"The state" is an overloaded concept. It is frequently used/mobilized in historical and social analyses despite the fact that the concept is difficult to pin down analytically. Taking the development of the post World War 2 state as the historical backdrop, this course intends to look at the state from multiple angles, and from various disciplinary standpoints. The goal is to enable students to have a firm and methodologically solid grasp of the different ways to explore, understand and ultimately do research on the state, particularly from developmentalism to neoliberalism.

While we will talk about various attempts at theorizing the state, Marxist, Weberian, etc., our primary goal will be identifying how these different traditions utilize the notion of the state in their broader research and how they go about researching this rather broad institutional (and discursive) ensemble that we call the state. Exploring the different ways to look at and do research on this rather fuzzy concept, we will reflect on what types of methodological building blocs we need to set up in order to be able to construct, represent and ultimately reach social scientific judgments about this key institution of the modern society.

To be able to concretize the somewhat abstract discussions, we will be reading examples/case studies from various parts of the world, as states are transformed in the shift from developmentalism to neoliberalism. Students are expected to keep up with the readings and participate in class discussion.

Requirements and distribution of grades are as follows:

A) 6 Response papers 30 %
B) Participation/ attendance 20 %
C) Final research proposal (10+ pages) 30 %
D) Take home final exam 20 %
Schedule of Readings (subject to revision)

1- The Problematique (Feb. 11)


Michel Foucault (2008) Birth of Biopolitics (Palgrave MacMillan) (excerpt/ 75-78)


2- Marxism and the State (Feb. 18)

Karl Marx (1845/6) "German Ideology" Robert Tucker (ed.) Marx Engels Reader (2nd ed. 1978), pp. 146-200


3- Historical/ Institutional Approach (Feb 25)

Max Weber (1978) Economy and Society (University of California), Ch. XI, Bureaucracy, pp. 956-1005


4- Bringing the State Back in? (March 3)

J. P. Nettl (1968) "The State as a Conceptual Variable" World Politics (20:4), pp. 559-592

Theda Skocpol (1985) "Bringing the State Back in: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research" in Peter Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer, and Theda Skocpol, eds. Bringing the State Back in (Cambridge), pp. 3-43


Timothy Mitchell (1991) “The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and
Their Critics” The American Political Science Review (85:1), pp. 77-96

5/6- Developmental States and Economic Transformations (March 10-17)


7- Elites, Strategies, and Fields of Power (March 24)


Yves Dezalay and Bryant Garth (2002) The Internationalization of Palace Wars: Lawyers, Economists and the Contest to Transform Latin American States (University of Chicago Press) Chs. 1-5, pp. 1-95

8- The Modern State, Knowledge and Power (March 31)


9- Globalization, Neoliberalism and the State I (April 7)


Capital & Class, February (37:1) pp. 5-24.

David Harvey (2001) Spaces of Capital (Routledge) Chs. TBA

10- Globalization, Neoliberalism and the State II (April 14)


APRIL 21 SPRING BREAK

11- Crisis, Debt, Austerity (April 28)

Wolfgang Streeck (2014) Buying Time: The Delayed Crisis of Democratic Capitalism (Verso)

12/13- Neoliberal States, Neoliberal Subjects (May 5-12)


Nikolas Rose (2008) "Governing Advanced Liberal Democracies", in Aradhana Sharma and Akhil Gupta, eds., The Anthropology of the State (Blackwell), pp. 144-162


Katharine Rankin (2001) "Governing Development: Neoliberalism, MicroCredit
and Rational Economic Woman” Economy and Society (30:1), pp. 18-37

