

# GENOCIDE: SOCIOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL PERSPECTIVES

## Fall 2020

**Instructor:** Pietro Pirani  
**Email:** piranip@mcmaster.ca  
**Lecture:** Thursdays 7:00 pm – 9:00 pm  
**Room:** On-Line Delivery

**Office Hours:** Mondays 4:00 pm - 5:00 pm or by appointment. All meetings with students will be held on Zoom

### Contents

Course Description.....	3
Course Objectives .....	3
Required Materials and Texts .....	3
Class Format.....	3
Course Evaluation – Overview .....	4
Course Evaluation – Details .....	4
Tutorial attendance and participation (20%) .....	4
Case study (10%) .....	4
Midterm (20%) .....	5
Research paper (20%) – Due date: November 19 <sup>th</sup> , 2020.....	5
Final take-home examination (30%) – Due date: December 18 <sup>th</sup> , 2020. ....	5
Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings .....	5
Week 1 (September 10).....	5
Week 2 (September 17).....	5
Week 3 (September 24).....	6
Week 4 (October 1) .....	6
Week 5 (October 8) .....	6
Week 6 (October 12 – October 18) Mid-term recess .....	6
Week 7 (October 22) .....	6
Week 8 (October 29) .....	7
Week 9 (November 5).....	7
Week 10 (November 12).....	7
Week 11 (November 19).....	7
Week 12 (November 26).....	8
Week 13 (December 3).....	8

Course Policies .....	8
Grades.....	8
Late Assignments .....	8
Absences, Missed Work, Illness .....	8
Courses with an On-Line Element .....	8
Online Proctoring.....	9
Authenticity / Plagiarism Detection .....	9
Copyright and Recording .....	9
Academic Accommodation for Religious, Indigenous or Spiritual Observances (RISO) .....	10
Academic Integrity Statement.....	10
Conduct Expectations.....	10
Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities.....	11
Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy .....	11
Course Modification .....	11
Extreme Circumstances.....	11
Appendix 1.....	11
Instructions for the research paper .....	11

## **Course Description**

This course is an introduction to genocide. The first half of the course will provide an overview of the topic of genocide, from the origin of the term in the mid-20<sup>th</sup> century to its 21<sup>st</sup> century reality, through its historical evolution, theoretical notions, and instruments. In this section, the course will focus on the legal, political, and sociological relationship that exists between the notion of “genocide” and other core international crimes, such as “crimes against humanity” and “war crimes” and the role of and concerns that have been raised about the International Criminal Court. The second half of the course, instead, aims to explore some of the contemporary issues surrounding the idea of “genocide”. Furthermore, it will discuss the efficacy, and limitations, of some of the political remedies, such as apologies, compensation, and memorialization, that the international community and states have engineered to acknowledge the traumas that societies and individuals have suffered as a result of genocidal acts. The course will take both a thematic and case study approach.

## **Course Objectives**

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

1. Explain the origins of the concept of “genocide”, and appreciate its increasingly prominent role in international law and humanitarian policy;
2. Examine key issues from a sociological and political perspective;
3. Critically analyse the socio-cultural and international contexts that influence the evolution of crimes against humanity in jurisprudence.
4. Demonstrate effective writing communication skills in various formats (e.g., group discussion and essay) and for various purposes (e.g., defending, explaining, persuading, and arguing).
5. Develop confidence to express and articulate their ideas on a broader level.

## **Required Materials and Texts**

- *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction* ([https://campusstore.mcmaster.ca/cgi-mcm/ws/txsub.pl?wsTERMG1=204&wsDEPTG1=POLSCI&wsCOURSEG1=3KK3&wsSECTIONG1=EVE%20C01&crit\\_cnt=1](https://campusstore.mcmaster.ca/cgi-mcm/ws/txsub.pl?wsTERMG1=204&wsDEPTG1=POLSCI&wsCOURSEG1=3KK3&wsSECTIONG1=EVE%20C01&crit_cnt=1))
- All other readings are available digitally, free of charge, via McMaster’s online library or via Avenue to Learn.

## **Class Format**

This course is taught over 14 weeks, comprising of one two-hour lectures and one-hour tutorial sessions per week. Students are expected to participate actively in tutorials and complete the weekly assigned readings.

Modes of delivery:

Lecture: virtual asynchronous      Tutorial: virtual synchronous

## **Course Evaluation – Overview**

1. Tutorial attendance and participation (20%)
2. Case study (10%)
3. Midterm test (20%)
4. Research paper (20%)
5. Take-home final exam (30%)

## **Course Evaluation – Details**

### **Tutorial attendance and participation (20%)**

Students are required to take an active role during the course. This means completing the assigned readings for each class, showing up to on-line tutorials regularly and on time, and participating consistently in tutorial discussion with quality contributions.

Quality comments possess one or more of the following properties:

- Offers a different and unique, but relevant, perspective;
- Contributes to moving the discussion and analysis forward;
- Builds on other comments;
- Transcends the “I feel” syndrome. That is, it includes some evidence, argumentation, or recognition of inherent tradeoffs. In other words, the comment demonstrates some reflective thinking.

### **Case study (10%)**

Students are asked to form teams of four and **give** one 10-12-minute video presentation during the semester. Each group will **explore** one of the three analytical themes (before the genocide, the genocide, after the genocide).

To join a group, please go to our website on A2L → Communication → Groups.

1. Armenians
2. Ukraine
3. Holocaust
4. Cambodia
5. Rwanda
6. Bosnia
7. East Timor
8. Christians and Yazidis in Iraq and Syria

Each student **MUST** join a group by September 17<sup>th</sup>, 2020. A2L will assign randomly a group to unassigned students after September 17<sup>th</sup>.

Video presentation must be uploaded to the A2L dropbox by 11:59 p.m. on the due date.

### **Midterm (20%)**

The midterm will be written online in A2L on Thursday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7 pm Eastern Time.

1. The midterm will cover ALL COURSE NOTES and COURSE READINGS from **Week 1 to Week 5**.
2. The midterm will have **50 questions**.
3. Students will only be able to access the test once and will have 1 hour and 30 minutes to complete it once you have started.
4. 10 sample questions will be posted at the end of **Week 5** to give you an idea about the nature of the questions on the midterm.

### **Research paper (20%) – Due date: November 19<sup>th</sup>, 2020**

Your paper should be 2700-3000 words. An important part of the course is the research paper. The paper is designed to aid you in learning more about crimes against humanity, and to improve your writing and research skills. **For more instructions about the paper, see Appendix 1**

### **Final take-home examination (30%) – Due date: December 18<sup>th</sup>, 2020.**

The take-home final exam will be available to you at the beginning of Week 13. For the exam you will choose **two essay questions** out of a list of **10**, which draw on all the topics and readings you have encountered throughout the course. You are expected to write in total 1500-2000 words. You are to upload the final exam into the appropriate drop box in A2L. Please include a separate cover page which includes your name, your student number, the course number and title, and instructor's name. There will be a late penalty of 2% per day (including Saturday and Sunday). **No examinations will be accepted more than one week late.**

#### **Please note:**

This course will require electronic submission of assignments through the plagiarism detection service [Turnitin](#).

## **Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings**

### **Week 1 (September 10)**

**Introduction and Overview of Course**

### **Week 2 (September 17)**

**The Origins of Genocide (part one)**

❖ *Genocide* - chapters 1

- ❖ Patricia M. Wald (2007) "Genocide and Crimes against Humanity", *Washington University Global Studies Law Review* 6 (3)

### **Week 3 (September 24)**

#### **The Origins of Genocide (part two)**

- ❖ *Genocide* - chapters 2
- ❖ Watch video (3 minutes long) - [Three Minute Thought: The Concept of the Political \(YouTube\)](#)

Notes: Case study 1: Armenians (groups: CS1a, CS1b, CS1c)  
Due date: September 23

### **Week 4 (October 1)**

#### **The Sociology of Genocide**

- ❖ *Genocide* – chapter 11
- ❖ Amy O'Donoghue (2015) "[Sovereign Exception: Notes on the Thought of Giorgio Agamben](#)" *Critical Legal Thinking*

Notes: Case study 2: Ukraine (groups: CS2a, CS2b, CS2c)  
Due date: September 30

### **Week 5 (October 8)**

#### **Political Science and International Relations (I)**

- ❖ *Genocide* – Chapter 12
- ❖ Scott Straus. "Political Science and Genocide." [The Oxford Handbook of Genocide Studies](#): Oxford University Press, September 18, 2012. [Oxford Handbooks Online](#).

Notes: Case study 3: Holocaust (groups: CS3a, CS3b, CS3c)  
Due date: October 7

### **Week 6 (October 12 – October 18) Mid-term recess**

No class

### **Week 7 (October 22)**

**MIDTERM TEST**

## **Week 8 (October 29)**

### **Political Science and International Relations (II)**

- ❖ *Genocide* – Chapter 12
- ❖ Shaw, Martin. *Genocide and International Relations: Changing Patterns in the Transitions of the Late Modern World*. Cambridge University Press, 2013, pp.145-160.

Notes: Case study 4: Cambodia (groups: CS4a, CS4b, CS4c)  
Due date: October 28

## **Week 9 (November 5)**

### **Ideology and Genocide**

- ❖ David Leopold (2013) "Marxism and Ideology: From Marx to Althusser" in *The Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*, pp. 20-27; 28-32

Notes: Case study 5: Rwanda (groups: CS5a, CS5b, CS5c)  
Due date: November 4

## **Week 10 (November 12)**

### **Terrorism and Genocide**

- ❖ McCauley C. 2012. "Extremes of asymmetric conflict: terrorism and genocide." In Daniel J. Christie (Ed.), *Encyclopedia of Peace Psychology*, first edition. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley-Blackwell.
- ❖ Rae, G. (2016). The real enmity of Carl Schmitt's concept of the political. *Journal of International Political Theory*, 12(3), 258–275.

Notes (a): Case study 6: Bosnia (groups: CS6a, CS6b, CS6c)  
Due date: November 11

## **Week 11 (November 19)**

### **Justice, Truth and Redress**

- ❖ *Genocide* – chapter 15
- ❖ Moon, Claire (2012) "'Who'll Pay Reparations on My Soul?' Compensation, Social Control and Social Suffering" *Social & Legal Studies* 21 (2)

Notes (a): Case study 7: East Timor (groups: CS7a, CS7b, CS7c)  
Due date: November 18

Notes (b): Research paper  
Due date: November 19

## Week 12 (November 26)

### Strategies of Intervention and Prevention

- ❖ *Genocide* – chapter 16
- ❖ Simon, Thomas W. *Genocide, Torture, and Terrorism: Ranking International Crimes and Justifying Humanitarian Intervention*, Palgrave Macmillan US, 2015, pp. 161-173.

Notes: Case study 8: Christians and Yazidis in Iraq and Syria (groups: CS8a, CS8b, CS8c)

## Week 13 (December 3)

### Review

## Course Policies

### 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-
67-69	C+
63-66	C
60-62	C-
57-59	D+
53-56	D
50-52	D-
0-49	F

### Late Assignments

There will be a late penalty of 2% per day (including Saturday and Sunday)

### Absences, Missed Work, Illness

McMaster Student Absence Form (MSAF): 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”.

### 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.

### **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](http://www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity).

### **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.

## **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.

## **Academic Integrity Statement**

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.

## **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](mailto:sas@mcmaster.ca) to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University's [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

### **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.

### **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.

## **Appendix 1**

### **Instructions for the research paper**

An important part of the course is the research paper. The paper is designed to aid you in learning more about genocides and to improve your writing and research skills.

**The topic of paper may be selected from any of the material we will cover in the course.**

1. Must be an argumentative paper, which means that you must provide information about the topic as well as present an argument with supporting ideas and opposing ideas of an argumentative issue. For more information on how to write an argumentative paper, check out: [Purdue Online Writing Lab](#)
    - a. **Please note** that **descriptive essays** which largely “re-tell the story” **cannot** qualify for a grade greater than **C+**.
  2. Must be a **minimum of 2700 words** to a **maximum of 3000 words**, but **excluding** works cited and cover page
    - a. **Note:** Under length Deficiency Penalty = –10%
  3. Should have a **separate Cover Page** which has: your name, your student number, this course’s number and title, and **my name**
  4. Must be typed in **12pt** font in Times New Roman
  5. Must be written in **formal academic English**, obeying formal British or American or Canadian grammar, spelling, and language rules – check out: [Laurier Writing Resources](#)
    - o **Please Note:** Marks will not be deducted for **occasional errors in grammar or spelling**; the mark primarily reflects the student’s ability to **analyse, organize and review** a topic in the review format. However, **major or consistent style problems will lower the final grade**
- Must have an introduction, body paragraphs, conclusion, bibliography/works cited
  - Must have page numbers
  - Must be **double-spaced**
  - For this paper you can use a **citation style of your choice**. For guidelines: [Evaluating & Citing Sources](#)
    - o Note: No Citations Penalty = –10%
  - **Good academic sources: journal articles and books** through McMaster’s on-line journal retrievals systems
  - **At least 4 scholarly journals or book sources**
    - o **Note:** Less than four academic sources = –10%
  - **No textbooks** are considered as part of your academic sources, and should be used sparingly for only limited factual or statistical data
  - The paper **MUST** be submitted **electronically** in **WORD** format. Any other formats will not be accepted. The essay assignments should be uploaded to the A2L dropbox by 11:59 p.m. on **December 18<sup>th</sup>**. There will be a late penalty of 2% per day (including Saturday and Sunday). If you are going to be late, PLEASE contact me before the deadline. No papers will be accepted after one week past the deadline.
  - The marking sheet on the next page shows other expectations for your paper.

**MCMASTER UNIVERSITY**  
**Department of Political Science**  
**POLISCI 3KK3**

**ESSAY MARKING SHEET:**

**MARK:**

<b><i>Organization and coherence</i></b>	
The organization of the essay is clear	
You have the tendency to change topics abruptly without any explanation of these transitions from one topic to another.	
The introduction is not fully developed. You should have spent more time in defining your thesis and describing which topics you would be covering in the body.	
Your essay lacks organization. Try to plan and arrange your ideas logically.	
Your essay shows basic organizational structure, but the ideas needs to be more clearly connected.	
<b><i>Paragraphs</i></b>	
Each paragraph is unified around a clear main point	
Some paragraphs include details or discussion unrelated to their main points	
<b><i>Transitions</i></b>	
The transitions work well between paragraphs	
Edit for more effective transitions between paragraphs	
<b><i>General comments</i></b>	
Your essay is well written and developed. I really enjoyed reading it.	
Your essay is well written and developed. However, you have the tendency to make statements without supporting them with the appropriate source.	

You try to cover too many aspects of your topic in your paper. The next time you write a paper, please try to build your paper around one or two concepts. Your paper tackles interesting issues, but you did have neither the time nor the space to unfold the complexity of the issue under scrutiny.	
Your final exam does not meet the requirements of the word count expectation.	

**Further comments:**