

## Syllabus

<b>Title of the Course:</b>	Studying the State: Theoretical and Methodological Insights	<b>Course Breakdown:</b>	28 teaching hours online, 152 hours independent study
<b>Name of the Instructors:</b>	Prof. Dr. Atilla Güney Dr. Ezgi Pınar Dr. Melehat Kutun	<b>Weekly class time:</b>	2 hours, Mondays, 14:00 – 16:00 (CEST) / 15:00 - 17:00 (TSI)
<b>Language:</b>	English		
<b>Hosted by:</b>	Political Science Institute, Philipps-Universität Marburg	<b>Certificate issued by:</b>	Political Science Institute, Philipps-Universität Marburg (6 ECTS or PASS)

## Description of the Course

This course brings forward a methodological approach to the state. Debates on the role and nature of the state are at the center of contemporary politics. Together with the erosion of liberal democracy and the rise of authoritarian regimes, the state is subject to a range of interpretations such as authoritarian state, failed state, exceptional state, and rogue state. Hence, not only the functions of the state in contemporary politics but also its formation, its re-scaling, its relations to other social organizations, and different parts of social life need to be explored. This course aims to open a discussion on competing accounts about nature, functions, and changing structure of the state in modern politics. In doing so, first, the existing approaches such as the Weberian approach, liberal/neo-liberal theories, structural-functionalist accounts, and Marxist state theory(s) will be elaborated. After a comparative elaboration of these approaches, the capitalist state as a formation, entity, and as an abstraction will be analyzed and its theoretical roots will be questioned. Assessing the existing methodologies and addressing alternative methodologies is the fundamental aim of this course.

## Learning Aims

At the end of the course, participants will be able to answer the following questions from different perspectives:

- Is the state a reality or an illusion?

- How should the state be understood?
- Where does the state start and end?
- What are the limits of the state?
- What is the relationship between state, society, and/or individual?

## Ground Rules of the Course

- The topics that we will cover throughout the course are mainly based on weekly discussion questions, that of which composes a context for different modules.
- Each class meeting is going to start with a collective discussion introduced by participants' annotations of the key text. Then, we are going to develop a broader and open discussion on the topic. These discussions and annotations must bring together the central arguments, questions and problems on the weekly key text and keywords/questions.
- Each topic is introduced with questions and keywords. These questions and keywords are designed to guide your reading, annotation writing and group discussion. Please, consider 1) the weekly key texts, 2) keywords, and 3) questions when you are reading the text and participating class discussions during the course.
- Participants are expected to develop their capabilities by means of *weekly annotations* and *classroom discussions* to be able to successfully complete the course.
- Weekly reading annotations and classroom discussions have the purpose of providing students with their own analytical perceptions and enabling them to discuss the relevant themes. Annotations should reflect the following:
  - Your comprehension of the issues which replies the relevant discussion/question of the week
  - Your assessment on the reading material
  - Your ability to have a grasp of relevant literature
  - Your ability to organise your points and arguments in a structured and coherent manner
  - An introduction, which sets out the structure and direction of your and text's arguments
  - A concluding summary
- Weekly annotations must be submitted for the upcoming class every week
- Students could consult the course instructor(s) via *Coworkingsquares*'s messaging system and consult on the related questions.

## Course Requirements

### Course components include:

- 2 Hours-long Class Meetings
- In-Class Discussions
- Weekly Readings
- Weekly Assignments (Annotations)
- Final Paper

### The final grade for the course will be based on the following:

- Weekly Reading Annotations 40 %
- Participation and Engaging in Class Discussions 20 %
- Proposal for Final Paper 5 %
- Final Paper 35 %

### **Weekly Reading Annotations (due every Friday 5 pm CEST / 6 pm TSI):**

Participants who want to complete the class successfully will have to submit weekly annotations. You are expected to send one annotation paper every week before the class. The annotations should be based on highlights of the central issues, arguments, and conclusions of the weekly text. Please, do not write more than one-two pages (typed, or spaced) per weekly reading (300 words, Times New Roman 12, double-spaced with 2.5 margin spacing would be ideal).

**Participation and Engaging in Class Discussions:** Participants are expected to participate the classes regularly and discussions actively during the class hours.

**Proposal for Final Paper:** Participants are expected to write a short 2-3 pages long summary with the purpose to clarify some of the main issues they will address in the final paper. (Deadline will be announced).

**Final Paper:** Participants will be expected to write a 15-pages long final paper about a subject, which they will choose. Subject proposals will be presented in-class. (Technical details of the final paper: 15 pages, Times New Roman 12, 1.5 line spacing, 2.5 margin spacing. 15 pages should only be the main text, excluding title/cover page, table of content, bibliography, and appendix). (Deadline will be announced).

### Important Notes:

- Those who would like to earn PASS grade must do all assignments except for proposal for final paper and final paper.
- Those who would like to earn numeric grade with 6 ECTS must do all assignments.

**Course Materials**

There is no single text recommended for this course. There are weekly key reading texts on the relevant topic of each week. Please see the weekly reading list below.

**Outline of the Course Schedule**

<p><b>Week 1</b></p>	<p><u>Introduction to the Course and Its Requirements</u></p> <p>Welcoming everyone and Introducing the course</p>
<p><b>Week 2</b></p>	<p><u>A debate on how to analyse the state</u></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> State theories, an epistemology of the state, ontology of the state</p> <p><b>Key Question:</b> Is it necessary to construct an ontological foundation for the state theory?</p> <p><b>Key Text:</b> Jessop, B., (2016) The state past present future, Polity: Cambridge, 15-52.</p>
<p><b>Week 3</b></p>	<p><u>A proposal for symptomatic reading on existing theories of the state</u></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> State as a separate sphere, state as an idea, state society relations, sui generis</p> <p><b>Key Question:</b> How could/should we read the existing state theories problematically?</p> <p><b>Key Text:</b> Jessop, B., (2016) The state past present future, Polity: Cambridge, 15-52</p>
<p><b>Week 4</b></p>	<p><u>Naturalisation and neutralisation of the state I</u></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Social contract, human nature, separation of the state and economy</p> <p><b>Key Question:</b> What is the logic lying behind the naturalisation/neutralisation of the state?</p>

	<p><b>Key Text:</b> Hobbes, T. (2019) Leviathan, Ancient Wisdom, Chp: 13,14,15.</p>
<p><b>Week 5</b></p>	<p><u>Naturalisation and neutralisation of the state II</u></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Social contract, human nature, separation of the state and economy</p> <p><b>Key Question:</b> How does the conception of the natural/neutral state operate in reality?</p> <p><b>Key Text:</b> Dunn, J. (1969) The political thought of J. Locke, Cambridge Uni. Press: Cambridge, Chp. III/9 (the state of nature), 96-119.</p>
<p><b>Week 6</b></p>	<p><u>Ir-rationalisation and ahistorical formulation of the state I</u></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Power and politics, sociologicalisation of the state</p> <p><b>Key Question:</b> Is it possible to explain state formation with the will to power?</p> <p><b>Key Text:</b> Weber, M. (1946) Essays in sociology, H.H. Gerth and C.W Mills (ed.), Oxford New York, 159-179.</p>
<p><b>Week 7</b></p>	<p><u>Ir-rationalisation and ahistorical formulation of the state II</u></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Power and politics, sociologicalisation of the state</p> <p><b>Key Question:</b> What are the premises of historical sociology in explaining the state formation?</p>

	<p><b>Key Text:</b> Mann, M., (1992) States, war in capitalism: Studies in political sociology, Blackwell: Oxford, 1-25.</p>
<p><b>Week 8</b></p>	<p><u>Unrevealing the state and return of politics I</u></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Political sphere, democracy and authoritarian politics</p> <p><b>Key Question:</b> Is the return of politics a mechanism for unrevealing of the state in postmodern times?</p> <p><b>Key Text:</b> Mouffe, C. (2000) Deliberative democracy or agonistic pluralism, <i>institut für höhere studien</i> (IHS), Wien.</p>
<p><b>Week 9</b></p>	<p><u>Unrevealing of the state and return of politics II</u></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Political sphere, democracy and authoritarian politics</p> <p><b>Key Question:</b> How could we conceive of political theory in postmodern times?</p> <p><b>Key Text:</b> William, R. (1997) “Locating the political: Schmitt, Mouffe, Luhmann, and the possibility of pluralism”, <i>international review of sociology: revue internationale de sociologie</i>, 7:1, 103-115</p>
<p><b>Week 10</b></p>	<p><u>Authoritarian state: permanent or exceptional?</u></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Ordoliberalism, neoliberalism and the state, forms of the state</p> <p><b>Key Question:</b> What is the conception of the state as the political form of society?</p>

	<p><b>Key Texts:</b> Barrow, C.W., (2006) “(Re)reading Poulantzas: state theory and epistemologies of structuralism” in <i>reading Poulantzas</i> (ed.) Gallas, A., Bretthauer, L., Kannankulam J., Stütze, I., Merlin: Pontypool, 27-40.</p> <p>Hirsch, J., Kannankulam, J., (2006) “Poulantzas and form analysis: on the relation between two approaches to historical-materialist state theory” in <i>reading Poulantzas</i>, 56-71.</p>
<p><b>Week 11</b></p>	<p><u>Authoritarian state: permanent or exceptional?</u></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Ordoliberalism, neoliberalism and the state, forms of the state</p> <p><b>Key Question:</b> Is the authoritarian state a character of the capitalist state or an exceptional moment?</p> <p><b>Key Texts:</b> Werner, B. (2012) “Freedom and the strong state: on German ordoliberalism”, <i>new political economy</i>, 17:5, 633-656.</p> <p>Werner, B. (2006) “Democracy and dictatorship: means and ends of the state”, <i>critique</i>, 34:3, 237-252.</p> <p>Werner, B. (1999) “Agnoli on fascism the politics of change”, <i>ideology and critique</i>, No.24, 39-57.</p>
<p><b>Week 12</b></p>	<p><u>Round Table I: How to understand the state?</u></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> Revisiting methodology and epistemology</p> <p><b>Key Question:</b> <u>Every student should prepare their own questions.</u></p> <p><b>Key Text:</b> No Text</p>
<p><b>Week 13</b></p>	<p><u>Round Table II: How to understand the state?</u></p>

	<p><b>Keywords:</b> Revisiting methodology and epistemology</p> <p><b>Key Question:</b> <u>Every student should prepare their own questions.</u></p> <p><b>Key Text:</b> No Text</p>
<p><b>Week 14</b></p>	<p><b>Wrap-up and Conclusion –</b></p> <p>Evaluation of the course, students' feedback, and closure.</p>

*We reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus. You will be immediately notified of all changes.*

Good Luck! ☺  
Viel Glück! ☺  
Bol Şans! ☺