

**GENOCIDE: SOCIOLOGICAL AND POLITICAL
PERSPECTIVES**
POLSCI 3KK3
Fall 2022

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Lecture: Tuesday 14:30 – 16:20,
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Course Description

An examination of genocide and other extreme crimes against humanity. Students will examine the different phases of genocide: before genocide, the genocide, and the aftermath. It will ask students to answer difficult questions such as, how do we study genocide? How do different societies remember genocide? And why are some actions never recognized as genocides?

The course will investigate specific genocides around the world, examining the mechanics and people that engage as perpetrators of genocide. Themes of the course include the influence of specific ideologies, the exercise of state power, and reconstruction of both political and social life post-genocide. Students should think critically about the international community's definition of genocide and its responsibility to stop or prevent future genocides.

Course Objectives

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

- Comprehend the origins of genocide, as both a concept of analysis and the specific acts of killing around the world;
- Understand the key issues from a sociological and political perspective;
- Appreciate the complexities involved in debates concerning genocide studies;
- Critically assess the definition of genocide and the role of the international community in stopping or preventing mass atrocities.

Required Materials and Texts

- All reading material will be available online.

Class Format

The course includes three hours of lecture per week.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Annotated Bibliography - 15%, due October 7
2. Research Essay – 35%, due December 2
3. Avenue to Learn Participation – 20%, Weeks 2-5, 7-12
4. Take-Home Final Exam – 30%, due December 16

Course Evaluation – Details

Annotated Bibliography (15%), due October 7

This assignment will consist of three sections: First, write a paragraph describing a tentative thesis for the research paper. It should present an argumentative position.

Second, simply state the citation style that will be used (MLA, APA, Chicago, etc.) And third, cite 3 peer-reviewed journal articles in the citation style of your choice and do a short write-up of 4-5 sentences for each source. The write-up should describe the main argument of the reading and why it will be important to your research paper.

Citation Style Guides:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/resources.html

Research Essay (35%), due December 2

Write a 1,500-2,000-word research essay that engages with the theme of genocide. Students are free to pick their own topic, but it must present an argumentative position that explores one of the broad topics of the course. Topics could focus on a particular genocide or be comparative. Topics could explore the origins of one or more genocides, present a feminist critique of genocide and gendered violence, the legacy of colonialism, nationalism, the bureaucracy of genocide, the lasting impact of genocide, etc.

The Research Essay must cite at least 5 peer-reviewed journal articles or academic books.

Avenue to Learn Participation (20%), Weeks 2-5, 7-12

Each week students are expected to answer questions posed by the instructor. Students can also respond to other students' comments. At the end of the term, students will receive a grade based on quality and quantity of the answers and comments. The answers should show reflection on the readings.

Questions will be posted each Monday in the Discussions section on Avenue to Learn. Students have until Sunday by 11:59pm to answer the questions for that week. There will be no make-up for missed weeks.

Take-Home Final Exam (30%), due December 16

The final exam will be a take-home exam. Students will be given the exam on December 9. There will be 5 questions and students are expected to answer 4. Each answer must present an argument, using examples from lectures & readings.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (September 6 & 7)

September 6 – Introduction to the Course

September 7 – What is Genocide?

Optional Reading: Lemkin, Raphael. "The Crime of Genocide." *American Scholar*, vol. 15, no. 2, April 1946, pp. 227-230.

<http://www.preventgenocide.org/lemkin/americanscholar1946.htm>

Week 2 (September 13 & 14)

September 13 – Genocide Studies

September 14 – The Contested Meaning of Genocides

Readings: Verdeja, Ernesto. "The Political Science of Genocide: Outlines of an Emerging Research Agenda." *Perspectives of Politics*, vol. 10, no. 2, June 2012, pp. 307-321.

Week 3 (September 20 & 21)

September 20 – Identity & the Nation

September 21 – Gendered Violence

Readings: Hardi, Choman. "Gender and Genocide." *The Routledge Handbook of Gender and Security*, edited by Caron E. Gentry, Laura J. Shepherd & Laura Sjoberg, Routledge, 2018, pp. 182-193.

Week 4 (September 27 & 28)

September 27 – The Regime: Ideology & State Power

September 28 – The Rise of Nazi Ideology and Control

Readings: Steizinger, Johannes. "The Significance of Dehumanization: Nazi Ideology and Its Psychological Consequences." *Politics, Religion & Ideology*, vol. 19, no. 2, 2018, pp. 139-157.

Week 5 (October 4 & 5)

October 4 – The Holocaust

October 5 – Post-War: Nuremberg Trials & International Human Rights

Readings: Dimsdale, Joel E. "The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial: What Do We Do with the Criminals?" *Anatomy of Malice: The Enigma of the Nazi War Criminals*, Yale University Press, 2016, pp. 37-50.

Notes: Annotated Bibliography due Friday, October 7 by 11:59pm

Week 6 (October 10-14) – Mid-term recess, No Class

Week 7 (October 18 & 19)

October 18 – The Banality of Evil & the Mechanics of Genocide

October 19 – The Banality of Evil & the People of Genocide

Readings: Lederman, Shmuel. "The Radicalization of the Banality of Evil: Ideology and Political Conformity in Arendt." *New German Critique*, vol. 137, no. 2, August 2019, pp. 197-220.

Week 8 (October 25 & 26)

October 25 – Genocide by Other Means

October 26 – Holodomor

Readings: Serbyn, Roman. “Lemkin on the Ukrainian Genocide.” vol. 1, no. 1, Winter-Spring 2009, pp. 1-2.

Lemkin, Raphael. “Soviet Genocide in Ukraine.” *Holodomor Studies*, vol. 1, no. 1, Winter-Spring 2009, pp. 3-8.

Week 9 (November 1 & 2)

November 1 – On Violence

November 2 – Cambodian Genocide

Readings: Hinton, Alexander Laban. “Why People Kill.” *Why Did They Kill? Cambodia in the Shadow of Genocide*, University of California Press, 2005, pp. 276-298.

Week 10 (November 8 & 9)

November 8 – Imperialism & Colonialism

November 9 – Cultural Genocide

Readings: Bilsky, Leora & Rachel Klagsbrun. “The Return of Cultural Genocide.” *The European Journal of International Law*, vol. 29, no. 2, 2018, pp. 373-396.

Notes: Friday November 11 – Last day for withdrawing from courses without failure by default

Week 11 (November 15 & 16)

November 15 – The Legacy of Colonialism

November 16 – Rwandan Genocide

Readings: Mamdani, Mahmood. “The Racialization of the Hutu/Tutsi Difference under Colonialism.” *When Victims Become Killers: Colonialism, Nativism, and the Genocide in Rwanda*, Princeton University Press, 2001, pp. 76-102.

Week 12 (November 22 & 23)

November 22 – Ending Genocide

November 23 – Tribunals and Truth & Reconciliation Commissions

Readings: Isaacs, Anita. “Truth and the Challenge of Reconciliation in Guatemala.” *Reconciliation(s): Transitional Justice in Postconflict Societies*, McGill-Queen's University Press, 2009, pp. 116-146.

Week 13 (November 29 & 30)

November 29 – How Do We Remember Genocide? Why Do We Refuse to Recognize Genocide?

November 30 – No Class

No Reading

Notes: Research Essay due Friday December 2 by 11:59pm

Week 14 (December 6 & 7)

December 6 – Future Genocides

December 7– Review

No Readings

Notes: Take-Home Final Exam will be released Friday December 9

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

Papers must be electronically submitted on Avenue to Learn by **11:59pm** on the due date. All papers must have the student's name and student number, as well as the course code, and the date the paper is handed in.

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

The penalties for late submission of assigned coursework are **2%** per day, including weekends, unless accompanied by medical documentation.

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.

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](https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/), 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 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.