

<b>Political Science 112</b> <b>Fall Semester 2021</b> <b>Sage Hall 3218</b> <b>MWF 9:10—10:10</b> <b>Credit Hours: 3.0</b>	<b>Department of Political Science</b> <b>Professor Mike Jasinski</b> <b>jasinskm@uwosh.edu</b> <b>Office: Sage Hall 4624</b> <b>Office Hours: Thursdays 11-2 pm</b> <b>Peer Mentor: Grant Steffen</b> <b>Steffg86@uwosh.edu</b>
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## Power, Justice, and the State

### *“The End Justifies the Means”—Niccolo Macchiavelli*

**Course Description:** Power, Justice, and the State invites you to consider critical themes of public interest. Why do we have a state? What should the state do and why? What should it not do and why should it not? State power may obviously be used for ill, but when and how can it be used for good? Does citizenship create obligations about how to treat others as well as benefits citizens? We will consider several major schools of thought about this, which we label theories of justice. We will discuss the strengths and shortcomings of these theories in practice, looking in depth at four arenas of state involvement: school, marketplace, nation, and globe. We do this in order to help develop a lifelong interest in civic knowledge and as a means of understanding the varied potential of civic engagement.

**Prerequisites:** None

**Essential Learning Outcomes** for Power, Justice, and the State:

- objective evaluation of theories and assumptions
- critical and creative thinking
- civic knowledge and engagement

**University Studies Program (General Education at UW Oshkosh):** Power, Justice, and the State is the first course you are taking in your general education program here at UW Oshkosh. It is paired with a first semester course on either writing or communication (you will take the other next semester). Both this course and your writing or communication course will examine the question “How do people understand and engage in community life?” In subsequent semesters you will take classes that revolve around two other key questions: “How do people understand and create a more sustainable world?” and “How do people understand and bridge cultural differences?” Along with breadth courses (called “Explore” courses), this program is designed to give you a well-rounded introduction to the world and to key skills needed to succeed in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

**Definition of Civic Knowledge and Civic Engagement:** Civic knowledge consists of an awareness and understanding of the various political and social processes that impact the nature and quality of life in local, state, national, or global communities. It also encompasses the cultivation of skills which may be useful in public life, like effective communication and

ethical reasoning. Civic engagement means having an appreciation for and applying the values gained from civic knowledge in real world settings, directed at improving the quality of life in the communities of which one is a part. Civic knowledge and civic engagement emphasize learning, reflection, and action in order to create better communities.

**Political Science** is an important and relevant field of study, in that politics is at work in almost everything that you can think of, from the food you eat to the tuition you pay. Politics decides “who gets what, when and how” and determines what values are treated as authoritative. Learning about politics allows you to gain vital knowledge about how the world works. We also impart skills like critical thinking and writing that will be useful in almost any future endeavor. I invite you to check out our department home page or talk with me to find out more about Political Science and our Emphases in Law and Civic Engagement.

**Learning Outcomes and Core Abilities:** After taking this course you should...

- know the tenets of key theories of justice
- be able to list the strengths and weaknesses of various theories of justice
- articulate why thinking about justice is important
- apply concepts of justice to real-world situations
- be prepared to write and carefully argue whether something is just or not just
- constructively critique work by your student peers

**--On-Campus Activities:** A significant part of the first-year experience involves exploration and discovery of on-campus activities. To that end, you will attend five (5) on-campus events (list of available events is included below, and information on additional ones will be posted as it becomes available). For each event, you will write a half-page (single-spaced) summary whose purpose is to describe the activity and reflect on its usefulness to your objectives while in college. Is it something that you feel might be of interest to you during subsequent semesters, or instead something that is completely irrelevant? Make an attempt to attend these events in collaboration with other members of your learning community (in other words, your Quest I class). When you pick an event to attend, post a note to that effect in the On-Campus Events forum of the D2L discussion forums. If someone else has already posted on an event they are planning to event, don't add another post, but rather reply to the already existing post. That should give you an idea as to who else might attend the event, and help you solicit interest from others. Time permitting, these events will also be attended by the Peer Mentor who will serve as the rallying point for these activities, and possibly even The Professor (in other words, me).

**Early Alert:** Since college is a novel experience to most students in the USP program, this course is part of the Early Alert system whose purpose is to identify students who appear to be struggling by evaluating their performance in the initial weeks of the semester. Your Early Alert grade (which is not a component of the course grade in any way) will be based on class attendance and the Reaction Papers for weeks 1 through 3.

**Learning Communities:** Please keep in mind that most of the people you see in this class are the same people with whom you will be interacting in other USP courses. Moreover, each Quest II class of 50 students is composed of two smaller learning communities of 25 students each who are together enrolled in either a Quest Writing or Speaking course.

**Peer Mentor:** An upper class student has been assigned to this class as resource to you. This person is your peer mentor. The peer mentor someone who knows his or her way around the University and who will help you to succeed in college. The peer mentor will do a variety of things with students during the semester, including introducing you to learning opportunities outside of the classroom, which we hope you will make an important part of your college experience. Moreover, the Peer Mentor will be available to meet with you on a weekly basis to help you with any problems you may encounter in the course of your studies, and to assist you with locating university resources that may be of help to you. Please keep in mind the Peer Mentor is not a tutor—if you need assistance in grappling with the course material, do not hesitate to contact me. I am available for contact during times outside of my designated office hours as well.

**Office hours - Office Hours (MS Teams):** The Political Science Department uses Microsoft Teams (MS Teams) for holding office hours. This system is available to all UWO students. Faculty will be available during the hours noted on your syllabus. When logging into MS Teams, look closely at the status symbols for your instructor. A green dot by the professor's icon (which may be their picture or their initials) means they are available. A red dot means they are busy.

Generally, you are able to join office hour meetings and talk openly in the forum or use the chat function freely. At times, your instructor may be in a private meeting with a student during office hours, and will mark my availability as "busy" (a red dot).

We hope that using MS Teams for office hours for all of our courses will help students become more accustomed to virtual office hours during the pandemic. The main point to remember is that we are available to you. Please use our office hours freely and often. We are here to help. Many faculty are also happy to set up meetings outside of my office hours if students have conflicts with the posted times.

**Expectations for Academic Honesty:** A college education is intended to develop your skills, knowledge, and confidence. Graded assignments are designed to work on these items. Thus, to gain the skills, knowledge, and confidence of a college-educated person all graded work is to be your own. When you are directed to work alone, an assignment or test must be done by you, its primary ideas are to be your own, and any outside materials should be dealt with properly (quoted when using someone's words, and cited when quoting or referencing them in any other way). When your teacher directs you to work in teams, the work is to be done by the team. More information can be found here: <https://uwosh.edu/politicalscience/wp-content/uploads/sites/14/2020/08/Academic-Honesty.pdf>

**Note:** If substantive changes are made in course syllabus, such as changes in schedule or assignments, notification will be provided in a timely manner and a revised syllabus made available.

**Disclosure statement:** “Students are advised to see the following URL for disclosures about essential consumer protection items required by the Students Right to Know Act of 1990: <https://uwosh.edu/financialaid/consumer-information/>.”

**Statement of reasonable accommodation for student with disabilities**

<https://www.uwosh.edu/deanofstudents/Accessibility-Center/faculty-and-staff-resources/syllabus-statement>

**Grievance Process:** The Department of Political Science is committed to offering you a high-quality classroom experience, and we take your feedback very seriously. If you have concerns about anything related to this course, assignments, or teaching method, you are encouraged to first speak with your instructor directly. If you are not comfortable speaking with the instructor, you are invited to speak with the Chair of the Department of Political Science, Dr. James Krueger. He can be reached at [kruegerj@uwosh.edu](mailto:kruegerj@uwosh.edu). Should he be unable to resolve your concerns, he will guide you to appropriate resources within the College of Letters and Science.

**Note to Political Science Majors:** Political Science majors should take Political Methodology (245) in either their sophomore year or the first semester of their junior year. Political Science 245 is a prerequisite for the senior capstone, Political analysis (401), and cannot be taken concurrently. If you are currently a political science major or if you think you will be one of our majors in the future, it is important that you save your graded coursework from this class. If you have questions, please see me or any faculty member after class.

**--Attendance:** Highly encouraged! I will take attendance regularly, and while there is no attendance grade, there is a class participation grade (explained below) which will suffer if you have significance attendance gaps.

**Readings:** All course readings are on Canvas. There is no textbook associated with this course.

**Grading:** Your course grade will consist of the following:

**--Weekly Responses.** Starting with week 2, each week’s slides will contain a number of discussion questions that would have ordinarily been part of the class discussion, and which will now be moved to Canvas.

The requirement here is to write 250-word responses for **three** of the discussion questions **for each week**. Submit them to the relevant dropbox under Assignments on Canvas.

Each response is graded on a three-point scale (1-3). These points will be earned as follows:

--Actually provides a sound, logical, evidence-supported answer to the question.

--Cites relevant readings, including readings for that week or other weeks. As an alternative, you may cite outside sources that you have located through your own research.  
--Is of proper length.

Meeting each of the three above gets you 1 point, for a total of three per 250-word essay.

I will provide written feedback on Canvas to each of your answers.

Collectively, they will amount to 60% of the final course grade.

--**Participation in class discussion:** This accounts for the 20% of your course grade. Class participation grade will be assessed as follows:  
Frequent and topical participation (you are weekly participant in the discussion, in the form of providing insights, or even simply asking questions): 100%  
Occasional participation (once every few weeks you make a contribution): 75%  
No participation, or very rare participation (you may have said something once or twice during the entire semester): 50%

You will naturally not be penalized if your participation is negatively affected by quarantines, illness, other pandemic-related issues, personal or family. However, please do keep me informed if these issues arise.

--**Major Writing Assignment: Literature Review:** You will research one of the personalities discussed during the semester in greater depth in order to provide a more thorough understanding of how scholars have interpreted their actions.

In order to complete this assignment, you will first assemble a bibliography of sources which provide an insight into the motives and outcomes of the political leader in question, and then write a collective assessment of how the political leader is perceived, identifying both the positive and negative interpretations and summarizing the reasons for the positive or negative assessments.

Two of the First Year Experience events, namely visits to the Polk Library and the Writing Center, are designed to facilitate your completion of this assignment.

--**Grade Scale:** Final course grades will be assigned as follows: A: 92 and higher. A-: 90-91; B+: 88-89; B: 82-87; B-: 80-81; C+: 78-79; C: 72-77; C-: 70-71; D: 60-69; F: 0-59.

## **Week 1: Introduction**

### **Week 2: *"The end justifies the means"***

Weber, "What is a State"?

Merriam, "Hobbes' State of Nature Doctrine"

**Week 3: *"People try to be good, but not too good, and not quite all of the time"***

Rawls, "Law of Peoples"

Gurr, "Relative Deprivation and the Impetus to Violence"

**Week 4: *"I cannot tell a lie"***

"Letters of George Washington Bearing on the Negro"

Bemis, "Washington's Farewell Address"

Countryman, "Getting to know George Washington"

**Week 5: *"To the victors belong the spoils"***

Andrew Jackson's Inaugural Address

Greenstein, "Andrew Jackson, Force of Nature"

Cave, "Andrew Jackson and the Indian Removal Act"

**Week 6: *"Four score and seven years ago"***

Smith, "Abraham Lincoln: Realist"

Hudson, "Abraham Lincoln: An African-American Perspective"

Lindsay and Wellman, "Abraham Lincoln on Secession"

**Week 7: *"I welcome their hatred"***

Chin, "Japanese-American Internment"

"FDR's Social Vision"

Bowman, "FDR's Obituary"

**Week 8: *"The government is not the solution to our problems. The government is the problem"***

First and Second Inaugural

Heclo, "Reagan's Legacies"

"Racist Policies of Ronald Reagan"

**Week 9: *"In our time the weak are not taken into account, only the strong are"***

Ulam, "The War Against the Nation"

Ulam, "For Our Country, For Stalin"

**Week 10: *"I go the way Providence dictates with the assurance of a sleepwalker"***

Kater, "Hitler in Social Context"

Billson, "Inside Albert Speer"

Aly, "Nazi Socialism"

Grass, "How I Spent the War"

**Week 11: *"History will be kind to me for I intend to write it"***

Addison, "Three Careers of Winston Churchill"

Addison, "The Political Beliefs of Winston Churchill"

Grada, "Revisiting the Bengal Famine of 1943-4"

**Week 12: "All political power comes from a barrel of a gun"**

Schram, "Mao 100 Years On: The Legacy of a Ruler"

Dittmer, "The Legacy of Mao Zedong"

Bernstein, "Mao Zedong and the Famine of 1959-1960"

**Week 13: "Why would we want a world without Russia?"**

Herspring and Kipp, "Understanding the Elusive Mr. Putin"

Sakwa, "Putin's Leadership"

**Week 14: "Make America Great Again"**

West, "The Trump Era"

Margolies, "Joe Biden is a Racist Who Loves Police Brutality"

Kuo and Yee, "White Privilege, American Hegemony, and the Rise of China"