

**SOSC 110**  
**STATE AND SOCIETY**  
**SPRING 2023**  
**(Updated on 27 February 2023)**

**Time:** Mondays & Wednesdays, 14:30-15:40

**Location:** Online via Zoom

**Instructor:** Burak Gürel

**Office:** SOS 253

**Office hours:** Mondays, 10:00-11:00, Online via Zoom, by appointment.

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**Course Description**

We often use the words “society” and “state” when we talk about our lives, rights, and obligations or try to understand something we read in a news media. We also use them to make cultural, economic, and political arguments. However, we often do not know what we refer to exactly. Is “society” a group of people? Is it a “nation”? Is the state a collection of institutions serving the society, or does the society serve the state? Does the state always represent the interests of the society as a whole or only certain social groups? How do state-society relations affect within-country and global inequalities? This course answers such questions by surveying some historically critical areas of state-society relations, including the bureaucracy, law, war-making, economic development, colonialism, neoliberalism, social movements, repression, and welfare provision. After finishing this course, the students will be capable of evaluating social and political events more easily and sophisticatedly.

**Information about Koç University’s Core Program**

SOSC 110 is taught as part of Koç University’s core program.

Increased vocational specialization forces universities to emphasize professional identities and skills at the expense of free inquiry, creativity, and exploration. Bearing this dilemma in mind core curriculum fulfills students’ desire to pursue their interests independent of the requirements of their majors. Courses of the core program give students the opportunity to expand their knowledge into disciplines beyond their major, to explore ideas and learn skills that will help them become open-minded thinkers without which they cannot become problem solvers in their civic and professional lives.

Core program strives to show students that, no matter how different they are, disciplines such as literature and physics, or philosophy and cognitive science intersect in their concern for common issues that had to do with individuals, societies, and the world.

The core curriculum shows students that their individual actions have consequences at local, national, and global levels, and invites them to evaluate the ethical implications of these actions. It prepares students for civic engagement and enables them to respond critically and constructively to change-- social, cultural, scientific, technological and otherwise. It

aims to make students ask the very personal question of the duties and obligations, as well as the privileges, rights, and responsibilities, of civic and ethical agency in a dynamically changing world.

**Core program envisions a Koç University graduate who:**

- demonstrates an understanding of historical, cultural, and philosophical complexity and express their understanding in sophisticated language
- understands the ethical dimensions of what they do and what they say
- demonstrates an understanding of the factors associated with global interdependence, including economic, political, psychological, socio-cultural, historical, and scientific forces.
- is able to conduct research-based inquiries, including articulation of complex disciplinary and interdisciplinary problems, effective evaluation and analysis of primary and secondary sources, and integration of relevant information.
- has the knowledge, skills, and disposition to recognize and to democratically participate in processes which improve the civic life of communities.
- demonstrates effective communication of complex knowledge and ideas through written, oral, visual, and technological media.

**Course Organization and Requirements**

***Lectures, discussions, and movie screenings:*** The class will meet twice per week. In the first meeting, the instructor will introduce a few basic theoretical concepts about state and society. In the second meeting, we will discuss an important social or political event that is recently covered in a newspaper through the prism of these concepts. We will start with very simple theoretical concepts and continue with more advanced ones as the course progresses. Thus, students will learn how new theoretical concepts advance our understanding of social events. In some weeks, the instructor will show videos related to the theme of the week.

***Exams:*** There will be two midterm exams. Each exam will include two short essay questions and ten multiple-choice test questions. You can take make-up exams only if you have documented medical emergencies. There will be only one make-up for each exam.

***Attendance and participation:*** Attendance is not mandatory, but your level of class participation will significantly affect your participation grade. We will be discussing course readings, newspaper articles, and movies shown in the classroom. You are expected to participate in these discussions.

**Grade distribution**

First midterm: 40%  
Second midterm: 40%  
Participation: 20%

## Grading scale

Letter Grade	Scale	Suggested Grade Range
A	4	90 – 100
A-	3,7	87 – 89
B+	3,3	83 – 86
B	3	80 – 82
B-	2,7	77 – 79
C+	2,3	73 – 76
C	2	70 – 72
C-	1,7	67 – 69
D+	1,3	64 – 66
D	1	60 – 63
F	0	0 – 59

<https://cssh.ku.edu.tr/en/about/faculty-resources/grading-scale/>

### Koç University’s Policy on Academic Honesty

According to Koç University’s *Student Code of Conduct*, “academic dishonesty includes and is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, multiple submissions, and collusion.” A clear explanation of this issue is available here: <https://apdd.ku.edu.tr/en/academic-policies/student-code-of-conduct/>

## Reading List and Schedule

### Week 1: Introduction to the course & syllabus review (February 27& March 1)

#### Week 2: Classical Theories of Society (March 6&8)

Anthony Giddens, Mitchell Duneier, Richard P. Appelbaum, and Deborah Carr, *Introduction to Sociology* (New York & London: W. W. Norton & Company, 2014), pp. 9-13.

Joel Andreas, “Industrial Restructuring and Class Relations in China.” In Beatriz Carrillo and David S.G. Goodman (eds.), *China’s Peasants and Workers: Changing Class Identities* (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2012), pp. 102-104.

John J. Macionis & Kenneth Plummer, *Sociology: A Global Introduction* (Harlow & New York: Pearson/Prentice Hall, 2008), pp. 101-111.

#### Week 3: Inequality (March 13&15)

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848). In Robert C. Tucker (ed.), *The Marx-Engels Reader* (New York & London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1978), pp. 469-491 (the following 10 pages of the text (pp. 491-500) is **optional** reading).

#### Week 4: Bureaucracy (March 20&22)

Max Weber, “Bureaucracy.” In H. H. Gerth & C. Wright Mills (eds.), *From Max Weber:*

*Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1946), pp. 196-244.

**Week 5: War-Making and State Formation (March 27&29)**

Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime." In Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer & Theda Skocpol (eds.), *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 169-191.

**Week 6: Colonialism and Capitalism (April 3&5)**

Utsa Patnaik and Prabhat Patnaik, "The Drain of Wealth: Colonialism Before the First World War," 1 February 2021, <https://monthlyreview.org/2021/02/01/the-drain-of-wealth/>

**Week 7: Global Inequality (April 10&12)**

Giovanni Arrighi, Beverly J. Silver, and Benjamin D. Brewer, "Industrial Convergence, Globalization, and the Persistence of the North-South Divide," *Studies in Comparative International Development*, Vol. 38, No. 1, 2003, pp. 3-31.

Evgeny Morozov, "The Huawei War," November 2020, <https://mondediplo.com/2020/11/10huawei>

**Spring break & Ramadan holiday (April 17-23)**

**Week 8: First Midterm (April 24 & 26)**

Midterm review (April 24)

Midterm exam (April 26)

**Week 9: The Developmentalist State (May 3)**

Robert C. Allen, *Global Economic History: A Very Short Introduction*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011, Chapter 9 (pp. 131-145).

Burak Gürel, "The Role of Collective Mobilization in the Divergent Performance of the Rural Economies of China and India (1950-2005)," *The Journal of Peasant Studies*, Vol. 46, No. 5, 2019, pp. 1021–1046.

**Week 10: Neoliberalism (May 8&10)**

David Harvey, *A Brief History of Neoliberalism* (Oxford & New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), pp. 1–38.

Anne L. Kalleberg, "Precarious Work, Insecure Workers: Employment Relations in Transition," *American Sociological Review*, Vol. 74, No. 1, 2009, pp. 1-22.

Vicente Navarro, "Neoliberalism as a Class Ideology; Or, the Political Causes of the Growth of Inequalities," *International Journal of Health Services*, Vol. 37, No. 1, 2007, pp. 47–62.

**Week 11: Social Movements and Social Policy (May 15&17)**

Frances Fox Piven and Richard Cloward, *Regulating the Poor: The Functions of Public Welfare* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1971), pp. 3-42.

Murat Koyuncu, Erdem Yörük, and Burak Gürel, "Does Violent Conflict Affect the Distribution of Social Welfare? Evidence from India's Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Act," *Social Policy & Administration*, 2023, pp. 1-23.

**Week 12: Second midterm (May 22&24)**

Midterm review (May 22)

Midterm exam (May 24)

**Week 13: Course review (May 29&31)**