

**POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY**  
**SOC260H1-F**  
**Fall 2016**  
**University of Toronto, St. George Campus**

**Course Director:** Dr. Jasmin Hristov

**Class Time and Location:** Wednesday 4-6pm, SS 2102

**Contact Information:** [jasmin.hristov@utoronto.ca](mailto:jasmin.hristov@utoronto.ca); 416 978-6579

**Office Hours:** Thu 12-2pm; Room 389, Department of Sociology, 725 Spadina Avenue.

**TA:** TBA

**TA Contact Information:** TBA

**TA Office Hours:** TBA

### **Course Description**

This course introduces students to the field of political sociology by exploring the relationship between state and society. The first part of the course offers a brief overview of major theoretical approaches to build a historically informed understanding of the state in capitalist society. The second part of the course examines major transformations that nation-states have undergone during the era of economic globalization. The third part looks at states' responses to popular discontent and resistance. The last part of the course considers alternative politico-economic models. The main goal is to develop a systematic understanding of the macro-social dynamics between political institutions, capital, and civil society. Overarching themes, including state building, social movements, political parties, imperialism, transnationalization, political violence, coercion, and human rights, are explored by incorporating some empirical examples from different parts of the world.

### **Learning Objectives**

- 1) Demonstrate knowledge of major theoretical approaches in political sociology.
- 2) Assess the explanatory potential and limitations of major theoretical approaches in light of empirical evidence from different parts of the world.
- 3) Identify and describe types of actors that challenge states' monopoly over the means of violence.
- 4) Explain the novelties in the ways that coercion and violence are organized and performed by state apparatuses as well as politically motivated non-state actors. Analyze the implications of these with regards to civil rights, democracy and ultimately, human rights.
- 5) Identify ways in which processes of transnationalization are transforming state structures and state-society relations.
- 6) Demonstrate an understanding of notions such as failed/weak states, crisis of hegemony, privatization of violence, low-intensity democracy and others, in relation to various configurations of state capacity and class structure.

## **Prerequisites**

The prerequisite to take SOC260H1F is SOC101Y1 OR SOC102H1 OR SOC103H1. Students without the prerequisite will be removed at any time discovered and without notice.

## **Course Format**

### Lecture

The lecture will consist of an interactive presentation by the instructor, at times accompanied by a video documentary. Students are expected to engage seriously with the assigned readings before attending lecture.

### Tutorials

The pedagogical approach of this course rests on the idea that learning is a collective process and thus, the classroom should be a community of learners. Tutorials are offered with the purpose of enriching your learning experience by facilitating the understanding of readings and lecture content as well as by offering a space for questions and discussion. During each tutorial, there will be a presentation of discussion question by two or more students in the class, which the rest of the class members will answer in groups. The TA and the presenter(s) will moderate the discussion. Any remaining time will be used for answering any other questions students might have (whether clarification or discussion-oriented). Tutorial attendance is mandatory and counts towards your grade.

### Tutorials are scheduled as follows:

Tut 5101 Wed 6-7pm, LM157

Tut 5102 Wed 6-7pm, MP 118

Tut 5201 Wed 7-8pm, LM 157

Tut 5202 Wed 7-8pm, MP 118

## **Required Texts**

- Course-pack of selected readings available online on Blackboard at NO COST for students enrolled in the course.
- Hristov, J. (2014). *Paramilitarism and Neoliberalism: Violent Systems of Capital Accumulation in Colombia and Beyond*. London: Pluto Press.

## **Video Documentaries**

All documentaries shown in class form an integral part of the course material. They are carefully selected visual illustrations of the issues and concepts taught in the course. The test and exam will require you to incorporate the knowledge gained from documentaries into your answers.

## **E-mail /Online Communication**

E-mail communication is for providing short answers to any clarification questions regarding the course content and/or organization and should be directed to your TA. Your emails will be

responded within 2 days. If you require help with course material, please use tutorial time to bring up these questions or arrange to see me or your TA during office hours. Please check Blackboard regularly for course announcements.

### **Attendance**

Regular attendance at lectures is required in order for you to do well in the course. Lectures explain *as well as supplement* the readings. One does not substitute for the other. If you need to miss lecture, you will not be penalized, however you should ensure that you know someone in the class from whom you can borrow lecture notes. Lecture *power-points* will be posted on Learning System/Blackboard. Keep in mind that these *do not contain all lecture content or explanations* but rather constitute an outline/point-form organization of the content, including some key definitions.

### **Use of Electronic Devices in Class**

The use of electronic devices for purposes other than note-taking / course-related work is not allowed. It inhibits learning and is also disruptive and disrespectful.

### **Taping / Recording / Photographing Lectures**

Lectures and course materials prepared by the instructor are the instructor's intellectual property covered by the Canadian Copyright Act. Students wishing to record lecture or other course material in any way are required to ask the instructor's explicit permission and may not do so unless permission is granted. This includes tape recording, filming, photographing PowerPoint slides, Blackboard materials, etc. Once obtained, such permission is only for that individual student's own study purposes and does not include permission to "publish" them in any way. It is absolutely forbidden for a student to publish an instructor's notes to a website or sell them in other form without formal permission.

### **Talking during Lecture**

Talking to your classmates during lecture (even if you are whispering) is disturbing. Please refrain from talking unless you have been invited to do so by the instructor. If you are unclear about something that was said by the instructor, please put up your hand instead of asking your classmates. This will ensure that you or your classmates do not miss anything important and fall behind during lecture.

### **Blackboard**

Announcements, handouts, lecture power-points, and any additional learning aids will be posted here, so please check the website three times a week.

## Evaluation

Type of Assessment	Weight	Due Date
Critical Commentaries	20%	Every class except for Sept.14 and Oct.12
Discussion Questions Presentation (in tutorial)	10%	Randomly assigned a date
Tutorial Participation	5%	ongoing
Test	25%	October 12
Final Exam	40%	Held during official examination period

### Critical Commentaries (CC)

Every class students are required to submit at the beginning of tutorial a critical commentary (approximately 1 page single-spaced Times New Roman, 12 point font, 1 inch margins all around) on the assigned readings for that week and be prepared to share their commentary with their classmates during tutorial discussions. The commentary should provide: i) an overview of the key issues raised in the readings; ii) a personal argument / opinion / reaction on any one or more of these issues that interests you. The latter part of the commentary may focus on a single issue or reading.

Each commentary will serve as a record of the student's presence and participation in class and will receive 1%. Commentaries must be typed and can only be submitted in person in class. You will be submitting 10 commentaries for the entire course (worth 10%). The content and quality of these will be evaluated cumulatively at the end of the course and is worth an additional 10% (for a total of 20% of the course grade).

Critical commentaries are due every class except for September 14 and October 12.

### Presentation of Discussion Questions (DQs)

Each student will be randomly assigned a tutorial date on which she/he will be responsible for presenting a discussion question(s) based on the readings assigned for that day. A hard copy of the questions should be distributed to each class member and the TA at the beginning of tutorial. Each question should be preceded by a brief (one-two sentences) background (preamble) that situates us in terms of the topic on which it is based. ***It should not have a right or wrong answer, not ask for clarification or factual information, but instead should invite us to think critically and creatively.*** The presenters will pick randomly students from the audience to share the group's answer with the class and should be prepared to respond to / comment on the groups' answers. ***The DQs will be evaluated in terms of their clarity, creativity, the amount of interest/discussion they generate, and the presenter's responses to classmates' answers and comments.***

## Tutorial Participation

Participation grade will be based on attendance, taking part in group and class discussions, active listening, and complete focus on course work (i.e. no distractions such as mobile devices or off-topic conversations).

## Policy on Late / Missed Work

### Missed Test

- ❖ Students who miss the test will receive a mark of zero.
- ❖ **If you miss a test, do not contact the instructor or a TA unless you have followed the steps described below.** Telling us why you missed a deadline or a test will not be considered.
- ❖ Students who miss a test for legitimate reasons will be given the opportunity to write a make-up test if **within three days** they provide the instructor with a written request for special consideration which explains why the test was missed, **accompanied by proper documentation from a physician or college registrar.** A request should be accompanied by contact information (the student's telephone number and email address) so the date, time and place of the make-up test can be communicated to the student. **In case of illness, you must supply a duly completed *Verification of Student Illness or Injury Form* (available at [www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca](http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca)).** A doctor's note is not acceptable. The form must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the instructor, and submitted to her. If a personal or family crisis prevents you from meeting a deadline, you must get a letter from your college registrar. The letter must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the instructor, and submitted to her.

### Missed Critical Commentary

Not submitting a commentary will lead to losing 1%. However, students have the right to miss *one* class (sick day) without a medical note and not be penalized, provided that they e-mail their commentary on/before the day of class OR submit it the following class. \*Check with your TA for preferred method.

### Missed Discussion Question

If you are away on the day you are scheduled to present your DQ, you will receive a grade of zero. If you have a legitimate reason, follow procedure above and provide instructor with documentation.

The last day to submit any outstanding work (provided that you have been approved for accommodation by the instructor) will be due Dec 13<sup>th</sup>.

## Policy on Disputing Assignment Grades

If you disagree with the grade you were given on your assignment, you must present your argument in writing and schedule a meeting with your TA **within one week** after the test was returned. Your letter must take into consideration the feedback that was given in class as well as

the specific comments you received on the assignment and explain why despite of these, you are still convinced that your grade should have been higher.

### **Accessibility Needs**

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or Accessibility Services at (416) 978-8060 or visit:

<http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>

### **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. Academic integrity is a fundamental value of learning and scholarship at the U of T. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that your U of T degree is valued and respected as a true signifier of your individual academic achievement.

**The University of Toronto's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters** outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct, the processes for addressing academic offences, and the penalties that may be imposed. ***You are expected to be familiar with the contents of this document.*** Potential offences include but are not limited to:

#### In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Copying material word-for-word from a source (including lecture and study group notes) and not placing the words within quotation marks.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Including references to sources that you did not use.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment including:
  - working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work;
  - having someone rewrite or add material to your work while "editing".
  - lending your work to a classmate who submits it as his/her own without your permission.

#### On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone;
- Looking at someone else's answers;
- Letting someone else look at your answers;
- Misrepresenting your identity;
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

#### Misrepresentation:

- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including doctor's notes.
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

\*\*Students who commit an academic offence face serious penalties. All suspected cases of

academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*. The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on your transcript. Avoid plagiarism by citing properly: practices acceptable in high school may prove unacceptable in university. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from me, or from other available campus resources like the [U of T Writing Website](#).

## **SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND COURSE WORK**

### **SEPT 14 Introduction**

- Introduction to course objectives, expectations, organization and analytical framework.

### **PART 1: STATE AND CIVIL SOCIETY: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES AND HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENTS**

#### **SEPT 21 Theoretical Perspectives on the State in Capitalist Society I**

- Cox, L. and Gunvald Nilsen, A. (2014). 'The Bourgeoisie, Historically, Has Played a Most Revolutionary Part': Social Movements from Above and Below in Historical Capitalism. In *We Make Our Own History: Marxism and Social Movements in the Twilight of Neoliberalism*. London: Pluto Press, pp. 99-112.
- Hristov, J. (2014). *Paramilitarism and Neoliberalism*, pp. 20-23; 25-30; 61-79.
- McNally, D. (2002). The Colour of Money: Race, Gender, and the Many Oppressions of Global Capital. In *Another World is Possible*. Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, pp. 105-116.

#### **SEPT 28 Theoretical Perspectives on the State in Capitalist Society II**

- Weber, M. (1919). Politics as a Vocation, pp. 1-5
- Tilly, C. (1990). Cities and States in World History (pp. 1-3; 16-23; 29-30); European Cities and States (p.14); How War Made States and Vice Versa (pp. 68-76; 91-95); States and their Citizens (pp. 96-99). In *Coercion, Capital and European States*. Cambridge: Basil Blackwell, Inc.
- Knutilla, M. (2007). The State and Social Issues: Theoretical Considerations. In Samuelson, L. and Antony, W. (Eds.). *Power and Resistance: Critical Thinking about Canadian Social Issues*. Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, pp. 23-28
- Hristov, J. (2014). *Paramilitarism and Neoliberalism*, pp. 61-79

#### **OCT 5 The Welfare State: Origins and Challenges**

- Fox Piven, F. and Cloward, R.A. (1971). Relief, Labour, and Civil Disorder: An Overview. In *Regulating the Poor: the Functions of Public Welfare*. New York: Random House, Inc., pp. 3-42.
- Reese, E. (2007). Politicians, Think Tanks, and the Global Promotion of the "Wisconsin Model" of Welfare Reform. In Cabezas, A.L., Reese, E., and Waller, M. (Eds.). *The Wages of Empire: Neoliberal Policies, Repression, and Women's Poverty*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, pp. 86-97.

## OCT 12 IN-CLASS TEST

### PART 2: STATE TRANSFORMATIONS IN THE ERA OF GLOBAL CAPITALISM

#### OCT 19 The Neoliberal State and the Transnational State

- Harvey, D. (2005). The Neoliberal State. In *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 64-86.
- Hristov, J. (2014). *Paramilitarism and Neoliberalism*, pp. 82-85.
- Robinson, W. (2004). The Transnational State. In *A theory of global capitalism: Transnational production, transnational capitalists, and the transnational state*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, pp. 85-101.

#### OCT 26 The Imperial State

- Zunes, S. The US Invasion of Iraq: the Military Side of Globalization. *Globalizations*, 6(1), 99-105.
- Panitch, L. (2003). Globalization Begins (and Ends) at Home: Bringing the State Back In. In Griffin Cohen, M. and McBride, S. (Eds.). *Global Turbulance: Social Activists and State Responses to Globalization*. London: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.
- Hristov, J. (2014). *Paramilitarism and Neoliberalism*, pp. 79-82.

### PART 3: CONFLICT AND CHANGE

#### NOV 2 Political Parties and Social Movements in the Global North

- Andersen, R. (2013). The Class-Party Relationship in Canada, 1965-2004. In Evans, G. and De Graaf, N.D. (Eds.), *Political Choice Matters: Explaining the Strength of Class and Religious Cleavages in Cross-National Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Brym, R., Birdsell Bauer, L. and McIvor, M. (2013). Is Industrial Unrest Reviving in Canada? Strike Duration in the Early Twenty-First Century. *Canadian Review of Sociology* 50 (2): 227-238.
- Pickerill, J. and Krinsky, J. (2012). Why Does Occupy Matter? *Social Movement Studies* 11(3): 279-287.

*\*November 7 is the last day to drop a course without receiving a grade*

#### NOV 9 Citizenship and National Security

- Hristov, J. (2014). *Paramilitarism and Neoliberalism*, pp. 85-93.
- Smeltzer, S. and Hearn, A. (2014). Student Rights in an Age of Austerity? 'Security', Freedom of Expression and the Neoliberal University. *Social Movements Studies: Journal of Social, Cultural, and Political Process*: 1-7.
- Robinson, W. and Santos, X. (2014). Global Capitalism, Immigrant Labour and the Struggle for Justice. *Class, Race, and Corporate Power* 2(3): 1-14.

**NOV 16 The ‘Failed State’/ ‘Weak State’**

- Hristov, J. (2014). *Paramilitarism and Neoliberalism*, pp. 33-60.
- Tilly, C. (2003). Violence as Politics. In *The Politics of Collective Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 41-53.
- Boas, M. and Jennings, K. (2007). ‘Failed States’ and ‘States Failure’: Threats or Opportunities. *Globalizations* 4(4): 475-485.

**NOV 23 Non-State Armed Actors and the New Political Counterpart of Global Capital**

- Hristov, J. (2014). *Paramilitarism and Neoliberalism*, pp. 93-165.

**PART 4: ALTERNATIVES**

**NOV 30 Alternative Politico-Economic Models in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: Possibilities and Challenges**

- Harnecker, M. (2015). Making Progress When the Government is in Our Hands. In *A World to Build*. New York: Monthly Review Press, pp. 113-136.
- McKelvey, C. (2012). The Cuban revolutionary project and its development in historical and global context. *Global Learning*.
- Leal Chacon, E. (2013). Twenty-first Century Socialism: a Political and Pedagogical Act. In Muhr, T. (Ed.), *Counter-globalization and Socialism in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century: the Bolivarian Alliance for the Peoples of our America*. London: Routledge, pp. 33-44.