

**M.A. COLLOQUIUM
POLSCI 775
Fall 2022/Winter 2023, Term 3**

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Meeting times: Every second Monday,
11:30 am-2:20 pm
Meeting location: LRW 5012

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Office hours: Mon 10:15-11:15 am,
Wed. 3-4 pm. You may also book
consultations using [MS Booking](#) or
email tporter@mcmaster.ca to request a
virtual meeting.

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Course Description

The MA Colloquium is a required part of the MA degree in the Department of Political Science. Its principal aim is to give students an opportunity for collegium-building both among one another and with the department faculty and to participate in training and briefing sessions about topics relevant to the degree. The MA Colloquium provides a somewhat less formal setting in which to interact with speakers and participants. Structured as a series of synchronous and asynchronous presentations, seminars and group discussions, the MA Colloquium will primarily be meeting in person while also using Microsoft Teams, with the possibility of switching to online meetings if required by a resurgence of COVID.

Course Objectives

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

- Move towards completion of the Major Research Paper, having obtained advice and feedback on the process in the MA Colloquium
- Be familiar with key characteristics associated with the Department of Political Science's main subfields
- Experience and reflect on the graduate student conference Mapping the Global Dimensions of Public Policy
- Be aware of career experiences that previous graduates of the Department's MA program have pursued.

Required Materials and Texts

- You may be required to review certain documents and publications or to view certain video content in advance of some sessions to be better prepared for them.

Class Format

The course will be in person unless we are required to shift to online due to a worsening of public health conditions. Our primary collaborative platform will be Microsoft Teams, possibly supplemented with other online platforms such as Zoom and Avenue2Learn. The meeting time slot is every second week. More details appear below. In each of these time slots there will be a session that may not last the full time. Some parts of the regular 11:30 am-2:20 pm time slot remain unscheduled but are likely to be used for Colloquium activities such as those involving alumni. Each student will also be assigned to one each of two types of groups. The first set of groups will be differentiated by subfield. The primary purpose of this first set of groups ("Subfield Groups") is to lead discussions related to your subfield as explained in more detail below. The second set of groups will be focused on research topics ("Topics Groups"), with one main purpose: to provide feedback on MRP topics. Colloquium participants will be expected to attend

at least one session of the 2023 graduate student conference Mapping the Global Dimensions of Public Policy, which is scheduled for Friday March 10 noon to 5 pm and Saturday March 11, 9 am – 5:30 pm.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Assignments
2. Attendance
3. Participation

Course Evaluation – Details

Create profile page and initial statement of research interests, due Monday September 19, 11:59 pm

There are two parts to this assignment:

A. Create your profile page in the Class Notebook in Teams.

Create a page in the Class Notebook introducing yourself to the Colloquium. You may use any format and you may comment on your research interests, prior academic or extra-curricular experiences, or anything else you think might be interesting to Colloquium participants. The Class Notebook is a version of OneNote and can support images, text, and links to external content. The Class Notebook will be viewable only to participants in the Colloquium. This is due by Monday, September 19, at 11:59 pm. You may view other participants' profile pages, but you should not edit them. Further instructions for creating your profile page appear at the end of this course outline.

B. Insert a chat entry on your research interest in the “Research Interests” channel on Teams.

This channel will appear on the left side of the Teams desktop when to log into our Teams group. This channel will be to facilitate collaboration and exchange of information on MRPs, including identifying topics for potential collaborative MRPs. For this assignment you simply need to provide a one or two sentence discussion of your current thinking about what topic you might wish to explore with your MRP. You are also welcome to indicate whether you might be interested communicating with others who may be interested in a similar or overlapping topic, including possible consideration of a collaborative MRP as described in the MRP course outline (Pol Sci 708) available on the Department's website. You may change your topic and research interest throughout the fall term as your ideas evolved. It will be good to update your explanation of your interests in the chat if and when these interests change. You may respond or comment on any postings in the chat in this channel.

MRP-related assignments I: due Monday, October 24, 11:59 pm

MRP-related assignments I: sample research question.

Formulate a draft sample research question for your MRP and share it on Teams with your Topics Group members and the instructor. This will consist of a written statement of up to 500 words. It should include (a) a title which conveys the topic and is interesting; (b) the central question being researched; (c) the reason your topic is important or interesting; (d) an argument or hypothesis; and (e) what kind of evidence will be needed to support your argument or hypothesis and show that your argument or hypothesis is better than the strongest competing argument or hypothesis (which you should identify). This is an opportunity to start to develop a research question for your MRP. You will be able to modify this initial direction for your MRP as you continue to develop it subsequently. Your Topics Group members will provide you feedback on this topic at the October 31 session of the Colloquium. This assignment will be submitted to a file folder in your Topics Group channel on Teams. Please include your name in the filename.

Note: MRP supervisors will be assigned near the end of the fall term. You should get in touch with your supervisor once you have been assigned one. Please see the course outline for the MRP (POL SCI 708) for further details on the MRP requirements and timelines.

MRP-related assignments II: due January 9, 9 am

MRP-related assignments II: formal proposal, for presentation to your Topic Group.

Write up a 750-1250 word proposal for your MRP which includes the same elements as the sample research question assignment above (a-e) plus (f) a brief statement of what you will have accomplished by March 13 and April 10 and (g) a non-annotated bibliography with at least ten items (such as scholarly publications, government documents, think tank reports, new articles) as an illustration of the types of sources you will draw upon in your MRP research (you do not need to have read all of these). The bibliography is not included in the word count for this assignment. You will receive feedback on this from your Topic Group in the session on January 9. This proposal will be submitted to a file folder in your Topics Group channel on Teams.

MRP-related assignments III: due Thursday March 9, 11:59 pm

MRP-related assignments III: “First findings” report and presentation.

For this assignment you are to create a speech that is absolutely no longer than three minutes, which at an optimal speaking speed is 375 words. You should create a transcript of your speech that is a maximum of 375 words and practice it before delivering it to ensure it falls within the time limit. You should post your transcript in the Teams file folder for this assignment by Thursday March 9. This speech will present the most interesting original finding from your MRP research so far. The speech should not be about what you hope or plan to find, but what you have already discovered. Ideally

your discovery should be new to the world, but at least it should be new to Colloquium participants, and not just to you. The newness could be in your perspective, in some new information you have found, or some new mix of theory and empirics. You should convey your finding in a way that maximizes its interest to the Colloquium on March 13. You should budget each word for maximum impact. Your topic group will be responsible to provide feedback.

MRP-related assignments IV: due April 3, 11:59 pm

MRP-related assignments IV: Update on your research.

You will provide a brief written report (500-700 words) on the progress of your MRP research that explains what you have done since your “First findings” report, what you anticipate your final conclusion and distinctive research contribution to be, and likely conceptual or practical challenges that you will face in completing your MRP. This will be submitted to a file folder in a channel on Teams that will be set up for this. You will receive feedback on this in the Colloquium session of April 10 and you will be expected to provide feedback on reports provided by others.

Subfield-related assignment, roundtable, winter term

Subfield-related assignment: prepare a subfield group statement for the subfield Roundtables in the Winter term.

You will meet with your subfield group prior to the Roundtable for your subfield and prepare answers to three questions:

1. What are the big current issues in the subfield (the real world or the discipline)?
2. What are the analytical or research tools we have developed that can be applied to a pressing emerging or ongoing problem of concern that the subfield is well positioned to address?
3. What do you love about the subfield, and how, if at all, would you like to see the subfield change?

Before or on the day that the Roundtable is scheduled your group will present your answers to these questions. The faculty members participating in the Roundtable session will be addressing the same set of questions. A goal of the presentations will be to initiate more general discussion about these questions. Questions will also be solicited from all Colloquium participants for all Roundtables.

Alumni connections, winter term

Alumni connections: connect with one or more graduates of our MA program and share what you learn with the Colloquium.

We will match alumni of our MA program with current MA students in fall 2022. You will then be responsible to arrange a meeting with the former MA student or students with whom you have been matched using Zoom or a similar platform. You will summarize what they learned and communicate insights from your conversation with alumni to the Colloquium at one of the sessions in the Winter 2023 term. The progress of the

meetings will be recorded on an Excel sheet on our Teams site. Completion of these meetings is required as a condition for passing the MA Colloquium.

Mapping the Global Dimensions of Public Policy assignments

You are responsible to attend at least one panel in this graduate student conference, which is scheduled from Friday March 11 through Saturday March 12, 2022. A sign-up sheet for panels will be posted on Avenue as a way to distribute MA students across the panels rather than having everyone attending one panel. You will prepare a 300-500 word critique of the panel, upload this to the appropriate Teams channel. You will be assigned to a group of students who attended the same panel as you. Your group may wish to meet virtually or face to face sometime before the Colloquium session of March 27 and coordinate a 3-5 minute commentary (for your group as a whole) to present verbally to the Colloquium in the March 27 session.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory and is expected of all graduate students.

Participation

Participation is ongoing. Students will be evaluated according to their participation in the Colloquium.

Grades

The grade for the Colloquium is assessed on a P (pass) /F (fail) basis. You must perform satisfactorily on all the above assignments to pass the course and complete your MA degree.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Note that some parts of the regular 8:30 am- 11:20 am time slot remain unscheduled but are likely to be used for Colloquium activities such as those involving alumni.

Week 1 (September 12) Introduction to the MA Colloquium

We will have introductions and discuss the plan for the MA Colloquium course.

Note: your profile page and initial statement of research interests in the Class Notebook are due on Monday, September 19, 11:59 pm.

Week 2 (September 26) Library and Spark presentations

Presentation on Spark: a centre for social research innovation, 11:30 am – 12:45 pm

Spark Executive Director [Allison Van](#) will present and answer questions on the activities of [Spark](#) and their relevance to MA students.

Research library presentation, 1 pm-2:20 pm

Graduate Studies Librarian [Leeanne Romane](#) and Data Specialist [Vivek Jadon](#) will make a presentation on how best to benefit from the valuable library resources available to MA students.

Week 3 (October 17) How to create a good research question for your MRP

Discussion of how to identify research questions

Identifying a research question that is interesting and feasible is a major challenge and first step in any research project, including your MRP. This session will provide insights into how to do this, following by a general discussion. The sessions participants are:

- Dr. Katherine Boothe
- Dr. Peter Nyers

In preparation for this session you should read and be prepared to discuss the following three readings:

Bachner, Jennifer, (2012). [The Common Mistakes Students Make When Crafting Research Questions](#) American Political Science Association 2012 Teaching & Learning Conference Paper.

Day, C., & Koivu, K. L. (2019). [Finding the Question: A Puzzle-Based Approach to the Logic of Discovery](#). *Journal of Political Science Education*, 15(3), 377–386.

Vicki Squire (2013). "Attuning to *mess*," in Mark B. Salter and Can E. Mutlu, eds., *Research Methods in Critical Security Studies: An Introduction* (New York: Routledge), pp. 37-41 [this reading will be posted in a file folder in Teams].

The following optional reading may be useful:

Agee, Jane. 2009. "[Developing qualitative research questions: a reflective process](#)." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 22(4): 431–447.

Note: Your sample research question is due Monday October 18, midnight.

Week 4 (October 31) MRP initial topic feedback
Feedback on sample research questions

We will break down into Topic Groups and discuss the sample MRP research questions that everyone submitted.

Week 5 (November 14) Research Shop and community-based research presentation

Community-based research at McMaster

The [Research Shop](#) brings together graduate students and senior undergraduate students to work with public, non-profit, and community organizations in Hamilton to provide plain-language answers to research questions. Evan Gravely, Research Shop Manager, will present on the activities of the Research Shop and on community-engaged research. Even if you aren't doing community-based research, the ethics and principles involved are valuable for research more generally. This presentation will be from 11:30 am – 12:30 pm. We will discuss other MA Colloquium related issues in the remainder of the time.

Week 5 (November 28) Research Ethics

This seminar will be led Dr. Tony Porter, who sat on the McMaster Research Ethics Board (MREB) for two years, and who has been involved with the consultative process for development of the [Tri-Council Policy Statement on Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans](#) (TCPS) sponsored by the three Canadian federal granting agencies. The TCPS sets out the rules for Canadian researchers working with human participants.

If you do interviews or field research with human participants for your MRP you will need MREB clearance. He will talk about the importance and content of research ethics.

Tony Porter initially became involved with research ethics governance issues as a result of concern with the poor fit between the rules, which in part originated from biomedical research, and political science research. These concerns are articulated in this article, not required for this session:

Porter, Tony. 2008. "[Research Ethics Governance and Political Science in Canada](#)." *PS: Political Science & Politics* 41(03): 495–499.

However, in the light of subsequent experience and the revision of the rules, he is presently fully supportive of the rules, while recognizing ongoing challenges with them.

Note: Your formal MRP proposal, for presentation to your Topic Group, is due January 9, 9 am.

Week 6 (January 9) MRP proposal discussion

You should come to this session prepared to give feedback on the MRP proposals that were submitted by students in your Topic Group.

Week 7 (January 23) Political Theory Roundtable

The following faculty members will speak to the three questions about subfields noted above and below, from 11:30 am-1 pm:

- Dr. Catherine Frost
- Dr. Inder Marwah

1. What are the big current issues in the subfield (the real world or the discipline)?
2. What do you love about the subfield, and how, if at all, would you like to see the subfield change?
3. What are the analytical or research tools we have developed that can be applied to a pressing emerging or ongoing problem of concern that the subfield is well positioned to address?

If you are in the Theory Subfield Group your group will also be presenting in this session.

Week 8 (February 6) Global Politics Roundtable

The following faculty members will speak to the three questions about subfields noted above, from 9:30-11 am:

- Dr. Nathan Andrews
- Dr. Peter Nyers
- Dr. Robert O'Brien

If you are in the Global Politics Subfield Group your group will also be presenting in this session.

Week 9 (February 27) Canadian, Comparative and Public Policy Roundtable

The following faculty members will speak to the three questions about subfields noted above, from 9:30 - 11 am:

- Dr. Katherine Boothe
- Dr. Maria Gintova
- Dr. Netina Tan

If you are in these Subfield Groups your group will also be presenting in this session.

Note: your transcript for the “First Findings” session is due Thursday March 9, 11:59 pm.

Note: the Mapping the Global Dimensions of Public Policy conference is scheduled to take place Friday March 10 and Saturday March 11, 2022. Please make careful notes to prepare for the discussion in the Colloquium session of March 27.

Week 10 (March 13) MRP “First findings” research presentation

You will present your 375-word speech as explained in the Assignments section above.

Week 12 (March 27) Discussion of Mapping Conference

- Discussion of the conference, drawing on the panel critiques everyone has submitted. See instructions in the assessment section of this course outline.

Note: your brief written update on your MRP is due April 3, 11:59 pm

Week 12 (April 10) MRP research update reports

- You will speak briefly to your written report on your progress on your MRP and receive feedback on it. See instructions in the Assignment section above for more details on the written report.

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

Assignments will be submitted through folders in Teams, unless otherwise noted above.

Grades

The grade for the Colloquium is assessed on a P (pass) /F (fail) basis. You must perform satisfactorily on all the above assignments to pass the course and receive your MA degree.

Late Assignments

Assignments are due on the date indicated. If you are unable to do so, please contact the instructor.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

Regular attendance is expected of all graduate students. Please contact the instructor in advance (or as soon as possible) via email if you are going to be absent.

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.

Academic Integrity

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

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 behaviour 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. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., on-line search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

Courses with an On-Line Element

Some courses may use on-line elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, 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 a course that uses on-line elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

Online Proctoring

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

Conduct Expectations

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact Student Accessibility Services (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities policy.

Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the RISO policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar’s Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

Copyright and Recording

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and artistic work, including lectures by University instructors

The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done by either the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution, or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

Extreme Circumstances

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

Course Modification

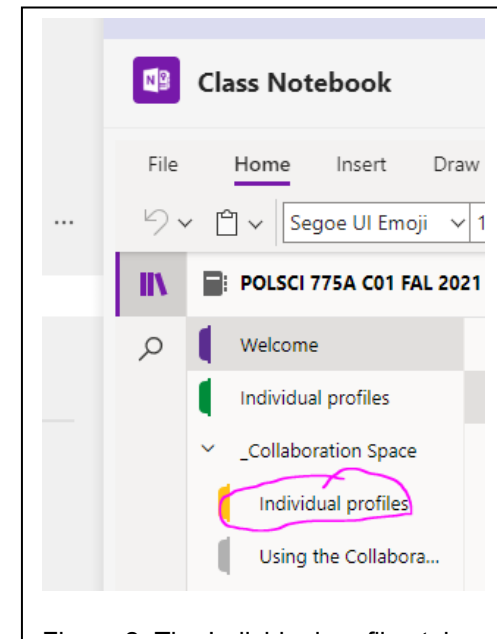
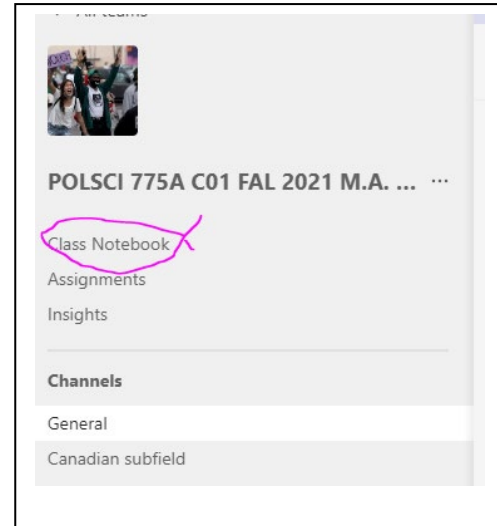
The instructor and university reserve the right to modify elements of the course during the term. The university may change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances. If either type of modification becomes necessary, reasonable notice and communication with the students 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.

How to set up an individual profile page on our MS Teams site

Please start by reading the instructions on page 4 of the course outline. These instructions are supplementary to those. Please note that the two graphics below were from fall 2021 because the current Team for this course was not available yet when the course outline was prepared, but the current Team will have a similar look.

The individual profile pages will be located in the Teams Class Notebook. Please follow these steps:

1. Get onto the Team set up for the Colloquium.
2. From the General channel, click on the “Class Notebook” link at the top of the page (see Figure 1).
3. Look for the “Collaboration Space” tab on the left side and click on it. You should see a small icon that looks like three books on a bookshelf. . It may take a moment for the Notebook to load up from the cloud. That icon brings up the table of contents.
4. Click on the “Individual profiles” tab.
5. You should see Tony Porter’s profile and others as they get added. You will notice “Add page” at the bottom of the column of names. Click on this to add a page for yourself.
6. On the page that you are now on, add your name in the upper left corner. This will be your profile. Please use the names you prefer to use in interactions in this class.
7. Please create your profile page, as explained in the course outline. You will see the various ways to create content on your page in the tabs above it. You can insert pictures, text, hyperlinks, video and drawing.
8. Feel free to be creative, but of course you must be mindful of the code of student conduct, as noted on the McMaster University Avenue to Learn site when you access any course through that site. As that note states “the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments and applies to any interactions that adversely affect community members, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities.”
9. Your individual profile will be visible to everyone in the Colloquium, so it would be helpful to convey something about any particular interests you have in the content of the MA program since that will be relevant as discussions proceed through the course.



10. The profile pages are located in the collaborative spaces and everyone on the Team can modify any of the pages in that collaborative space. You should not modify anyone else's profile page without their explicit permission. A record of all modifications and who made them is available to the instructor, so there is a form of accountability for everything that is added to the collaborative spaces.