

ADVANCED ISSUES IN CRITICAL SECURITY STUDIES
POLSCI 776
Term 2, WINTER 2020

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Course Description

This graduate seminar explores recent developments in the theory and practice of international security from a critical perspective. The seminar does not seek to provide a comprehensive overview of what is now a diverse and multiversal field of 'critical security studies'. Rather, the aim is to develop an understanding of what is at stake, politically, with some of the main concepts, theories, methodological approaches, and empirical objects within this field of study. The course begins by introducing students to some of the main theoretical approaches in critical security studies, including constructivism, feminism, postcolonialism, international political sociology, and securitization theory. The course will then move on to consider some of the major new themes and issues in security studies. These include security challenges arising in the context of climate change, global health, human security, refugees and migration, surveillance and cybersecurity, and the global war on terrorism. The final part of the course will consist of a "3-Minute Thesis" presentation where students will present their research project for the course.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should be able to:

1. To read and come to understand a variety of scholarly writings in critical security studies.
2. To develop an appreciation of the historical emergence, transformation, experience, and contestation of security.
3. To understand a range of concepts from social theory and their applicability to understanding contemporary issues in international relations.
4. To have improved and refined their research and writing skills through short and long essays.
5. To have developed skills in group leadership, discussion, and class presentation.

Required Materials and Texts

Columba Peoples and Nick Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies: An Introduction*, Second Edition (New York: Routledge, 2014).

The book is available in the Campus Store. All other required readings are available through the Avenue to Learn course website.

Course Evaluation – Overview

Participation	Every class Sundays 1pm	Active in class discussion. Keywords, Key Passage, Questions	25%
Class Leadership	Once per term	Presentation on readings; leading class discussion	10%
Short Paper	February 3	1,500 word paper	15%
Research Paper Outline	March 2	250 word abstract, 5 key words, 10 academic sources annotated bibliography	5%
Research Paper	April 6	4,000 word research paper	40%
3MT	April 6	3 minute presentation of research papers, with discussion	5%

Course Evaluation – Details

Participation (25%)

This is an advanced seminar and so you are expected to attend all class sessions and participate in the discussions. You are expected to complete the required readings, think carefully about them before coming to class, and take an active part in the seminar. The quality of your questions and comments will be valued more than the quantity. Listening and engaging with your fellow students' ideas will also be valued.

The agenda of each class session will be student driven. For weeks 2-6, 8-11, and 13 you will be responsible for submitting a one page document consisting of: 1) a list of key concepts and terms from the readings; 2) a key line or passage from one of the readings; 3) three or four discussion questions based on the readings. The document is to be uploaded to the 'Discussion' section of the Avenue to Learn website by Sunday at 1pm. You are encouraged to bring up your own or others' keywords, passages, and questions in the seminar.

Class Leadership (10%)

Students will be arranged into groups of two (or more if necessary) at the first meeting of the class. Each group will make one presentation to the class reflecting on all the

readings for that week. Students should avoid providing an author-by-author summary and concentrate instead on connections, contrasts and themes in the readings. Presentations on the readings should be no longer than 15 minutes long.

In addition to presenting on the readings, the class leaders will lead the seminar discussion. They will create two-page 'agenda' based on the key terms, passages, and questions provided by their classmates, and provide hard copies to the class. Class leaders are encouraged to use visual material and bring examples, illustrations and cases into your presentations.

Short Paper (15%), due February 3

Write a 1,500-word analysis of a recent news story that involves some dimension of 'security', broadly understood. The analysis of the news event will draw on one (or more) of the theoretical perspectives covered in weeks 2-4.

Research Paper Outline (5%), due March 2

To help prepare for researching and writing the major research paper for this course (see below), each student will compose an outline of their research project. The outline will include:

- 1) A title that describes the research project;
- 2) A one sentence description of the project (thesis statement);
- 3) A 250 word paragraph that summarizes the project, including a description of how you plan to substantiate the argument (abstract); and
- 4) An annotated bibliography of at least ten academic books and/or journal articles.

Research Paper (40%), due April 6

Write a major research essay on a topic that is related to the course themes and arrived at through consultation with Professor Nyers. The research essay will be about 4,000 words in length (14-16 pages). The theoretical and empirical sources of the paper can draw upon any of the course readings. However, the paper must also demonstrate independent research.

The following journals will be helpful when conducting research for this assignment: *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political; Big Data and Society; borderlands e-journal; Citizenship Studies; Cooperation and Conflict; Critical Asian Studies; Critical Military Studies; Critical Studies on Security; Critical Terrorism Studies; Cultures et conflits; Environment and Planning D: Society and Space; European Journal of International Relations; European Security; Geopolitics; International Political Sociology; International Security; Journal of International Relations and Development; Journal of Narrative Politics; Journal of Refugee Studies; Millennium: Journal of International Studies; Migration Studies; Political Geography; Review of International Studies; Security*

Dialogue; Security Studies; South Atlantic Quarterly; Studies in Social Justice; Survival; Third World Quarterly.

3MT (5%), due April 6

The final session of the course will take the format of Three-Minute Thesis (3MT) presentation. Students will present the core of their research papers and then field questions from their classmates. Prizes will be given to the first and second place winners of the 3MT competition, as determined by their classmates.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (Jan 6) Introduction

No readings.

Week 2 (Jan 13) Critical Security as Social Constructivism

Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, Introduction, chapters 1-2.

Mark B. Salter, ed. 'Horizon Scan: Critical security studies for the next 50 years', *Security Dialogue* 50(4S): 9-37.

Mark Neocleous and George Rigakos, 'Anti-Security: A Declaration', in Mark Neocleous and George Rigakos, eds., *Anti-Security* (Ottawa: Red Quill Books, 2011): 15-21.

NOTE: Assignment: Choose one of the interventions in the Salter article and come to class prepared to discuss the piece and justify your choice.

Week 3 (Jan 20) Feminism and Postcolonialism

Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, chapters 3-4.

Laura J. Shepherd 'The State of Feminist Security Studies: Continuing the Conversation', *International Studies Perspectives* 14:4 (2013): 426-462 [read contributions by Shepherd, Parashar, Sylvester, Teaiwa and Slatter, D'Costa and Lee-Koo, Basu, and McLeod].

Pinar Bilgin, *The International in Security, Security in the International* (New York: Routledge, 2016): Introduction.

Randolph B. Persaud, 'Security Studies, Postcolonialism, and the Third World', in Randolph B. Persaud and Alina Sajed, eds., *Race, Gender, and Culture in International Relations: Postcolonial Perspectives* (New York: Routledge, 2018): chapter 9.

Week 4 (Jan 27) International Political Sociology and Securitization Theory

Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, chapters 5-6.

Ole Wæver, 'Aberystwyth, Paris, Copenhagen: the Europeanness of new "schools" of security theory in an American field', in Arlene B. Tickner and David L. Blaney, eds., *Thinking International Relations Differently* (New York: Routledge, 2012): 48-71.

J. Peter Burgess, 'The international political sociology of security studies', in Xavier Guillaume and Pinar Bilgin, eds., *Routledge Handbook of International Political Sociology* (London: Routledge, 2017): 233-244.

Alison Howell and Melanie Richter-Montpetit, 'Is securitization theory racist? Civilizationism, methodological whiteness, and antiblack thought in the Copenhagen School', *Security Dialogue* (2019): 1-20.

Week 5 (Feb 3) Security of the Anthropocene

***Short Paper Due**

Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, chapter 7.

Anthony Burke et al, 'Planet Politics: A Manifesto from the End of IR', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* (June 2016): 499-523.

Stefanie Fishel et al. 'Defending Planet Politics', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* (2017): 1-11.

Reece Jones, 'Borders, Climate Change, and the Environment', in *Violent Borders* (London: Verso, 2016): 140-161.

NOTE: Short Paper due

Week 6 (Feb 10) Health, Resilience, Insecurity

Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, chapter 8.

Alison Howell, 'The Global Politics of Medicine: Beyond global health, against securitisation theory', *Review of International Studies* 40:5 (2014): 961-987.

Stefan Elbe, 'The pharmaceuticalisation of security: Molecular biomedicine, antiviral stockpiles, and global health security', *Review of International Studies* 40:5 (2014): 919-938.

Mark Neocleous, 'Resisting Resilience' *Radical Philosophy* 178 (2013): 2-7.

Week 7 (Feb 17) Mid-term recess, No Class

No class.

Week 8 (Feb 24) Terror and Exceptionalism

Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, chapter 9.

Richard Jackson, Harmonie Toros, Lee Jarvis and Charlotte Heath-Kelly, 'Introduction: 10 years of *Critical Studies on Terrorism*', *Critical Studies on Terrorism* 10:2 (2017): 197-202.

Karin Fierke, 'Agents of Death: The Structural Logic of Suicide Terrorism and Martyrdom', *International Theory* 1:1 (2009): 155-184.

Mark Neocleous, *Critique of Security* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2008): 39-75.

Week 9 (Mar 2) Human Security and Development

***Research Proposal Due**

Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, chapter 10.

Kristin Bergtora Sandvik and Kjersti Lohne, 'The Rise of the Humanitarian Drone: Giving Content to an Emerging Concept', *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 43:1 (2014): 145-164.

Cecilia Jacob, 'Practising civilian protection: Human security in Myanmar and Cambodia', *Security Dialogue* 45:4 (2014): 391-408.

Mark Duffield, 'Challenging environments: Danger, resilience and the aid industry', *Security Dialogue* 43:5 (2012): 475-492.

NOTE: Research Proposal due

Week 10 (Mar 9) Migration and Borders

Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, chapter 11.

Corey Johnson et al., 'Interventions on rethinking "the border" in border studies', *Political Geography* 30 (2011): 61-69.

Heather L. Johnson, 'The Other Side of the Fence: Reconceptualizing the "Camp" and Migration Zones at the Borders of Spain', *International Political Sociology* 7:1 (2013): 75-91.

Maurice Stierl, 'A sea of struggle: activist border interventions in the Mediterranean Sea', *Citizenship Studies* 20:5 (2016): 561-578.

Week 11 (Mar 16) Technological Warfare and Surveillance

Peoples and Vaughan-Williams, *Critical Security Studies*, chapter 12.

Ian GR Shaw, 'Robot Wars: US Empire and geopolitics in the robotic age', *Security Dialogue* 48:5 (2017): 451-470.

Kyle Grayson and Jocelyn Mawdsley, 'Scopic regimes and the visual turn in International Relations: Seeing world politics through the drone', *European Journal of International Relations*, 25:2 (2019): 431-457.

Philippe M. Frowd, 'The Promises and Pitfalls of Biometric Security Practices in Senegal', *International Political Sociology* 11:4 (2017): 343-359.

Week 12 (Mar 23) Citizenship and Security I

Film: *'I am an American': Video Portraits of Post-9/11 US Citizens* (Dir. Cynthia Weber, 2007).

NOTE: Assignment: Which vignette did you find most interesting and why? Come prepared to discuss your choice on the March 30th class.

Week 13 (Mar 30) Citizenship and Security II

Xavier Guillaume and Jef Huysmans, 'Introduction: Citizenship and Security', in Xavier Guillaume and Jef Huysmans, eds., *Citizenship and Security: the constitution of political being* (London: Routledge, 2013): 1-34.

Angharad Closs Stephens, 'Recrafting Political Community', in Xavier Guillaume and Jef Huysmans, eds., *Citizenship and Security: the constitution of political being* (London: Routledge, 2013): 178-193.

Audrey Macklin and Rainer Bauböck, eds., *The Return of Banishment: Do the New Denationalisation Policies Weaken Citizenship?* EUI Working Paper RSCAS 2015/14: 1-56.

Week 14 (Apr 6) Student Presentations of Research

NOTES: *3MT Presentations and Research Paper due

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

All written assignments should be handed in as a hard copy in class. Electronic copies of the assignment will only be accepted if prior arrangements have been made with Prof. Nyers.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-90	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
69-0	F

Late Assignments

Assignments are to be handed in on the due date. Unless a prior arrangement has been made with Professor Nyers, late submissions will be penalized 3% per day. Students are required to keep both paper and electronic copies of all work submitted for evaluation.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the Academic Regulation in the Undergraduate Calendar "Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work".

Please inform Prof. Nyers if you are ill or will otherwise be missing class.

Avenue to Learn

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behavior in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behavior can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on

the transcript (notation reads: “Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty”), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university.

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

1. Plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one’s own or for which credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. Academic accommodations must be arranged for each term of study. Student Accessibility Services can be contacted by phone 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or e-mail sas@mcmaster.ca. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Policy for [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#).

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

Effective September 1, 2010, it is the policy of the Faculty of Social Sciences that all e-mail communication sent from students to instructors (including TAs), and from students to staff, must originate from the student’s own McMaster University e-mail account. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. It is the student’s responsibility to ensure that communication is sent to the university from a McMaster account. If an instructor becomes aware that a communication has come from an alternate address, the instructor may not reply at his or her discretion.

Course Modification

The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students will be given with explanation and the opportunity to comment on changes. It is the responsibility of the student to check his/her McMaster email and course websites weekly during the term and to note any changes.