AMERICAN POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT
IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

This course will examine the growth and change of the American national state from the late 19th century to the present era. It is concerned with the responses of the national government to changes and pressures originating in society, the economy and the international arena, as well as the state’s effect on society, market, ideology, and world politics. The major contending approaches to an understanding of government growth and change see it either as a response to (1) societal pressures or demands via groups, movements, or cultural norms; (2) to changing ideas and cultural norms; (3) the need to rationalize and strengthen capitalism; or (4) a process by which officials within the government themselves craft policies to address emergent problems and build supporting coalitions around these policies. As we examine actual changes in public policy and institutions in reform periods, we will explore these pluralist, cultural, class-based, and state-centered approaches to see which provides a better "fit" with the data. The purpose of different approaches to understanding political change is to answer big questions: How has the distribution of participation and power in the U.S. changed since 1900? Of the commonly recognized major pathologies that political communities experience—economic stagnation, prejudice and discrimination, and war—how do political institutions contribute to the production of, or solution to, these pathologies? Is progress linear, or cyclical (or both)?

After the first two weeks, the course will be divided into three parts, focusing on the three major functions of the national state (whose expansion may prove to have quite different dynamics and supporting coalitions). In order of appearance, they are: the regulatory state, the social welfare state, and the national security state. The theory behind this three-fold segmentation is that the forces shaping regulatory, welfare, and military policy are very different. They enlist different groups in the population, and the agency of Congress, the president, and the courts varies significantly.

There is no final exam for those who keep up with the readings. In lieu of a final, students will write, weekly, one and a half-two page (dbl. sp) essays on the week’s readings, which must be sent to me electronically by 5 pm Saturday night (earlier is fine, too!), and to the rest of the class by 7 pm on Saturday. These will be returned with my comments within the following week. You are allowed to be late with these papers TWICE, but should get them to me no more than a week later to receive credit on those two occasions. You can MISS turning in a paper ONE week, but must do the readings every week. Use your “free pass” wisely and advise me when you decide to take it. Anyone not meeting the weekly paper requirement more than twice will need to take a final in-class exam.

The purpose of the weekly papers is to demonstrate knowledge of, and critical reflection on the readings, in lieu of a comprehensive final; and also to get valuable practice in structured social science writing. (Your analytical writing ability will almost certainly improve substantially by the end of the semester). I will distribute Paper Writing and Essay Construction Pointers the first week. Some guides are already on Blackboard (BB). You should read the writing pointers VERY carefully.

Class attendance is required except in case of documented illness or serious personal crisis communicated to me at the time. In event of a serious crisis, call me at home since I might miss your email.

In addition to the weekly essays on the readings, there will be a final paper of 10-15 pages (for undergraduates; graduate students will do longer papers) on a topic developed in consultation with me, using both outside and relevant syllabus readings. It is due no later than the first day of final exams. You will need to meet with me (in the office) at least twice for this consultation. I need to know and discuss your topic no later than week 4.
The weekly commentaries on the readings will count for 30% of the grade; oral class participation, for 20%; and the longer paper, for 50%. For those who don’t make the weekly paper requirement and thus have to take the final exam, that exam will count for 30% of the grade. Graduate students are expected to read more of the readings than the pages assigned for undergraduates, and/or to sample the optional readings. Undergraduates are NOT expected to read the optional works (but may want to consult them for the paper, where relevant).

Most of the readings are articles and chapters on Blackboard; these are indicated by asterisks and include some of the optional readings as well. Two books are required: Small Oxford Press books by Nugent and Rauchway, which were ordered at the book store, and since they are not on BB, they do not carry asterisks. A few copies of three optional little Oxford Press books—Skidelsky on Keynes, Troy on Reagan, and McMahon on the Cold War were also ordered. Finally, I have ordered a few copies of the new Princeton Encyclopedia of American Political History, ed. By Michael Kazin, for optional purchase. For under $35, you get 662 pages, by hundreds of leading historians/political scientists. Major books will also be on regular reserve at Uris library (look for book chapters under book author or editor's name). Reading is lighter in some weeks than others. Approximate pages of reading (rounded) are in brackets.

Week 1

**Approaches, Concepts, and Goals in APD**

*William Domhoff, “Wealth, Income, and Power,” 1-16 (Optional: *Interview with Domhoff also on BB*)
  http://sociology.ucsc.edu/whorulesamerica/power/wealth.html (retrieved December 15, 2010) [17]
*James A. Morone, *Hellfire Nation*, 1-33, 277-mid 283, 328 (bottom)-331 (top) [40]
*Imperialism as Manliness? (with the connivance of female consumers); H-diplo Review [7]
*Elizabeth Sanders, *Roots of Reform*, 1-6 [5]

These works introduce varied approaches to the study of APD. Obviously, a field of study that includes all political development will contain a multitude of diverse theoretical perspectives. The seven selections above explain APD as a result of the economic requirements of capitalism and elite interests; an exceptionally religious culture; gender imperatives; social movements interacting with state officials; ideology; and ideas (in the Stein reading, Keynesianism). In your essay, give at least brief notice to all readings, but you may concentrate on a few that most interest you. It is good to compare and contrast the perspectives, and to comment on methods and data used to back up the author’s claims. Be skeptical of those claims and evidence. In subsequent essays, recall these different approaches.

Optional Theoretical Readings for Week 1:

*Robert Skidelsky, Keynes: The Return of the Master, xv-xxii-28; his conclusion, “Keynes for Today,” is also interesting. OR you may want to read more in two other excellent new books on Keynes and the influence of his ideas: Sidelsky’s little Oxford paperback, *Keynes: A Very Short Introduction*; or British historian Peter Clarke’s *Keynes: The Rise, Fall, and Return of the 20th Century's Most Influential Economist* (if you read one of these, you can skip Stein or Morone).*
*Kristin L. Hoganson, *Fighting for American Manhood*, 1-29*
*David B. Robertson, The Constitution and America’s Destiny (fine anal. of the founding; pp 1-29 on BB)*
*Keith Whittington, Political Foundations of Judicial Supremacy (at least xi-27, 124-34, 285-96)*
*Paul Pierson, "Increasing Returns, Path Dependence, and the Study of Politics," APSR, June, ‘00, 251-66
*Robert Higgs, Crisis and Leviathan, 3-34 (interesting early statement of the “crisis ratcheting” effect

**Week 2**

**After Leviathan: The Legacy of the Civil War for the American State**

*Brian Balough, A Government Out of Sight, 1-17 [20]
*Richard Bensel, Yankee Leviathan, 1-17, 114, 303-12; and
*The Political Economy of American Industrialization, xvi-xxii, 1-18 [40]

**Optional Reading:**

**The Regulatory State**

**Week 3**

**Progressive Era State Building**

Walter Nugent, Progressivism: a Very Short Introduction, 1-107, 120-27 (skimming 56-73) [c.120]
*Daniel Carpenter, The Forging of Bureaucratic Autonomy, 1-25 (subhead), 255-270 [40]

**Optional Reading:**

**Week 4**

**The New Deal**

Eric Rauchway, The Great Depression and the New Deal, 8-131 [123]

**Optional Reading**
William E. Leuchtenburg, Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal
*John Maynard Keynes, letter to Franklin Roosevelt
*Joseph J. Thorndike, The Fiscal Revolution and Taxation...1929-38 http://law.duke.edu/journals/lcp
Week 5-6  [2 wks]  The Regulatory Surge of the 1970s...and Deregulation

*Paul Charles Milazzo, *Unlikely Environmentalists* 120-31 and 150-60  
*David B. Robertson, ed., *Loss of Confidence*, 1-18  
*Thomas S. Langston, *Ideologues and Presidents*, xi-21; end at subhead  
*Simon Johnson and James Kwak, *Thirteen Bankers*, 70-102  
*David M. Herszenhorn, “Bill Passed in Senate Broadly Expands Oversight of Wall St.,”  
  NYT May 20, 2010

Optional Reading:  
*Steven Teles, *The Rise of the Conservative Legal Movement* 1-5, 22-57  
*Robert Collins, *Transforming America* 1-27  
*Philip J. Cooper, *The War against Regulation* (esp. 1-13, 46-169)  

The Welfare State

Week 7

*Rick Ungar, “Congress Passes Socialized Medicine and Mandates Health Insurance -In 1798”*  
*Theda Skocpol, *Protecting Soldiers and Mothers*, 1-12, 40-41 (skim 13-39 subheads)  
*Jason Scott Smith, *Building the New Deal*, 1-20, 232-4, 258-63  
*Suzanne Mettler, *Soldiers to Citizens*, 1-14, 106-20  
*Jacob S. Hacker, *Divided Welfare State*, 1-21, 291-301, 312-14]*change to 1-21, 85-95, 121-23* [35]

Optional Reading:  
*Mary Poole, *The Segregated Origins of Social Security* (esp. 30-53, on BB)  
Christopher Bonastia, *Knocking on the Door: The Fed. Govt’s Attempt to Desegregate the Suburbs
Week 8


*Mary Dudziak, *Cold War Civil Rights*, 1-17, + mid 178-202


Optional Reading:


*Kenneth Kersch, *Constructing Civil Liberties* (esp. ch. 3, Labor Rights to Civil rights)


Week 9


*Francis F. Piven and Richard A. Cloward, *Regulating the Poor*, 183-199, 228-47

*Herbert Stein, *Presidential Economics* cptr 4, 89-122 (“Kennedy & Johnson… Exhausted”)

*Charles Murray, *Losing Ground*, 56-83, 124-33


*Jacob S. Hacker, “the Road to Somewhere: Why Health Reform Happened…” *Perspectives on Politics* v.8 (Sept 2010) 861-76

Optional Reading:


*Daniel Patrick Moynihan, *Maximum Feasible Misunderstanding*, 75-100, 128-41, 150-54

Judith Russell, *Economics, Bureaucracy, and Race* (browse)


The National Security State

Week 10 (Nov 14)

*Skowronek, *Building a New American State*, 213-34

*Bartholomew H. Sparrow, *The Insular Cases*, 1-9 (top)

*Alfred W. McCoy, *Policing America’s Empire*, 1-14


*Michael J. Hogan, *A Cross of Iron*, 1-21, 291-301, 312-14 (can substitute Logevall & Craig)


Optional Reading:

Campbell Craig and Fredrik Logevall, *America’s Cold War, esp. chs 1-2.*
Week 11

*Jeffrey A. Smith, *War and Press Freedom* 169-94
*W. Lance Bennett et al, *When the Press Fails*, 14-29, 48-57
*James Pfiffner, *Power Shift*, 1-12, 67-83

Optional:
* Laura A. Belmonte interview re her book, *Selling the American Way: U.S. Propaganda and the Cold War*
*Gene Healy, *The Cult of the Presidency*, 1-33 (skim, as intro to this section)

Week 12

*Gregory Hooks, *Forging the Military Industrial Complex* 1-7, 229-57, 264
*Kenneth M. Jones, "The Government-Science Complex" in ibid, 326 (third paragraph)-337
*Daniel Wirls, *Buildup*, 11- mid 40, 46-55

Optional:

Week 13

*John Prados, *Presidents' Secret Wars*, 9-11, 92-107, 315-24 (top), 396-418, 480-87
*Daniel Wirls, “Between the Wars,” WPSC paper, March, 2005 [skip 11-14]
*“The Dark Side” by Jane Mayer (Rev. by historian Alan Brinkley)
*Bruce Ackerman, *The Decline and Fall of the American Republic*, 1-12
Optional:
* David F. Schmitz, *Thank God They're on Our Side*, 3-8, 144-57, 293-303
Louis Fisher, *The Constitution and 9-11*, esp. chapters 6-10
Jonathan Mermin, *Debating War and Peace*, intro & cptrs. on 1st Gulf war
James Bamford, *A Pretext for War*, 254-408
The USA Patriot Act  http://www.epic.org/privacy/terrorism/usapatriot/ (skim)
National Commission on Terrorist Attacks on the United States, Final Report, at  
http://www.gpoaccess.gov/911/index.html (skim)

A very good link to APD bibliography and resources (from David Robertson, U. MO):  
http://www.umsl.edu/~poldrobe/sy431bib.html. See also the UVA Miller Center resources:  
http://www.millercenter.virginia.edu/ and the Wilson Center site: http://www.wilsoncenter.org/topic/cold-war

Class attendance is required. If you are ill, and have a confirming note from Gannet, of course you need not come to class; however, the paper on the readings is still required when you are sufficiently recovered.  
Feel free to talk to me in confidence about any situation that is interfering with your performance in this class.