

Political Science 112 Fall Semester 2023 Clow Classroom S023 MWF 9:10—10:10 Credit Hours: 3.0	Department of Political Science Professor Mike Jasinski jasinskm@uwosh.edu Office: Sage Hall 4624 Office Hours: Mondays 10:20—11:20; Thursdays 10-12 Peer Mentor: Morgan Rau
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Power, Justice, and the State

“The End Justifies the Means”—Niccolo Macchiavelli

Catalogue 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.

Fall 2023 Course Description: The debate of whether the end justifies the means is implicit in nearly every decision made by government officials and agents. Decisions that will result in the loss of human lives, such as going to war or implementing the death penalty, naturally invoke that dilemma. But many other, lesser ones, do as well. This semester, we will place ourselves in the shoes of numerous US and world leaders who have had to make that decision, and decide for ourselves whether, in fact, the end justified the means used in pursuing it.

Prerequisites: None

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 21st 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 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.

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

- understand the subjective nature of “justice”
- be aware of the cost every exercise of state power entails
- understand the ethical and moral calculus of national governments and their citizens
- acquire an ability to evaluate government actions in terms of their benefits and harm
- acquire scholarly research skills
- discuss these issues with your peers in a group setting

--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 (eligible events will be announced in class). 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).

Assignments and Grading

--Grading: Your course grade will consist of three components: weekly quizzes (30% of final course grade), group class work (30%), and the group major writing assignment (40%, in two parts).

--Attendance: Highly encouraged! I will take attendance regularly, and while there is no attendance grade, your individual group work grade discussed below would suffer in the event of extensive unexcused absences.

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

--Weekly Quizzes: Every Monday there will be an 8-question quiz on the readings for that week. I will issue the study guide for each week the Friday before. The quizzes will be worth 30% of the final course grade. There are no make-ups, but I will drop the lowest two quiz grades.

The quizzes are meant to ensure you have a certain basic knowledge of facts relevant to the individual whose political record we'll discuss during that week. The other two assignments will help you achieve the Learning Outcomes of this course that are listed above.

--Group Class Work.

During the first week, I will divide you into groups. The ideal is 3 students per group, though groups of 2 or 4 are acceptable too, given the likelihood of adds and drops during the semester. Most of classroom time will consist of group work. This will also require some outside-of-classroom preparation. It's up to you to decide how you want to coordinate your internal group activities. You may use MS Teams, email, or the features of the Canvas course site to divide work and come up with ways to address each week's requirements.

Each Friday, I will give you a tasking to prepare for the next Monday. That tasking will then form the basis of the week's classroom activities.

Starting with Week 3, each group will have a two-fold task.

Part 1: The Docket. Assemble a list of the best, greatest accomplishments that the individual whom we are discussing that week can be credited with, as well as the worst ones. Consider the entirety of the political career, and consult sources other than the readings as well. All of this should be done even before you come to class on that week's Monday. Here, out-of-classroom communications among the group will be essential. Be sure to come up with at least five items for the "worst" and "best" list each since, once in class, each of the groups will place one accomplishment from each list on the board, in a random order. You cannot place an accomplishment on the board if another group has already placed it!

For each of the sets of policies, try to estimate the number of individuals affected by the policy, as well as the nature of benefit/harm, using Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. This means doing a short, 1-minute "elevator pitch" presentation on each of the policies that are put on the board.

For example, if we were looking at the career of Herbert Hoover, we'd quickly discover that he was responsible for the American Relief Administration that possibly saved millions of lives after World War I, the Hoover Dam which created thousands of jobs in the short term and provided electricity to the entire Southwest region, both of which address the most basic of human needs. Moreover, as President, he kept inflation and budget deficit low, which fall more under the "belonging/self-esteem" needs of the hierarchy of needs.

On the minus side, Hoover was one of the parties responsible for the onset of the Great Depression which unfortunately brought massive harm to the most of the US population as well as the populations of other countries, since the US stock market crash quickly became a world crisis that eventually brought the Nazis to power in Germany. He also ordered the dispersal of the Bonus Army, WW1 veterans who gathered in Washington to demand payment for their military service. After his presidency, Hoover favored policies of appeasement of Nazi Germany, opposed FDR's New Deal and Lend Lease, as well as the US-Soviet alliance during World War 2 that was essential to defeating the Axis.

Once we have done that, we move to **Part 2: The Devil's Advocate.** Could a case be made, in relation to each of the "worst" accomplishments, that they were instrumental in achieving one or more of the "best" accomplishments? Were they a means to an end? Or an end in itself?

This part will be done while in class. Each group will go through the entire list of the "worst" accomplishments on the board and evaluate them, one by one, in terms of a) was that "worst" accomplishment a means to achieving one or more of the "best" ones, and b) was the human cost of that "worst" accomplishment an unavoidable, necessary, and justifiable in achieving that "best" accomplishment?

To return to our Hoover example, I suspect we'd quickly agree the American Relief Administration, or possibly the Hoover Dam, were his greatest accomplishments, whereas the Great Depression was the worst. Now, can an argument be made that any good at all came out of the Great Depression? Not really—the price for achieving those balanced budgets and low inflation was entirely too great. Hoover's greatest accomplishments preceded his presidency

and were unrelated to the Great Depression. Nor did they eclipse the damage wrought by that economic crisis, which is why Hoover is absent from the pantheon of great presidents of the United States.

There will be no group assignments in Week 1. Week 2 group assignment will have a different format, since the material of that week is intended to provide you with theoretical tools needed to make the evaluations in Week 3 and onward.

Group work will be self-graded, using an honor system that I will explain in class. In order to get the maximum grade for this component, each group must report that it satisfactorily completed their task for that day of class. Each member of the group will receive the same group work grade. However, it is possible that individual group members may receive a lower grade if there are extensive unexcused absences or evidence of absence of participation in group activities.

--Group Major Writing Assignment: Annotated Bibliography and Literature Review:

Whereas the group class assignments are intended to elicit your interpretation of exercises of state power, the major writing assignment is to help you acquire skills in evaluating how these exercises were judged by others. This, too, you will perform as a group.

The task here is relatively simple. If you follow instructions below step by step (and keep me and/or the Peer Mentor in the loop when you run into a wall).

Step 1: Pick an action by a national government. It should be a distinctive, “the buck stops here” action performed or allowed to be performed by a national chief executive, possibly with support from the national legislature in cases of democracies. Ideally, the action should be at least moderately controversial. Do not pick actions that are universally held to be good (for example, building hospitals and schools) or bad (for example, genocide) because there is no point of conducting that kind of review.

This still leaves you with a lot of choices to make. National governments decide whether to wage war or appease. To raise or lower taxes. To shift burden of taxation from one demographic to another. To allow abortion or not allow it. To allow LGBT+ individuals to serve in the military or not allow it. To allow same-sex marriage or not allow it. To allow large numbers of immigrants and refugees to come into the country or not allow it. The list is almost limitless, but be sure to pick a fairly major action that has been the subject of extensive discussion, debate, and controversy. Obscure government actions rarely yield much analytical or scholarly literature.

All political outcomes are the product of conscious decisions by individuals who believed that particular exercise of state power advanced the cause of justice—as they understood it, in their capacity as rational individuals pursuing their self-interest.

But how was that pursuit of rational self-interest interpreted by others? This gets us to...

Step 2: Finding scholarly literature discussing that specific action! Well, what is “literature”, you may ask?

Books, articles in scholarly journals held by the Polk Library, other similar materials. We will have two Polk Library visits with the specific purpose of helping you find the relevant literature on the topic you have picked. Ideally, you should pick a fairly major governmental decision that was and possibly still is the subject of debate. Otherwise it will be difficult for you to find relevant sources.

In order to locate relevant sources prior to our inevitable Polk Library visits, you can perform keyword searches for the action you are seeking to analyze on the Polk Library web site. You can also look for books and articles on specific politicians who were associated with that action.

I will stop here and note that “scholarly sources”, a.k.a., “literature”, do not include Wikipedia, history.com, cnn.com, the New York Times, etc., etc., etc.

Once your group has assembled at least 10 sources that discuss the specific governmental action you have chosen, you may proceed to the first part of the Major Writing Assignment.

Part 1: Annotated Bibliography. This is simply (?) a (believe it or not) a bibliography (!) that discusses, article by article, book by book, that governmental action and provides an assessment. Keep in mind that, with book sources you don’t have to read the entire book. Most books have an Index in the back which lists key names and terms mentioned within. That governmental action you research ought to be mentioned in the Index—if it isn’t, that book does not belong in your bibliography.

And if it does contain references to the action you are seeking to analyze, all you need to read is the pages and passages where that governmental action is referenced.

This part is worth 20% of the final course grade. The grade depends on the following factors:

- Number of sources. Six (6) will earn you an A grade, number below that will be graded accordingly lower. Sources ought to be scholarly in nature, i.e., articles and book chapters, not news outlets or internet pages.
- Establish whether or not the source views that particular event in a positive, negative, or neutral light.
- Describe in detail the listed reasons for the above evaluation.
- Cite all sources appropriately.
- Write it in a clear language free of errors.

At the end of the document your group should include a description of how the work was divided among the group members. Every member of the group will receive the same grade provided all group members are satisfied everyone pulled their weight in this effort. Feel free to contact me if there are issues with division of labor.

Each of the above five categories is graded as follows: A (-0 points), B (-3) C (-5) D (-7) F (-10)

Part 2: Literature Review. This is the next step, and worth 20% of the final course grade. You will integrate the individual sources you have located into a comprehensive review that will establish a) whether or not that action is viewed in a predominantly positive or negative light, b) reasons for these conflicting assessments, and c) how that evaluation has changed over time.

--Number of sources. 6 or more sources will earn you an A grade. These are the same sources that you have located for your annotated bibliography.

--Describe the overall state of scholarship of that event, whether it's predominantly positive, negative, or neutral/split, and reasons cited in support of that evaluation.

--Discuss the evolution of assessments over time. Has this action "aged" well? Did the descriptions become more positive or negative over time? If so, why?

--Cite all sources appropriately.

--Write it in a clear language free of errors.

At the end of the document your group should include a description of how the work was divided among the group members. Every member of the group will receive the same grade provided all group members are satisfied everyone pulled their weight in this effort. Feel free to contact me if there are issues with division of labor.

Each of the above five categories is graded as follows: A (-0 points), B (-3) C (-5) D (-7) F (-10)

--**Campus Activities:** You are required to attend five events during the semester, and provide short write-ups to the appropriate Canvas drop-box. You will lose 2 points from the final course grade for each of the five activities short of the total.

--**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 9/6 9/8: Introduction

Week 2, 9/11 9/13 9/15 : Human Needs: "The end justifies the means"
"Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs"

Week 3 9/18 9/20 9/22 George Washington: "I cannot tell a lie"
Countryman, "Getting to know George Washington"

Week 4 9/25 9/27 9/29 Andrew Jackson: "To the victors belong the spoils"
Greenstein, "Andrew Jackson, Force of Nature"
Cave, "Andrew Jackson and the Indian Removal Act"

Week 5 10/2 10/4 10/6 Abraham Lincoln: "Four score and seven years ago"

Smith, "Abraham Lincoln: Realist"

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

UARC Advisor visit Friday, October 6

Week 6 10/9 10/11 10/13 FDR: "I welcome their hatred"

"FDR's Social Vision"

Dallek, "FDR as World Leader"

Week 7 10/16 10/18 10/20: George W. Bush: "You are either with us or against us in the war against terror."

Gaddis, "A Grand Strategy of Transformation"

Leffler, "Bush's Foreign Policy"

Week 8 M 10/23 10/25 10/27: Joseph Stalin: "In our time the weak are not taken into account, only the strong are"

Ulam, "The War Against the Nation"

Glantz, "The Parameters of the Soviet-German War"

Week 9 10/30 11/1 11/3: Adolf Hitler: "I go the way Providence dictates with the assurance of a sleepwalker"

Aly, "Nazi Socialism"

Grass, "How I Spent the War"

Annotated Bibliography Due Friday, 11/3

Week 10 11/6 11/8 11/10: Winston Churchill: "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"

Week 11 11/13 11/15 11/17 11/20: Mao Zedong: "All political power comes from a barrel of a gun"

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

Week 12 11/27 11/29 12/1: Fidel Castro: "Capitalism has neither the capacity, nor the morality, nor the ethics, to solve the problem of poverty."

Lemass, "Fidel Castro's Cuba"

Week 13 12/4 12/6 12/8: Augusto Pinochet: "Everything I did, all of my actions, all of the problems I had, I dedicate to God and Chile, because I kept Chile from becoming Communist."

Dorfman, "Exorcising Pinochet"
Constable, "Pinochet's Grip on Chile"

Week 14 12/11 12/13 12/15: Vladimir Putin: "Why would we want a world without Russia?"
Sakwa, "Putin's Leadership"

Literature Review Due Friday, 12/15

Additional Course Information

Early Alert: A few weeks into the semester your instructors will send you an early alert message if they think that you are struggling with class. This message will let you know whether your instructors have noticed any academic problems, attendance problems, or both. When you get such a message it is a chance to address a problem and improve on your work. We suggest meeting with your instructor.

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: STUDENT RIGHT TO KNOW ACT (1990) Students are advised to see the following URL for disclosures about essential consumer protection items required by the Student Right to Know Act of 1990: <https://uwosh.edu/financialaid/consumer-information/>

Disabilities Policy: It is university policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students who have documented disabilities that may affect their ability to participate in course activities or to meet course requirements. Please contact your instructor as soon as possible to discuss any accommodations you might need and provide appropriate documentation.

Grievance Procedure: 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. Tracy Slagter. She can be reached at slagtert@uwosh.edu. Should she be unable to resolve your concerns, she 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. If you have questions about this requirement, your course schedule, possible internships, or career preparation please reach out to your faculty adviser. Students are encouraged to meet with their faculty advisers at least once per year. If you are unsure who your adviser is, you can check TitanWeb or email Ms. Angelee Hammond at hammond@uwosh.edu.