Civil society has become one of the most popular terms both in scholarly work and practice. Despite this popularity, however, there has been hardly any consensus about the definition of the term. The major goal of the course is a critical rethinking of both classical and contemporary theories of civil society by exploring its links to the state and other political institutions. Concretely, we will explore alternative patterns of interaction between the state and a wide-ranging sphere of collective action, including social movements, community action, grass root activities, diversified voices of the public sphere, non-governmental organizations and interpersonal reciprocal relations. Theoretical approaches will be accompanied by actual case studies, which will be discussed in class. We will also situate civil society a imperative quality of social life to the context of political reform, democratization and broader political transformations. In this vein, the students will develop their final project and form their research question by engaging closely with the course material and the respective conceptual analysis. The presentation of final projects in class will help us to share different research questions and arguments and also enable us to give constructive criticism to the students.

Course Requirements:

Regular attendance, class discussions and presentations, three short papers and the final research paper.

Required Readings:

Coursepacket


Recommended Readings:

Sept 6: Introduction

Sept 11-13: An Introductory Look at Alternative Networks In History

(Please find the following three readings in this section ON RESERVE)

Ralph Hattox. *Coffee and Coffeehouses*

Leslie Pierce. *The Imperial Harem*

Gambetta. *Sicilian Mafia.*

Sept. 18-20: CLASSICAL THEORIES


Tocqueville, *The Old Regime and the French Revolution*, pp. 77-120, 148-157

Montesquieu, *Persian Letters* (selected letters: 6, 24, 26, 30, 63, 96, 141, 161)

SEPTEMBER 27 ADVISING DAY-NO CLASSES

September 25-Oct 2: **CONTEMPORARY THEORIES**

**Community: Social Capital and its Limits**


Oct.9 OCTOBER BREAK-NO CLASSES

Oct 4-11: Public Sphere and Religion


OCTOBER 16: RESPONSE PAPER DUE

Oct 16-18: Linking Civil Society to the State


Migdal, State in Society, Cambridge University Press, pp. 1-29 and 97-110

Oct 23-30: Clan Politics: Kinship and the State

Schatz Book

Oct 25 Film and discussion

OCTOBER 30: FILM REVIEW DUE

Nov 1-6-8: Islamic Politics: Religion, Community and the State


Salame. *Democracy without Democrats?*

**NOV 12: BAYAT BOOK REVIEW DUE**

Nov 13-15-20: Civil Society, Democracy and the Middle East

Bayat Book

**NOV 13 FINAL PROJECT PROPOSAL DUE**

Nov 22 THANKSGIVING

**Nov 27-29: Civil Society, Diversity in America**

Frank and Gillian Book

**Presentations**

Dec 4-6

**FINAL PAPERS DUE DEC 6!!**