

Spring 2022  
GOV 355M, #37975  
classroom: MEZ 1.216  
Tues., Thurs. 9:30am-11:00am

Professor Jason Brownlee  
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## The Political Economy of Repression

This course examines how and why **states use violence (repression)** against other countries or their own populations. Key questions we consider: Do military-industrial profiteers or energy executives push the United States into armed conflicts overseas? Do foreign aid and weapons sales play a critical role in maintaining dictatorships in the developing world? Under what conditions have mass movements succeeded in curbing repression and restraining the state?

We will seek answers to these question through a range of approaches, including **political economy**. Political economy carries several potential meanings. In this course political economy means giving attention to how the distribution of material resources (money, goods) can affect outcomes of interest, including individual and collective human action. Distinct from some other courses in political science, this class gives particular attention to political economy, not because it will necessarily answer all of our questions (it won't), but because it offers significant analytical, and often untapped, leverage.

Tying together the above points, the subject of this course, the political economy of repression, is **the study of how the allocation of money and goods shapes state violence**. Students will critically assess treatments of the subject through close readings, structured writing assignments, and a combination of impromptu and prepared oral presentations on the subject. No prior knowledge of world history, particular countries, or US politics is required.

This course carries the **Writing** Flag. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline.

## Readings

One **course packet**, available for purchase at Jenn's Copy and Binding (2518 Guadalupe), will provide all or nearly all of the required reading starting in Week 3. (For weeks 1 and 2, students will be asked to print texts from Canvas.) Students should expect to read and study roughly 60 book or article pages (roughly 20,000 words) per week, spending an average of 4-6 hours work outside of class. Class meetings are about one-third of the time commitment needed for satisfactory performance. If you do not have that kind of time for this course, I encourage you to select another class or choose another semester to take this class. Students should acquire a notebook and writing utensils, such as a decent pen, for in-class writing assignments. Paper copies of the course texts are needed for class discussion.

## Grading policy

The final grade will come from in-class oral and written work, plus writing, reading, and study outside of class. *The focus is on careful treatment of course materials and mainstream media sources, not intensive independent research.*

- 1) **readiness** for lectures, student-driven discussion, and in-class activities (20%, each class of ready attendance, including on-camera Zoom participation, earns a point, maximum 20 points);
- 2) two short **discussion papers** (1-2 pages, max. 600 words) (5% each, total of 10%);
- 3) a **midterm paper** with opportunity for revision (3-5 pages, max. 1500 words) (15%);
- 4) a solo-authored **debate reflection paper** (2-3 pages, max. 900 words) (10%) and group participation during in-class **team debates** (5%);
- 5) a **solo or partnered media critique** (3-5 pages, max. 1500 words) (15%) and in-class **presentation** (10%);
- 6) an overview, **short-answer exam** at the end of the course (15%).
- 7) opportunity for 1-3 additional points from extra-credit comprehension quizzes.

### 1) Readiness (20%)

Readiness begins with students coming to class on-time (and on-camera in Zoom) for a close discussion of the material. Students are encouraged to take notes by hand and ask questions about any points that are unclear. Readiness also includes being able to address (orally or in writing) the following items on each week's readings:

1. What is the author's argument in your own words?
2. What does the author provide that sounds new about foreign intervention?
3. What is a question you have about the reading and on which you would like to hear your classmates' thoughts?

NOTE: This is a participation-heavy class that requires students to attend actively. Students who do not think they are prepared to show up and engage consistently are encouraged to seek a course that does not require participation.

For students who are generally able to engage, there is no penalty for missing a specific class. Credit for ready attendance begins with the first class in which the student participates. It then increases, by one point, for each day of ready attendance beyond that day, up to a maximum of 20 points. This means, a well-prepared student, even if they missed one or two classes (for whatever reason), would max out their readiness and attendance grade (achieve a full 20/20) after twenty class days, approximately the end of Week 11.

Regarding excused absences (including medical emergencies, athletic events, and religious holidays). A student with excused absences does not need to take any action, unless they think the excused absences would prevent them from having twenty ready-attendance days. Anyone

who would like a university-documented excused absence to count as a ready attendance day may submit an alternate written assignment on that week's readings. The paper will count toward credit in this category.

## **2) Discussion papers (10% total)**

Our discussions on Tuesdays constitute the driving force of the class. (Thursdays are for continuing discussion and for previewing the next week's material.) Although I will facilitate discussion, I prefer you, the students, speak the most, articulate your own ideas, and respond to each other.

Discussions will be structured around ideas raised by students in their assigned discussion papers. During weeks 2-8, 10-12, students will submit 300-600-word (1-2-page) reflections discussing their thoughts about the reading for that week. (Students will alternate weeks based on five assigned groups.) Papers will be due by electronic submission **on Canvas by 11:59pm on the prior Sunday. For example, the paper for Week 3 is due by the end of Sunday, January 30.**

Discussion papers should resemble the style of a book review, but they can be less formal. Each paper should clearly address the following items:

1. [The what] What is the author's thesis? Summarize the author's argument and evidence as it relates to the course topic.
2. [The so-what] Why does this reading matter? What does the author say about the political economy of repression that makes the text worth reading?
3. [The am-I-convinced] What is your critical assessment of the reading(s)? Is it persuasive or informative? Why or why not?
4. [The questions] Present at least two questions on the readings that you think would be worth discussing in class.

Discussion papers will be graded on a 0-5 scale based on I. Clarity of prose: Is the paper easy to read and understand? II. Grasp of material: Does the paper show that the student has read the texts? III. Critique: Has the student reached his/her/their own assessments about the authors' arguments?

**5 – Excellent.** The discussion paper was submitted on-time. It reads well and indicates a serious attempt to engage the authors' ideas.

**4 – Very good.** The discussion paper generally conforms to the instructions and reflects serious work, but there are two or more identifiable flaws.

**3 and below – Needs work.** There are multiple, noteworthy shortcomings and substantial evidence of a less-than-serious effort.

As for formatting: double-spaced, 1" margins, with a font no smaller than Times New Roman  
**12. Submissions one day late (by Monday 11:59pm) will lose two points. No submissions beyond that time will be accepted.**

### **3) Midterm paper (15% total)**

Midway through the course students will submit a 3-5 page (900-1500 word) essay based on course materials. No outside research is required. This paper will be eligible for revision and resubmission in response to the professor's comments.

### **4) Team debate and individual paper (15% total)**

For week 9 (March 22, 24), students will be randomly assigned to research a debate topic in teams. They will participate in the in-class debate (5%) and submit a paper summarizing their individual experience researching the topic (10%).

### **5) Media critique paper and presentation (25%)**

Students will submit a 5-10 page paper critically examining political economy in media coverage of a topic of their choosing. The paper may be single-authored or co-authored with one partner. A list of possible topics and media content will be offered. The paper will be due by the end of day (11:59pm) on Friday, April 29. The paper will be worth 15%. During the prior four class sessions students will present and discuss their critique in class. The presentation will constitute another 10%.

### **6) Closing short-essay exam (15% total)**

A closing short-essay exams (May 5, to be hand-written in blue books or on notebook paper) will test the ability of students to synthesize prior course material and directly address the issues at hand. Notes and texts (but no online sources) may be consulted during the exam. Exams are to be completed during the 75-minute class period. It is each student's responsibility to take the exam as scheduled (unless exempted by a university documented time conflict).

### **7) Extra-credit comprehension quizzes (1-3 points)**

Periodically there will be short extra-credit quizzes that recognize close reading and careful work with course materials.

Week One – 1/18, 1/20	<b>What is political economy?</b> <i>Read the syllabus.</i> Supplemental: Thomas Ferguson, <i>The Golden Rule</i> ; Thomas Piketty, <i>Capital in the Twenty-First Century</i>
Week Two –	<b>State power</b>

1/25, 1/27 <b>(Group 1)</b>	<p><b>1) Hannah Arendt</b>, <i>On Violence</i>. New York: Harcourt, Brace &amp; World, Inc., 1970, pp. 35-56.</p> <p><b>2) Vivek Chibber</b>, <i>Capitalism and the State</i>. Brooklyn NY: Jacobin Foundation, 2017, pp. 2-38.</p>
Week Three – 2/1, 2/3 <b>(Group 2)</b>	<p><b>Repression and revenue</b></p> <p><b>1) Charles Tilly</b>, <i>From Mobilization to Revolution</i>. New York: Random House, 1978, pp. 98-119</p> <p><b>2) Margaret Levi</b>, "The Predatory Theory of Rule," <i>Politics and Society</i> 10(4), 1981, pp. 431-465.</p>
Week Four – 2/8, 2/10 <b>(Group 3)</b>	<p><b>Collective action</b></p> <p><b>1) Michael Zweig</b>, <i>The Working Class Majority: America's Best Kept Secret</i>. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2000, pp. 9-15, 18-58 (large font).</p> <p><b>2) Jane McAlevey</b>, <i>No shortcuts: Organizing for power in the new gilded age</i>. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016, pp. 1-26.</p> <p>Supplemental: Bois and Moyer, <i>Labor's Untold Story</i>, pp. 70-104.</p>
Week Five – 2/15, 2/17 <b>(Group 4)</b>	<p><b>From imperialism to military Keynesianism</b></p> <p><b>1) Edwin van de Haar</b>, "Adam Smith on Empire and International Relations," in Christopher J. Berry, Maria Pia Paganelli, and Craig Smith, eds., <i>Oxford Handbook of Adam Smith</i>. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2013, pp. 1-26 (from html).</p> <p><b>2) Rosa Luxemburg</b>, "Chapter 32: Militarism as a Province of Accumulation," in <i>The Accumulation of Capital</i>. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul Ltd., 1951 [1913], pp. 454-467.</p> <p>Supplemental: Nicolas Pratt, <i>Expansionists of 1898</i>.</p>
Week Six – 2/22, 2/24 <b>(Group 5)</b>	<p><b>Cold War clients</b></p> <p><b>1) Mark J. Gasiorowski</b>, "The 1953 Coup D'Etat in Iran," <i>International Journal of Middle East Studies</i> 19(3), 1987, pp. 261-286.</p> <p><b>2) Noam Chomsky and Edward S. Herman</b>, <i>The Washington Connection and Third World Fascism</i>. Boston, MA: South End Press, 1979, pp. 1-40.</p> <p>Supplemental: Jacobs and Page, "Who controls US foreign policy?"</p>
Week Seven – 3/1, 3/3 <b>(Group 1)</b>	<p><b>Out of sight, out of mind</b></p> <p><b>1) Edward S. Herman and Noam Chomsky</b>, <i>Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media</i>. New York: Pantheon Books, 1988, pp. 1-35.</p> <p><b>2) Marilyn Young</b>, "Bombing civilians from the twentieth to the twenty-first centuries," in Mark Philip Bradley and Mary L. Dudziak, eds., <i>Making the Forever War: Marilyn B. Young on the Culture and Politics of American Militarism</i>. Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 2021, pp. 139-164.</p> <p>Supplemental: Jeremy Kuzmarov, "Modernizing Repression: Police Training, Political Violence, and Nation-Building in the 'American Century,'" pp. 191-221.</p>

Week Eight – 3/8, 3/10 <b>(Group 2)</b>	<b>Post-Cold War expansionism</b> <i>No class meeting on Thursday March 10. Work independently with debate team. Submit midterm paper by Friday March 11, 11:59pm.</i> <b>1) Alexandra Homolar</b> , "How to Last Alone at the Top," <i>The Journal of Strategic Studies</i> 34(2), April 2011, pp. 189-217. <b>2) Shana Marshall</b> , "Regional Militaries and the Global Military-Industrial Complex," in Joel Beinin, Bassam Haddad, and Sherene Seikaly, eds., <i>A Critical Political Economy of the Middle East and North Africa</i> . Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2021, pp. 85-101. Supplemental: Bruce Jentleson and Rebecca Britton, "Still Pretty Prudent;"
<b>SPRING BREAK</b>	
Week Nine – 3/22, 3/24	<b>In-class debates:</b> Tuesday (red and gold), Thursday (blue and green). <i>No new readings or discussion papers.</i>
Week Ten – 3/29, 3/31 <b>(Group 3)</b>	<b>War on Terror era</b> <b>1) Emily Meierding</b> , "Dismantling the Oil Wars Myth," <i>Security Studies</i> 25(2), 2016, pp. 258-288. <b>2) Laleh Khalili</b> , "Counterterrorism and counterinsurgency in the Neoliberal Age," in Amal Ghazal and Jens Hanssen, eds., <i>The Oxford Handbook of Contemporary Middle Eastern and North African History</i> , Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2020, pp. 1-23 (from html).
Week Eleven – 4/5, 4/7 <b>(Group 4)</b>	<b>Political economy of autocracy</b> <b>1) Lisa Anderson</b> , "The State in the Middle East and North Africa," <i>Comparative Politics</i> 20(1), October, 1987, pp. 1-18. <b>2) Jill Crystal</b> , "Authoritarianism and Its Adversaries in the Arab World," <i>World Politics</i> 46(2), January, 1994, pp. 262-289.
Week Twelve – 4/12, 4/14 <b>(Group 5)</b>	<b>Repression and reform in the Arab Spring</b> <b>1) Mona El-Ghobashy</b> , "Praxis of the Egyptian Revolution," <i>Middle East Report</i> 258, spring, 2011, pp. 1-7 (from html). <b>2) Shamiran Mako and Valentine Moghadam</b> , <i>After the Arab Uprisings: Progress and Stagnation in the Middle East and North Africa</i> . New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021, pp. 216-235.
Week Thirteen – 4/19, 4/21	<b>Media presentations</b>
Week Fourteen – 4/26, 4/28 <b>(Media paper due by 11:59pm Friday, 4/29)</b>	<b>Media presentations</b>
Week Fifteen – 5/3, 5/5	<b>Overview exam (May 5)</b> <i>Readings to be determined.</i>

### Additional Course Policies and Guidelines

### Communication

I am happy to field questions, in person or by email, on substantive matters. If you miss a class, you are responsible for getting notes and information from classmates on what was covered. After doing so, you are welcome to approach me with outstanding questions. When communicating by email, plan for a 48-hour (or two business day) response time.

### Progress in the Course

Professor Brownlee is committed to helping all students understand the course material to the fullest extent of their interest. Toward that goal he is available outside of class during office hours to respond to questions about the assigned texts. When lectures incorporate slides, these slides will be posted on Canvas after the lecture.

### Grade calculation

Final grades will be determined on the basis of the below rubric. A = 94-100; A- = 90-93.999; B+ = 87-89.999; B = 84-86.999; B- = 80-83.999; C+ = 77-79.999; C = 74-76.999; C- = 70-73.999; D+ = 67-69.999; D = 64-66.999; D- = 60-63.999; F = 0-59.999. The professor will not alter grades calculated at the end of the semester.

### Suggestions for reading effectively.

Close reading entails reflecting on the text as you are reading, and evaluating the author's argument.

- What is the main claim she makes?
- Does this make sense to you? Why or why not?
- What are the weaknesses of the argument?
- If there is a narrative, who are the main personas and the pivotal events?

Thoughtful reading takes time and energy. Space out readings in reasonable increments. It is more pleasant and more productive to read over several days than to try and compress all the reading into an all-nighter.

*The goal of close reading is not turning pages, but being able to say something about the material and evaluate it.* When you are done reading, check to see that you can summarize the author's argument in a few sentences. I encourage you to take 5 minutes and write down this summary. Notes and synopses can be used during class discussions, the exams, and the papers.

### Attendance and Workload

Students are expected to come ready and on time for all class sessions. In the classroom students are expected to comport themselves in a professional manner. By enrolling and remaining in this course students indicate they have understood the importance of carefully completing the weekly readings and being ready for in-class discussion led by Professor Brownlee. **NB: If you miss a class for any reason, you are responsible for catching up on the**

***material. That begins with consulting classmates, NOT with asking the Professor "So... what did I miss?"***

### **Academic accommodations**

The University of Austin provides upon request appropriate academic accommodations for qualified students with disabilities. For more information, contact the Office of the Dean of Students at 471-6259, 471-6441 TTY. All accommodations must be coordinated through the Office of the Dean of Students. Students needing accommodations should communicate this need to before the third class meeting by providing the accommodation letter to the professor or teaching assistant.

### **Religious holidays or official extracurricular activities**

Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. It is the policy of the University of Texas at Austin that you must notify each of your instructors at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates you will be absent to observe a religious holy day. If you miss a test due to the observance of a religious holy day you will be given an opportunity to complete the work missed within a reasonable time after the absence.

Students missing class for an official extracurricular activity must provide documentation at least fourteen days prior.

### **Scholastic Dishonesty**

"Scholastic dishonesty... includes but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without prior permission of the instructor, providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive a postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or the attempt to commit such an act" (Section 11-802 (b), *Institutional Rules on Student Services and Activities*).

If you have any questions about what constitutes scholastic dishonesty, you should consult with me and the following website: [http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint\\_student.php](http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/acint_student.php) .

Violations will be reported to Student Judicial Services and the student(s) in question will fail this course. In additions, students are expected to abide by the university's rules on student conduct.

<http://catalog.utexas.edu/general-information/appendices/appendix-c/student-discipline-and-conduct/#subchapter11400.prohibitedconduct>

### **Grade Appeals**

Any complaints about grades should be initiated with a written explanation (by paper or email) of why the decisions behind the assignment of your grade should be revisited. You will have one week after an exam or paper has been handed back to submit this written explanation. Once you have submitted your written request, the professor will decide whether to re-grade your entire assignment. *Performance in other classes taken here at the university is not*



*germane to any grading decision made in this class. Consequently, if receiving a D in this class places you on academic probation, this does not constitute a viable justification for requesting the regarding of an assignment.*

### **Cell Phones and other External Communications**

Starting in the third week (Tuesday, September 10), all electronic devices are to be turned off during class.

### **Syllabus Changes**

The syllabus is subject to change by the professor. Any alteration in the syllabus course schedule will be announced in class and posted to Canvas.

**Time management** is a valuable skill in college and life. Professor Brownlee is glad to meet with you to discuss ways of organizing your schedule to carve out and protect the time needed for this class, e.g., thinking about when and where you study most effectively. Then set aside blocks of time that are reserved for homework for this class. Whatever your particular approach to managing time, if you would like assistance, it is best to approach Professor Brownlee in the first two weeks of class.

This course is expected to make up one component in a full student schedule of classes, extracurricular activities, work, and other commitments. The assignments and workload are designed to require approximately 5-7 hours, in addition to the time spent attending lectures. (If you do not have that kind of time to devote to this GOV 365, I would encourage you to select another class or choose another semester to take this class.)

**Strictness is fairness.** Most students are busy; all students merit equal treatment. Professor Brownlee will be strict about applying the announced policies uniformly.

The syllabus specifies the workload, deadlines, and grading rubric for the course. If any changes occur, they will be announced in class. In short, everyone knows the expectations for the class. Further, by taking the course, students are indicating that they will honestly strive to submit their best work punctually.