



W\_JSM\_104 | Fall 2021, Period 2

## Political Science: State, Power, Conflict

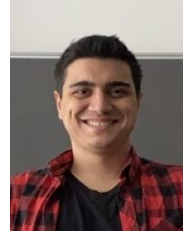
Monday/Thursday, 11:00-12:30h, HG-05A00/ Zoom



### Course coordinator

Wynand Kastart  
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### Seminar instructor

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*Note:* The contents of this syllabus may be subject to changes throughout the semester, which are announced in advance (i.e., before they come into effect). The lectures are held on campus and are live-streamed via Zoom. The seminars take place on campus. The seminars that are associated with Seminar Group 5 are also held via Zoom. The corresponding Zoom links are posted to Canvas. All Zoom meetings can only be accessed with your official VU Zoom account. The lectures are delivered by Wynand Kastart; the seminars are taught by Barış Ertürk. Students should contact these individuals by e-mail only through their official VU e-mail account.

**Course Description:** Democracy and the resolution of political conflict are two desirable outcomes, yet they often occur in each other's absence. Drawing insights from recent and established research within the fields of Comparative Politics and International Relations, this course explores the complex, multifaceted relationship between democracy and conflict resolution from a political science perspective. It does so by first laying out the conceptual groundwork for examining both the conceptual overlap between democracy and conflict resolution, and the causal and empirical links that connect the two (Part I). Next, this course investigates how political conflict is resolved inside democratic institutions, as well as the conditions under which conflict induces the erosion and breakdown of these channels of political influence and control (Part II). It then examines whether and how democracy shapes the manifestations of political conflict that operate outside political institutions, with a particular focus on political violence (Part III).

**Course Objectives:** At the end of the course, students should be able to: outline key issues from two major subfields of political science: Comparative Politics and International Relations; define key concepts of political science and use them in a consistent and rigorous manner; recognize and use a selection of key theories in political science and the way in which they offer competing explanations of political events; analyze political issues in a well-informed and structured manner; and possess a more developed understanding of modern-day democratic politics.

### Required Texts:

- Levitsky, Steven and Daniel Ziblatt (2018), *How Democracies Die*, New York, N.Y.: Crown.
- Mair, Peter (2013), *Ruling the Void: The Hollowing of Western Democracy*, New York, N.Y.: Verso Books.
- Przeworski, Adam (2019), *Crises of Democracy*, New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press.

## Course Requirements (percentages indicate weights for the final score):

<b>Seminar Attendance and Participation</b>	<b>0%</b>
Attend the seminars and complete the seminar assignments.	
<b>Assignments (four in total; 10% each)</b>	<b>40%</b>
Submit a total of four assignments (due on Canvas):	
#1 due on Monday (9:00h) of Week 46 (November 15 <sup>th</sup> ).	
#2 due on Monday (9:00h) of Week 48 (November 29 <sup>th</sup> ).	
#3 due on Monday (9:00h) of Week 49 (December 6 <sup>th</sup> ).	
#4 due on Monday (9:00h) of Week 50 (December 13 <sup>th</sup> ).	
<b>Midterm Exam</b>	<b>25%</b>
Week 47, Monday, November 22 <sup>nd</sup> , 15:30-17:45h, Canvas.	
<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>35%</b>
Week 50, Monday, December 20 <sup>th</sup> , 8:30-11:15h, Canvas.	

### Seminar Attendance and Participation

Seminar attendance is mandatory. Seminars take place twice a week, on the dates listed in the course outline. The seminars are held in HG-04A36 (Rawls Room). Each student is assigned to a fixed Seminar Group. The seminar meetings that correspond to Seminar Group 5 also take place via Zoom. Depending on the Seminar Group, the times of the seminars are as follows:

Seminar Group	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday
Seminar Group 1	n.a.	13:30-15:00h	n.a.	9:00-10:30h
Seminar Group 2	n.a.	11:00-12:30h	n.a.	13:30-15:00h
Seminar Group 3	13:30-15:00h	n.a.	13:30-15:00h	n.a.
Seminar Group 4	15:30-17:00h	n.a.	15:30-17:00h	n.a.
Seminar Group 5	n.a.	9:00-10:30h	n.a.	11:00-12:30h

Online attendance of the seminar meetings of Seminar Group 5 only counts towards the seminar attendance score if agreed in advance by Barış Ertürk ([y.b.erturk@vu.nl](mailto:y.b.erturk@vu.nl)). Students should submit requests for excused absences to Marija Vrbancić ([m.vrbancic@vu.nl](mailto:m.vrbancic@vu.nl)). You cannot pass the course without taking the Resit Exam unless you have attended at least 75% of the seminars. To assess seminar participation, there will be four seminar assignments. These assignments are completed during seminars and take the form of peer reviews. Each peer review revolves around the questions that appear on one of the four regular assignments, as indicated in the course outline. Students are required to submit the work that is to be reviewed before the start of the peer review, on the due dates and times listed in the course outline. You cannot pass the course without submitting the Resit Assignment unless you have passed all seminar assignments.

### Assignments

Students are required to submit four assignments, which are due on Canvas on the dates listed above. Students should complete these assignments on their own. Late assignments are heavily penalized. Assignments are posted on Canvas. Each assignment is worth 10% of the final score.

### Midterm and Final Exams

The Midterm Exam covers the assigned readings and lectures from Weeks 44-6. The Final Exam covers the material from Weeks 44-9, except Tilly (1990, pp. 1–5, 11–37). The Midterm Exam and Final Exam are worth 25% and 35% of the final score, respectively. Both exams are administered via Canvas on the dates and times listed above.

## Grading Policies

Your final score can range from 0 to 100 points (excluding extra credit). After adding extra credit, and together with the remaining grading policies detailed below, your final score determines your final grade, which is assigned on the basis of the following grade distribution:

$\geq 90.00$ :	10	70.00-72.99:	7.0	50.00-52.99:	4.0
87.00-89.99:	9.5	67.00-69.99:	6.5	47.00-49.99:	3.5
83.00-86.99:	9.0	63.00-66.99:	6.0	43.00-46.99:	3.0
80.00-82.99:	8.5	60.00-62.99:	5.5	40.00-42.99:	2.5
77.00-79.99:	8.0	57.00-59.99:	5.0	37.00-39.99:	2.0
73.00-76.99:	7.5	53.00-56.99:	4.5	$\leq 36.99$ :	1.5

## Academic Integrity

Students at VU are expected to adhere to the standards and policies detailed in the *Student Charter* (available online at <https://vu.nl/en/education/more-about/important-regulations>). When you submit an assignment with your name on it, you are signifying that the work contained therein is yours, unless otherwise cited or referenced. Any ideas or materials taken from another source for either written or oral use must be fully acknowledged. If you are unsure about the expectations for completing an assignment or taking a test or exam, be sure to seek clarification beforehand. All suspected violations of the Charter are handled according to University policies. Sanctions for academic misconduct may include a failing grade on the assignment, reduction in your final course grade, and a failing grade in the course, among other possibilities, and must include a report to the Dean, who may impose additional disciplinary sanctions.

### Re: Note Selling

Selling a faculty member's class notes individually or on behalf of commercial services using VU e-mail or Canvas violates both VU information technology and VU intellectual property policy. Violations of this policy are considered violations of the *Student Charter* and are reported to the Dean as a violation of course rules (academic misconduct).

### Notifications via Canvas

The default notification settings for Canvas can be found online at <https://sites.google.com/vu.nl/canvasstudentguide/getting-started-with-canvas>. You can customize these settings, but note that customizations apply to all courses in which you are enrolled; there is no way to have messages forwarded for one course, but not for others. By default, you receive messages ("conversations") and announcements forwarded to your VU e-mail inbox. If you modify this default setting, it is your responsibility to check Canvas regularly for communications.

## Examination Policies

Assignments and exams are graded within ten working days. Students may appeal final grades with the Examination Board within six weeks of the posting of grades. For at least twenty working days after the announcement of exam results, students can request access to the assessed work and the corresponding grading rubric. Student may submit a reassessment request to the examiner. A reassessment does not affect the timetable for lodging an appeal.

## Resit Policies

Irrespective of your final course grade, you can take an integrated Resit Exam, which covers all readings and lectures from Weeks 44-9. The most recent grade applies. Each failed seminar assignment can be retaken by reviewing two regular assignments submitted by your peers, which is part of the Resit Assignment (see more below). The corresponding due dates are listed in the course outline.

## Course Outline

The column on the right reports the workload in hours for each component, which is aggregated at the end of the course outline. Reading time is based on reading on average six pages per hour.

Week	Topics and Readings	Hours
	<b>Part I: State, Power, Conflict</b>	
	<b>1 European State Formation</b>	
Week 44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lecture:</b> Monday, November 1<sup>st</sup> <i>Readings:</i> Tilly (1990, pp. 1-5, 11-37)</li> <li>• <b>Seminar:</b> Tuesday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> or Wednesday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> <i>Topic:</i> Course Requirements</li> </ul>	1.5 5.3 1.5
	<b>2 Democracy and the State</b>	
Week 44	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lecture:</b> Thursday, November 4<sup>th</sup> <i>Readings:</i> Dahl (1973, Chapter 1), Fukuyama (2004), and Mair (2013, Introduction)</li> <li>• <b>Seminar:</b> Thursday, November 4<sup>th</sup> or Friday, November 5<sup>th</sup> <i>Topic:</i> How to Write for Assignment and Exam Questions</li> </ul>	1.5 7.7 1.5
	<b>3 Political Power</b>	
Week 45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lecture:</b> Monday, November 8<sup>th</sup> <i>Readings:</i> instructor's notes (wkastart-DT-Masterfile-v06-Chapter-03.pdf, pp. 74-97)</li> <li>• <b>Seminar:</b> Tuesday, November 9<sup>th</sup> or Wednesday, November 10<sup>th</sup> <i>Peer Review 1:</i> Assignment 1 (<i>Answers to Peer Review 1 are to be submitted via Canvas no later than Tuesday, November 9<sup>th</sup>, 9:00h.</i>)</li> </ul>	1.5 4.0 1.5
	<b>4 Political Conflict</b>	
Week 45	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lecture:</b> Thursday, November 11<sup>th</sup> <i>Readings:</i> Levitsky and Ziblatt (2018, Introduction and Chapter 1) and Przeworski (2019, Chapter 9)</li> <li>• <b>Seminar:</b> Thursday, November 11<sup>th</sup> or Friday, November 12<sup>th</sup> <i>Topic:</i> Feedforward on Assignment 2</li> </ul>	1.5 9.8 1.5
	<b>Part II: Political Conflict inside Democratic Institutions</b>	
	<b>5 Depoliticization from Below</b>	
Week 46	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lecture:</b> Monday, November 15<sup>th</sup> <i>Readings:</i> Mair (2013, Chapter 1) and Przeworski (2019, Chapter 5) <i>Assignment 1 is to be submitted via Canvas no later than 9:00h.</i></li> <li>• <b>Seminar:</b> Tuesday, November 16<sup>th</sup> or Wednesday, November 17<sup>th</sup> <i>Peer Review 2:</i> Assignment 2 (<i>Answers to Peer Review 2 are to be submitted via Canvas no later than Tuesday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 9:00h.</i>)</li> </ul>	1.5 8.0 2.5 1.5

(Course outline continued on the next page.)

Course outline (continued from the previous page):

Week	Topics and Readings	Hours
Week 46	<p><b>6 Depoliticization from Above</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lecture:</b> Thursday, November 18<sup>th</sup> <i>Readings:</i> Mair (2013, Chapters 2-3)</li> <li>• <b>Seminar:</b> Thursday, November 18<sup>th</sup> or Friday, November 19<sup>th</sup> <i>Topic:</i> Feedback on Assignment 1</li> </ul>	<p>1.5 9.0 1.5</p>
Week 47	<p><b>7 Democratic Norms</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lecture:</b> Monday, November 22<sup>nd</sup> <i>Readings:</i> Levitsky and Ziblatt (2018, Chapters 5-6)</li> <li>• <b>Midterm Exam:</b> Monday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>, 15:30-17:45h, Canvas <i>Material covered:</i> All readings and lectures from Weeks 44-6.</li> <li>• <b>Seminar:</b> Tuesday, November 23<sup>rd</sup> or Wednesday, November 24<sup>th</sup> <i>Topic:</i> Feedforward on Assignment 3</li> </ul>	<p>1.5 8.0 2.25 8.0 1.5</p>
Week 47	<p><b>8 The Erosion of Democracy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lecture:</b> Thursday, November 25<sup>th</sup> <i>Readings:</i> Levitsky and Ziblatt (2018, Chapters 4, 7–8) and Przeworski (2019, Chapter 10)</li> <li>• <b>Seminar:</b> Thursday, November 25<sup>th</sup> or Friday, November 26<sup>th</sup> <i>Peer Review 3: Assignment 3 (Answers to Peer Review 3 are to be submitted via Canvas no later than Thursday, November 25<sup>th</sup>, 9:00h.)</i></li> </ul>	<p>1.5 17.3 1.5</p>
Week 48	<p><b>9 The Breakdown of Democracy</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lecture:</b> Monday, November 29<sup>th</sup> <i>Readings:</i> Przeworski (2019, Chapters 1-4) <i>Assignment 2 is to be submitted via Canvas no later than 9:00h.</i></li> <li>• <b>Seminar:</b> Tuesday, November 30<sup>th</sup> or Wednesday, December 1<sup>st</sup> <i>Topic:</i> Feedback on Midterm Exam</li> </ul>	<p>1.5 12.7 2.5 1.5</p>
<b>Part III: Democracy and Political Violence</b>		
Week 48	<p><b>10 Democracy and Civil Peace</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lecture:</b> Thursday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> <i>Readings:</i> instructor's notes (wkastart-DT-Masterfile-v06-Chapter-02.pdf)</li> <li>• <b>Seminar:</b> Thursday, December 2<sup>nd</sup> or Friday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> <i>Topic:</i> Feedback on Assignment 2; Feedforward on Assignment 4</li> </ul>	<p>1.5 5.2 1.5</p>

(Course outline continued on the next page.)

Course outline (continued from the previous page):

Week	Topics and Readings	Hours
Week 49	<p><b>11 Democracy and State Repression</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lecture:</b> Monday, December 6<sup>th</sup> <i>Readings:</i> Davenport (2007, Chapters 1-2) <i>Assignment 3 is to be submitted via Canvas no later than 9:00h.</i></li> <li>• <b>Seminar:</b> Tuesday, December 7<sup>th</sup> or Wednesday, December 8<sup>th</sup> <i>Peer Review 4: Assignment 4 (Answers to Peer Review 4 are to be submitted via Canvas no later than Tuesday, December 7<sup>th</sup>, 9:00h.)</i></li> </ul>	<p>1.5 7.0 2.5 1.5</p>
Week 49	<p><b>12 The Democratic Peace</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lecture:</b> Thursday, December 9<sup>th</sup> <i>Readings:</i> Levy and Thompson (2010, pp. 104–17)</li> <li>• <b>Seminar:</b> Thursday, December 9<sup>th</sup> or Friday, December 10<sup>th</sup> <i>Topic:</i> Feedback on Assignment 3</li> </ul>	<p>1.5 2.3 1.5</p>
Week 50	<p><b>Week Before Finals Week:</b> No lectures or seminars are scheduled.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Assignment 4:</b> Monday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, 9:00h. <i>Assignment 4 is to be submitted via Canvas no later than 9:00h.</i></li> </ul>	<p>2.5</p>
Week 51	<p><b>Finals Week</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Final Exam:</b> Monday, December 20<sup>th</sup>, 8:30-11:15h, Canvas <i>Material covered:</i> All readings and lectures from Weeks 44-9, except Tilly (1990, pp. 1–5, 11–37).</li> </ul>	<p>2.75 12</p>
Week 12	<p><b>Resit Week</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Resit Exam:</b> Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 8:30-11:15h, Canvas <i>Material covered:</i> All readings and lectures from Weeks 44-9.</li> <li>• <b>Resit Assignment:</b> Wednesday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>, 8:30h, Canvas <i>Instructions:</i> For each failed seminar assignment, submit feedback on two regular assignments submitted by your peers. The course coordinator will send you the materials for these reviews.</li> </ul>	
	<p><b>Workload:</b> The course workload amounts to approximately 168 hours of work, corresponds to 6 ECTS (6 × 28 hours) and is composed as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Lectures:</b> 12 × 1.5 = 18 hrs.</li> <li>• <b>Seminars:</b> 12 × 1.5 = 18 hrs.</li> <li>• <b>Readings:</b> 578 ÷ 6 = 96 hrs.</li> <li>• <b>Assignments:</b> 4 × 2.5 = 10 hrs.</li> <li>• <b>Exams:</b> (8 + 2.25) + (12 + 2.75) = 25 hrs.</li> <li>• <b>Total:</b> 18 + 18 + 96 + 10 + 25 = 167 hrs.</li> </ul>	

**A note about the list of references:** The list of references presented below is primarily meant as a resource for you to use if you'd like to follow up on a given topic. Please note that students are only required to read the material indicated in the course outline. For instance, you are only required to read Chapter 1 of Dahl (1973), not the whole book.

## List of References

- Dahl, Robert Alan (1973), *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*, New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
- Davenport, Christian (2007), *State Repression and the Domestic Democratic Peace*, New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press.
- Fukuyama, Francis (2004), "The Imperative of State-building", *Journal of Democracy* 15 (2), pp. 17-31, DOI: 10.1353/jod.2004.0026.
- Levitsky, Steven and Daniel Ziblatt (2018), *How Democracies Die*, New York, N.Y.: Crown.
- Levy, Jack S. and William R. Thompson (2010), *Causes of War*, Hoboken, N.J.: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Mair, Peter (2013), *Ruling the Void: The Hollowing of Western Democracy*, New York, N.Y.: Verso Books.
- Przeworski, Adam (2019), *Crises of Democracy*, New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press.
- Tilly, Charles (1990), *Coercion, Capital, and European States, AD 990-1992*, Oxford, UK: Wiley-Blackwell.

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