemporary era of neoliberal capitalism: mass incarceration and mass deportation.

In Part II, we shift our focus to scholars that forefront State Violence. We begin by utilizing Weberian approaches that emphasize the state’s monopoly of legitimate violence to examine the US’ “War on Terror,” followed by scholarship that historically traces the development of state power through war, money and imperialism.

We conclude in Part III with Feminist Revisions of the approaches we studied in the first two parts of course, providing us with radically different perspectives on states, capitalism, violence, mass incarceration, and particularly the current pandemic and crisis of social reproduction.

**PART I: STATE & ECONOMY**

Economic Crises, Mass Incarceration & Mass Deportation

“Prisons are the underbelly of global capitalism.” (Tanya Golash-Boza)
1/21  **Booms & Busts: The Crises of Capitalism**


https://berkeley-kanopy-com.libproxy.berkeley.edu/video/capitalism-hits-fan

*Watch this video lecture BEFORE today’s class utilizing the provided viewing guide

1/26  **The Stock Market Crash of 1929 & The Great Depression**

Viewing Assignment: “1929: The Great Depression”

Part 1: https://youtu.be/bCEJ65H_1X6

Part 2: https://youtu.be/gO42ZfCN9ug

*Watch both parts of this documentary BEFORE today’s class

1/28  **Classical Marxism: The State as an Instrument of the Ruling Class**


2/2  **Neoliberalization**


2/4  **The Neoliberal State**

Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. (Pp.26-35; 64-71; 72-74; 75-78; 80-84)

2/9  **Primitive Accumulation & Accumulation by Dispossession**


Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. (Pp.154; 159-165)
2/11  The Global Economic Crisis of 2008 & The Great Recession

Viewing Assignment: Inside Job (2010)

*Watch this documentary BEFORE today’s class [Viewing link will be provided]

Class discussion: Applying Marxists to Inside Job

Suggested Additional Reading:


2/16  Neoliberal Rationality and the Undoing of Democracy


*Exam 1 distributed

2/18  NO CLASS – Exam 1 due 2/21

*** EXAM 1 DUE on 2/21***

2/23  The New Jim Crow: Mass Incarceration


Suggested Additional Reading:

**2/25 The Economies of Peculiar Institutions**


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**3/2 Global Apartheid: Mass Deportation**


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**PART II: STATE VIOLENCE**

**War, Money & Imperialism**

“The decisive means for politics is violence.” (Max Weber)

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**3/4 The State’s Monopoly of Violence**


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**3/9 (Il)Legitimate Violence**

Weber, “Politics as a Vocation” (Pp.83-84; 115-121; 125-128)


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**3/11 War Makes States**


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**3/16 War Makes Democracy**

3/18  War (Re)Makes States

No Assignment

In Class Viewing of Top Secret America (2013) PBS/Frontline

Class Discussion: Applying Tilly to Top Secret America (PBS)

3/23  NO CLASS – Spring Break

3/25  NO CLASS – Spring Break

3/30  The “War on Terror”

Viewing Assignment*: Taxi to the Dark Side (2007)

*Watch this documentary BEFORE today’s class. [Viewing link will be provided]

Class Discussion: Applying Weber & Tilly to Taxi to the Dark Side

*This documentary contains extremely graphic images and footage of physical, sexual and psychological violence. If you are not comfortable viewing this documentary, please contact me and we can arrange for an alternative means of accessing the information presented.

*Exam 2 distributed

4/1  NO CLASS – Exam 2 due 4/4

*There is no assignment or class meeting today, but you should begin the reading for 4/6 which is longer than usual (40 pages).

*** EXAM 2 DUE on 4/4***

4/6  War Makes Money

PART III: FEMINIST REVISIONS

Patriarchy, Prerogative Power & Crises of Social Reproduction

[T]he state is an insignia of the extent to which politics between men are always already the politics of exchanging, violating, protecting, and regulating women; the one constitutes the imperatives of the other.” (Wendy Brown)

4/8 Masculinist State Power


4/13 Patriarchy & Prerogative Power


4/15 Primitive Accumulation & Patriarchy of the Wage


4/20 Crises of Social Reproduction


4/22 The Pandemic, the Crisis of Care & the Racial Division of Reproductive Labor


**4/27 Neoliberalization, Social Reproduction & Mass Incarceration**


**4/29 Nuisance Laws and the Neoliberal Assault on Women’s Citizenship**


*Exam 3 Distributed

*** EXAM 3 DUE on 5/10***

**GRADE DISTRIBUTION:**

- **30%** Exam 1 (Due 2/21)
- **35%** Exam 2 (Due 4/4)
- **35%** Exam 3 (Due 5/10)

*Students are expected to thoroughly and carefully read the course policies below.*

*DO NOT* email me with questions that can be answered by referring to this syllabus.

**LECTURES:**

All lectures will be held via Zoom ([https://zoom.us/download](https://zoom.us/download)) and will begin promptly at 10 minutes after the scheduled hour (3:40 pm). All lectures will be recorded and made available to students (access to recordings is limited to students in the course only). While you will have access to these recordings, students are expected to attend the real time lectures – this kind of active engagement and discussion is crucial for the learning process and will make the course much more enjoyable. Attending real time lectures will also enable us to build our community in the classroom, which is particularly important given the social isolation we all struggle with.
during this pandemic. I also ask that you have your video turned on during lecture (although I understand this may not always be possible), as actually seeing each other is crucial for community building and connecting as a class.

**REQUIRED READINGS:**

The primary work for this class is reading – this course requires extensive and careful reading. The assignments listed for each class meeting are to be read prior to that scheduled class. The expectation is that students allocate the necessary time to undertake a thorough and careful reading. The examinations for this course consist of take-home, open-book exams which you will have a limited time to complete and which will require extensive citation (in other words, your answers to the exam questions will require you to provide the corresponding page numbers from the text). Hence, keeping up with the readings and notetaking throughout the semester are crucial for performing well on exams.

All readings listed on the syllabus are included in the course reader, available at Replica Digital Ink (510 549-9991) at 2138 Oxford Street (by the Center Street entrance to campus). You must first purchase the reader on their website (https://store.replicadigitalink.com/), and then you’ll have the option of picking it up or having it shipped to you.

While course readings are also available on bCourses, I strongly recommend that you utilize a course reader rather than these digital copies. Extensive research indicates that we learn and process information much more effectively with hard copies. The course reader will also prove highly advantageous for the exams (all your readings/notes will be organized and easily accessible).

**READING GUIDES:**

Included in the course reader (and available on bCourses) are reading guides for all of the assigned readings. You should always refer to the reading guides before beginning the assigned readings as they are intended to make the process easier (especially for the more difficult theoretical texts). Utilizing these guides will enable you to focus on the most important issues and help clarify your reading.

**EXAMS:**

The 3 exams for this course will be open-book, take-home examinations that consist of short essays that assess students’ mastery of the course materials. Exams will be cumulative (covering material from the entirety of the semester) and will be geared towards asking students to synthesize the scholarship covered in the course.

The distribution and due dates for the exams are listed on this syllabus. Students are expected to be aware of these dates and to schedule and prepare accordingly. (You should check these deadlines against your other academic obligations at the beginning of the semester and ensure that you are able to meet them before deciding to remain in this course.) Please do not contact
me with requests to change due dates because of other academic obligations. Late submissions will result in a grade penalty.

**SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS:**

Please notify me immediately if you require any special accommodations for the course. If you are registered with the DSP program, please ensure that your accommodation letter is forwarded to me at the beginning of the semester. Students who wish to utilize DSP accommodations for the exams are required to contact me about this well in advance.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:**

All written work must be your own. Any words, or even ideas, drawn from another source (even if paraphrased) must be appropriately cited.