This course focuses on the core elements of modernity: the transitions from “traditional” to “modern” political identities, from subsistence production to market-oriented production through capitalism or socialism, and from less to more complex forms of political authority under democracy or dictatorship. Until developing this course I often found myself referring in other undergraduate courses to these themes, and to classic books on them, without ever assigning the classics themselves. That is why I developed this course: to introduce advanced undergraduates in political science to the development of the central themes in comparative politics. That is the first goal of the class. As such, you should have taken at least CPO 2001 before this course; it is useful but not necessary to have also taken POT 2001 and at least one 3- or 4000 level course in comparative politics. We will spend the first third or so of the semester reading some classic social theory: the writings of Karl Marx, Max Weber, and Emile Durkheim. These three sociologists of the 19th and early 20th centuries are the foundation for nearly everything we know about comparative politics. Although the three take often wildly different approaches to studying what it means to become “modern,” all of them were centrally concerned with the contradictions between the prosperity that modernity brings and the unintended problems it creates. A note for those who have read these authors in POT 2001 or other theory courses: in this class we will mostly be discussing the empirical implications of the work of Marx, Weber and Durkheim. That is, rather than asking “what do each of them think the world SHOULD look like,” we will ask, “how do each of them think the world ACTUALLY works, and how would we know if they are right or not?”

The second goal of the course is to trace the evolution of comparative political science in studying these important phenomena through three major lenses. Many of the most influential books in comparative politics over the last 50 years or so draw heavily on one or more of the “big 3” social theorists. Moreover, as you will see contemporary scholars routinely find themselves alienated from their own favorite classic theorists as a result of too much disconfirming evidence—so keep your eyes open when we read Benedict Anderson, Barrington Moore, Andreas Wimmer, and Peter Evans, among others.

A note on the structure of the class: I envision it as something like a “capstone seminar” that many colleges and universities offer to seniors. This means first that discussion in class of the readings is a key, perhaps the most important, part of the course. If you are not able and willing to engage verbally these readings and your classmates and me every day, this is not the class for you. I want to be very up front about that: you wouldn’t turn in a research paper consisting of blank pages, so don’t “turn in” participation consisting of silence. This portion of the grade will be measured as rigorously as the writing assignments. Beyond three allowed absences, final grades will be reduced by 3 points (out of the total of 100) for each additional unexcused absence.
You will see throughout the semester that periodic days will have no assigned readings. These are to be solely for synthesizing the course materials: i.e. these are intense discussion days. **Attendance is MANDATORY for these course meetings, and at each of them you will each come to class with three questions for discussion.**

The writing assignments: you will write two short essays (around 1500 words, or 6-8 pages) during the semester, as well as a take-home final exam. These will be due on the dates listed below, with no exceptions. Late assignments earn zeroes.

Papers and the final exam will be due in class or to my office in hard copy as well as submitted by the deadline to the course page at turnitin.com. The class id is 4210756 and the password is modern.

Any instances of plagiarism, cheating or other violations of the academic portions of the UF Student Honor Code will elicit a failing grade of “E” for the entire course and a report to the Judicial Affairs Office at UF.

The grade distribution is as follows:

- Participation: 20%
- First paper: 20%
- Second paper: 25%
- Final take-home exam: 35%

List of required books:

- *Nationalist Exclusion and Ethnic Conflict: Shadows of Modernity*, by Andreas Wimmer (paperback)
- *Imagined Communities* by Benedict Anderson
- *Embedded Autonomy* by Peter Evans

All of these books are available at Orange and Blue Textbooks. If you prefer to buy them online (and I would bet you can find them for considerably less that way), they are all available at Amazon (no endorsement implied, I just found them all there).

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**Schedule of Readings and Assignments**
Note: Please bring all course readings with you to class. We will be using them every day.

August 22 and 24: Course Introduction: What are we up to here? And, What is Modernity? Classic Approaches.

Great Social Theorists I: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels


August 31 and September 2: No class. I will be in Seattle at the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association, thinking day and night about modernity.

September 5: No class. Labor Day. Pay homage to Marx: think about the working men and women out there, and inexplicably do it while grilling burgers and hot dogs.

Great Social Theorists II: Max Weber

September 7: Part IV in Calhoun et al (pp. 203-46)

September 9: pp. 247-75 in Calhoun et al.


September 16: Discussion Day.

Great Social Theorists III: Emile Durkheim

September 19: pp. 131-57 in Calhoun et al.

September 21: pp. 158-80 in Calhoun et al.

September 26 and 28: Documentary film on anomie, alienation and the iron cage. Discussion to follow on 9/28.

September 30: Discussion Day. First paper due by hard copy at the start of class and to turnitin.com by 11:45 am.

**Modernization Theory: Durkheimian Views of Social Evolution.**

Daniel Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society*, Chapters I and II. To be distributed.


October 7: No class: Homecoming. Go, Gators.

**Two contemporary takes on nationalism.**


October 12: Anderson, Chapters 5-7.

October 14: Anderson, 8-11.


October 19: Wimmer, chapters 4-5.

October 21: Wimmer, chapters 6-8.

October 24: Discussion Day.

**Regime Types as Routes to Modernity: Barrington Moore’s *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy*.**

October 26: Moore, Chapters I and III.

October 28: Moore, Chapters IV and VI.

October 31: Moore, Chapters VII-IX.

**Contemporary Marxian Approaches to Global Development**


November 11: No class: Veteran’s Day.


**Contemporary Weberian Takes on Political Power and Economic Development.**

November 16: Discussion Day.


November 21: Joel Migdal, Chapter 2 and Chapter 1 (in that order) of State in Society: Studying How States and Societies Transform and Constitute One Another. To be distributed.

November 23 and 25: No class. Thanksgiving Break.

November 28: Peter Evans, Embedded Autonomy. Read Chapters 1-2.

November 30: Embedded Autonomy, chapters 3-4.

December 2: Embedded Autonomy, remainder.

December 5: Discussion Day.

December 7: Course Conclusion. Take-home exam distributed.
December 12: Take-home exam due by 11 am, no exceptions to my office (002 Anderson) and by 11 am at turnitin.com.