

POLS 3

## POLITICS ACROSS THE WORLD

Prof. Osman Balkan



This class is meant to serve as a foundation for advanced undergraduate study in political science and related social sciences by providing students with the intellectual tools to analyze, compare, evaluate, and develop arguments about complex socio-economic, cultural, and political phenomena across the world. The course is organized around four thematic units. We begin with an overview of the “world system” and investigate the conditions under which states are created, consolidated, and exercise their power. Our first set of readings address the imbricated histories of capitalism, colonialism, and state formation in an effort to make sense of the lasting legacies and uneven impacts that these processes have had on different parts of the world. We then explore the relationship between states, political membership, and identity by exploring why and how certain groups are incorporated or excluded from the “imagined community” of the nation. The third unit focuses on the political economy of development. We interrogate various definitions of “development” and evaluate how the economic, cultural, and political processes subsumed under the broader heading of globalization have helped facilitate and/or hindered development, economic growth, and poverty reduction across the globe. Our fourth unit investigates the meaning of democracy and the driving forces behind social movements and political change. We consider the challenges of political representation and participation and assess the successes and failures of various contemporary social movements