Introduction

This course examines state building in the modern world. Whether one focuses on international relations, American politics or comparative politics, the state remains a critical component to our understanding of political life. Throughout this semester, we will explore how states emerged; why some states become strong or weak; how the state interacts with its society; and how the state building project functions in the contemporary world. Our course is organized in four blocks. In Block I, we will examine the major theoretical foundations of the state formation literature and discover how the state emerged from kingdoms, empires, and feudal systems. We will also examine the critical role of warfare in the development of modern states and consider throughout the semester whether or not this constitutes a necessary condition for building strong states. Additionally, this block will introduce the critical concepts of nationalism, rational choice, and institutions. In Block II, we examine fundamental concepts related to state capacity - the ability of a government to function - in order to understand both the development and denigration of states. During Block III, we view the state from the perspective of the civil society. Finally, in Block IV we examine the state building phenomena in: Sub Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the post-Soviet region.

In the middle of the course, we will have the opportunity to witness the dynamics of state building in action. From April 2 - 4, 2020, we will participate in a three day exploration of the state and civil society in Jersey City, New Jersey. During portions of the experience, we explore state capacity with respect to local government, municipal projects, police, judicial system, and community outreach. In other events, we will learn from various groups operating in the civil society such as: Muslim, Sikh, Jewish, Coptic, Catholic, and Mormon communities. By the end of the experience, cadets will gain new perspective on the relationship between the state and civil society.
Course Objectives

1. Think critically about the process to build state capacity by studying competing theoretical perspectives, questioning assumptions, and assessing evidence in order to develop a deeper understanding of the complexities of state building and an appreciation of the value of intellectual pluralism.

2. Read critically within a wide spectrum of academic, popular, and policy-oriented literature in order to understand key arguments and debates in the field and apply standards of social scientific analysis to critique the logic, argumentation, and evidence in the state building literature.

3. Describe, analyze, and explain state building processes using contemporary theoretical perspectives in combination with empirical evidence drawn from primary and secondary sources.

4. Apply theoretical perspectives accurately and consistently to explain causal phenomena that contribute to building state capacity both thematically and in case study analysis. Be able to articulate the critical mechanisms that contribute to state development in oral and written form.

5. Critically evaluate the normative and ethical implications of state building in the contemporary environment.

6. Communicate clear and effective analysis and arguments about complex international issues verbally and in writing.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lesson</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Date</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 1</td>
<td>Welcome to State Building</td>
<td>January 8, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 2</td>
<td>Studying the State</td>
<td>January 10, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 3</td>
<td>Types of States</td>
<td>January 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 4</td>
<td>War and the State</td>
<td>January 17, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 5</td>
<td>Economics and the State</td>
<td>January 23, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 6</td>
<td>Institutions and the State</td>
<td>January 27, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 7</td>
<td>Nation Building</td>
<td>January 29, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 8</td>
<td>Capacity and Strength</td>
<td>February 3, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 9</td>
<td>Scope of the State</td>
<td>February 5, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 10</td>
<td>Building Capacity</td>
<td>February 11, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 11</td>
<td>Developing States</td>
<td>February 13, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 12</td>
<td>Building the United States</td>
<td>February 18, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 13</td>
<td>Building the Armed State</td>
<td>February 20, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 14</td>
<td>Paper Drop (Lit Review)</td>
<td>February 24, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 15</td>
<td>State Weakness</td>
<td>February 28, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 16</td>
<td>State Failure</td>
<td>March 2, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 17</td>
<td>WPR</td>
<td>March 4, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 18</td>
<td>Paper Drop (Outline)</td>
<td>March 6, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 19</td>
<td>State and Society</td>
<td>March 16, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 20</td>
<td>State and Religion</td>
<td>March 20, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 21</td>
<td>State and Social Movements</td>
<td>March 23, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 22</td>
<td>State and Rebellion</td>
<td>March 25, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 23</td>
<td>Civil War</td>
<td>March 27, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 24</td>
<td>Jersey City</td>
<td>April 2 - 4, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 25</td>
<td>Middle East and North Africa</td>
<td>April 13, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 26</td>
<td>Latin America</td>
<td>April 15, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 27</td>
<td>Asia</td>
<td>April 20, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 28</td>
<td>Africa</td>
<td>April 23, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 29</td>
<td>Post Soviet Region</td>
<td>April 27, 2020</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesson 30</td>
<td>The State of State Building</td>
<td>April 29, 2020</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Requirements**

Cadets will have the opportunity to earn up to 1,000 points in during this course. These are the requirements:

**Comprehension**

**Participation 50 points.** We are a learning community. Classroom participation is an essential component of our course wide examination of state building. Cadets will be expected to complete all assigned readings before scheduled lessons. These readings will constitute the foundation of our discussions and will be augmented with articles, data projects, guest lectures, podcasts, and group presentations. Cadets will receive a score of 0 (unacceptable), 1 (acceptable), or 2 (excellent) for each lesson. I will take excused absences into account and normalize grades for those impacted.

**Online Entries 100 points.** Cadets will have the opportunity to engage the course material beyond the classroom. The arguments and ideas presented throughout the course are contentious and Cadets are encouraged to articulate agreements, dissents, applications, and gaps via online or “blog” entries. Prior to each lesson, Cadets will respond to a post provided by the instructor via the course website.

**WRIT 50 points.** Cadets will take an in-class WRIT on January 29, 2020 via the Respondus Lockdown Browser. This assessment will cover Lessons 1 - 7 and take thirty minutes to complete.

**WPR 100 points.** Cadets will take an in-class WPR on March 4, 2020 via the Respondus Lockdown Browser. This assessment will cover Lessons 1 - 16 and take 65 minutes to complete.

**Creativity and Critical Thinking**

Writing is critical to your development as an Officer and critical thinker. For each of the following assignments the following basic conventions apply:

1. Cover Sheet
2. Arial, Book Antiqua, or Times New Roman
3. 12 point font
4. 1 inch margins
5. Chicago Style
6. Footnotes
7. Bibliography
8. Safe Assign Score (via Blackboard)
9. Blackboard Submission
10. All submissions are due NLT 1600 on the date assigned.
Proposal 25 points. The writing component of this course is extensive and cumulative. On January 31, 2020 Cadets will submit a 500 word proposal on a state building project of their choosing. Cadets may select from the following options: Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, Asia, Latin America, the Post Soviet Region, and Western Europe. The proposal will contain the following elements: (1) a research question, (2) identification of dependent and independent variables, (3) initial data sources.

Literature Review 50 points. On February 28, 2020, Cadets will submit a 1500 word literature review. This assignment will address major arguments relative to each Cadet’s chosen project and identify gaps in our understanding of state building. This assignment will be incorporated into the draft and final papers.

Outline 75 points. On March 6, 2020, Cadets will submit a 4-page outline that sketches the major components of the research paper. Good outlines will: (1) address the research question and provide a compelling introduction, (2) assess the literature, (3) describe the type of data, (4) justify the selection of research method, (5) describe and execute an empirical examination, (6) assess your results, and (7) provide a compelling conclusion.

Draft 150 points. Cadets will submit a complete draft of their research project on April 10, 2020. This draft will be 4,000 words in length and incorporate comments from the previous three lessons.

Critique 100 points. Following submission of draft papers, each Cadet will be assigned a colleagues’ paper, anonymously, for critique. Each Cadet will be given one week to read and provide comments to another project. This assignment is due on April 17, 2020.

Final 100 points. On May 1, 2020, Cadets will submit a final draft of their research project. This draft will incorporate both instructor and anonymous comments.

Presentation 100 points. TBD. During TEE week, Cadets will design and present a 10 minute presentation of their research project.

Cultural Immersion

Preparation 25 points. From March 16 - 31, Cadets will prepare for our course trip to Jersey City, NJ. Activities will include: mission analysis, route reconnaissance, packing list design, transportation plan, communication plan, and research question. Throughout this phase, Cadets will coordinate with the instructor, local enablers, Mr. Ahmed Shadeed, and Councilman Richard Boggiano.

Execution 25 points. Cadets will participate in the 16th iteration of the Jersey City | West Point Cultural Immersion Program from April 2 - 4, 2020.

Reflection 50 points. Cadets will submit a 500 word reflection on their experience on April 7, 2020.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Deliverable</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>Throughout</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Journal Entries</td>
<td>Throughout</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WRIT</td>
<td>January 29, 2020</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proposal</td>
<td>January 31, 2020</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lit Review</td>
<td>February 24, 2020</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WPR</td>
<td>March 4, 2020</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outline</td>
<td>March 6, 2020</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC Prep</td>
<td>March 16-31, 2020</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC Execution</td>
<td>April 2 - 4, 2020</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JC Reflection</td>
<td>April 7, 2020</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Draft</td>
<td>April 10, 2020</td>
<td>150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Critique</td>
<td>April 17, 2020</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final</td>
<td>May 1, 2020</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>TBD</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Course Description and Readings

Block I: Origins of the State

Objectives What is the state? How did the state emerge? What are alternatives to the state? Why did scholars choose to “Bring the State Back In”? Is warfare a necessary condition to state-building? Is the saga of state building simply a European story that is inapplicable to the rest of the world? How does nationalism impact the development of the state? Do the assumptions imposed by rational choice apply to contemporary state building or are they irrelevant to the modern state building project? What types of institutions lead to strong states?

Lesson 1: Welcome to State Building

- George C. Marshall, “Remarks by the Secretary of State at Harvard University,” June 5, 1947.
- AY20-2 SS486 Course Syllabus

Lesson 2: Studying the State

- UN Member States
- State Building
Lesson 3: Types of States


- Varieties of Democracy

Lesson 3: War and the State


Lesson 5: Economics and the State


Lesson 6: Institutions and the State


- Acemoglu Lecture

Lesson 7: Nation Building


- Benedict Anderson Lecture

- World Atlas of Language Structures
Block II: State Capacity

Objectives What is state capacity? What are some of the features of strong states and can these features be exported? What is infrastructure power and how does this concept improve our understanding of state building? What are the basic economic arguments that underpin the state capacity literature? What features allowed the United States to develop into a “strong state” and can the developing world learn from this experience? Are weak states born that way and are they condemned to suffer in their weak status? How might a struggling state reverse course and take steps to build a strong state?

Lesson 8: Capacity and Strength


- Observatory of Economic Complexity


Lesson 9: Scope of the State


- Fukuyama Lecture

Lesson 10: Building Capacity: Infrastructure Power


- Infrastructure Report Card

Lesson 11: Developing States


- IMF DataMapper
Lesson 12: Building the United States


- US Census Bureau, IRS, US Treasury

Lesson 13: Building The Armed State


Lesson 14: Paper Drop, Literature Review

Lesson 15: State Weakness


- Fragile State Index

Lesson 16: State Failure


Lesson 17: WPR

Lesson 18: Paper Drop, Outline

*Spring Break, March 7 - 15, 2020.*

**Block III: State and Society**

**Objectives**

What is state autonomy? What is the role of civil society with respect to the state? Are the state and society locked in an unending competition for dominance? What are some of the challenges to the state’s authority from the civil society? To what extent does the state tolerate or deny the practice of religion? What strategies does the state adopt in order to thwart challenges from contentious members of the civil society? What conditions favor the onset, length and termination of rebellion and civil war?
Lesson 19: State and Society


Lesson 20: State and Religion


- Harvard World Religions Project

Lesson 21: Social Movements


- Minorities at Risk Project

Lesson 22: State and Rebellion


- State Building and Non State Armed Actors in Somalia

Lesson 23: Civil War


- Uppsala Conflict Data Program
Lesson 24: Jersey City

Block IV: Comparative State Building

Objectives How does state building vary across regions? Are certain regions home to weak and failing states while others produce strong states? What factors continue to plague weak states in Africa, the Middle East, and Latin America? Are there effective policy options available to leaders in these regions or are they condemned? How did some Asian states develop from weak and ineffective polities to the strong and vibrant “tigers” we see today? What lessons can we learn from the modern state building projects in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the post-Soviet region?

Lesson 25: Middle East and North Africa

- Wilson Center Middle East Program

Lesson 26: Latin America

- Latin American Public Opinion Project

Lesson 27: Asia

- Asian Development Bank

Lesson 28: Africa

- Afrobarometer
Lesson 29: Post Soviet Region


- Robert Person

Lesson 30: The State of State Building


- USAID