

POLITICS OF BORDERS
POLSCI 4PB3
Winter 2022, Term 2

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Course Description

This seminar investigates emerging theoretical and empirical developments in border control, security, and surveillance. While securing the territorial border remains a politically significant issue in international relations, the actual practices and techniques of border control have moved well beyond policing the 'border line'. The seminar will investigate the variety of practices that occur in the borders, frontiers, zones, and camps of the contemporary era, including themes such as biometric controls, pre-emptive practices, cyberborders, irregular migration, humanitarian interventions, and social movements for 'no borders'.

Course Objectives

The specific aims of the course are:

- To read and come to understand a variety of scholarly writings on the global politics of borders and border controls.
- To develop a critical appreciation of the historical emergence, transformation, experience, and contestation of borders.
- To introduce students to a range of concepts from social theory and their applicability to understanding contemporary issues in international relations.
- To improve and refine writing and research skills through short and long essay format.
- To develop group leadership and discussion skills through seminar presentations and participation.

Required Materials and Texts

- Thomas King, *Borders* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 2021).

The Thomas King book is available in the Campus Store and from the usual online sellers. All other readings are available online via Avenue to Learn.

Class Format

This course is run as an advanced seminar where a high degree of student participation is expected.

Course Evaluation – Overview

<u>Component</u>	<u>Due Date</u>	<u>Description</u>	<u>Percentage</u>
Seminar Participation	Every class	Read assigned readings. Active engagement in class discussion	20%
	Wednesdays 12noon	Keywords, Key Passage, Questions	
Class Leadership	Once per term	Presentation on readings; leading class discussion	10%
Short Essay	February 3	1,500 word essay	15%
Research Paper Outline	March 3	250 word abstract, 5 key words, 10 academic sources annotated bibliography	5%
Research Paper	April 7	4,000 word research paper	40%
3MT	April 7	3 minute presentation of research papers, with discussion	10%

Course Evaluation – Details

Seminar Participation (20%)

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 and 8-11 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 A2L course page ("Communication" → "Discussions") by

Wednesday at 12noon. 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 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 copies to the class. Class leaders are encouraged to use visual material and bring examples, illustrations and cases into their presentations. For additional ideas on how to organize the class discussion, see the "Tips for Class Leadership" document that is posted to the Avenue to Learn site.

Short Essay (15%), due February 3, 2022

Write a 1,500 word essay that critically engages with Thomas King's graphic novel, *Borders*. What does King's novel tell us about the status of territorial borders of nation-states? How are these borders experienced differently? Are the borders of settler-states actually settled, or are they up for contestation? Why does the mother refuse to declare her citizenship as either American or Canadian? What is the politics of this refusal? What is your assessment of how the border guards acted? The story focuses on the guards' guns – what do you think they symbolize? What is the power of the media in these circumstances? The book was originally published as a short story in 1993. Do you think the interactions with the border guards would have changed since the attacks of 9/11?

Research Paper Outline (5%), due March 3, 2022

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 7, 2022

Each student will write a major research essay on a topic of their choosing, but that is related to the course themes. The research essay will be 14-16 pages in length (about

4,000 words). The theoretical and empirical sources of the paper can draw upon any of the course readings. However, the paper must also demonstrate independent research.

3MT Presentation (10%), due April 7, 2022

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 through a secret ballot vote by the class.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (January 13, 2022): Introduction

Readings:

No Readings

Week 2 (January 20, 2022): Historicizing Borders

Readings:

Thomas King, *Borders* (Toronto: HarperCollins, 2021).

Ruben Zaiotti, *Cultures of Border Control* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011): 45-66.

Nira Yuval-Davis, Georgie Wemyss, and Kathryn Cassidy, *Bordering* (Cambridge: Polity, 2019): 30-63.

Harsha Walia, *Border & Rule: Global Migration, Capitalism, and the Rise of Racist Nationalism* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2021): 19-37.

Week 3 (January 27, 2022): Border Walls

Readings:

Ainhoa Ruiz Benedicto, Mark Akkerman, Pere Brunet, *A Walled World: Towards a Global Apartheid* (Barcelona: Centre Delàs d'Estudis per la Pau, 2020): 9-46

Elisabeth Vallet, 'Border Walls and the Illusion of Deterrence', in Reece Jones, ed., *Open Borders: In Defense of Free Movement* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2019): 156-168.

Shahram Khosravi, 'What do we see if we look at the border from the other side?' *Social Anthropology* 27:3 (2019): 409-424.

Karen E. Till et al., 'Interventions in the political geography of walls', *Political Geography* 33 (2013): 52-62.

Week 4 (February 3, 2022): Passports and Biometric Borders

Readings:

John Torpey, *The Invention of the Passport: Surveillance, Citizenship and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000): 4-20, 158-167.

Radhika Mongia, 'Race, Nationality, Mobility: A History of the Passport', *Public Culture* 11:3 (1999): 527-56.

Kamal Sadiq, 'Documentary Citizenship', in *Paper Citizens: How Illegal Immigrants Acquire Citizenship in Developing Countries* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2009): 101-135.

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

Note: Short Essay Due

Week 5 (February 10, 2022): Everyday Bordering

Readings:

Nira Yuval-Davis, Georgie Wemyss, and Kathryn Cassidy, *Bordering* (Cambridge: Polity, 2019): 97-129.

Chris Rumford, 'Citizens and Borderwork in Europe', *Space and Polity* 12:1 (2008): 1-12.

Thom Tyerman, 'Everyday Borders in Calais: The Globally Intimate Injustices of Segregation', *Geopolitics* 26:2 (2021): 464-485.

Nick Vaughan-Williams, 'Populist and "Post-Truth" Border Politics: The Securitization of Public Opinion on Migration', in *Vernacular Border Security: Citizens' Narratives of Europe's 'Migration Crisis'* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021): 60-95.

Week 6 (February 17, 2022): Case Study: US/Mexico Border

Readings:

Reece Jones, 'The US-Mexico Border: Rise of a Militarized Zone' in *Violent Borders* (London: Verso, 2016): 29-47.

Roxanne Lynn Doty 'States of Exception on the Mexico–US Border: Security, "Decisions", and Civilian Border Patrols', *International Political Sociology*, 1 (2007): 113-127.

Naomi Paik, *Bans, Walls, Raids, Sanctuary: Understanding U.S. Immigration for the Twenty-First Century* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2020): 47-73.

Sophie Smith, 'No More Deaths: Direct Aid in the US-Mexico Border Zone', *South Atlantic Quarterly* 116:4 (2017): 851-862.

Week 7 (Feb 21-27, 2022) Mid-term recess

No class.

Week 8 (March 3, 2022): Deserts, Islands, Seas

Readings:

Harsha Walia, *Border & Rule: Global Migration, Capitalism, and the Rise of Racist Nationalism* (Halifax: Fernwood Publishing, 2021): 93-104.

Cetta Mainwaring, *At Europe's Edge: Migration and crisis in the Mediterranean* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2019): 50-82.

Maurice Stierl, 'The Mediterranean as a *carceral seascape*', *Political Geography* 88 (2021): 1-10.

Allison Mountz, 'The enforcement archipelago: Detention, haunting, and asylum on islands', *Political Geography* 30:3 (2011): 118-128.

Note: Research Paper Proposal Due

Week 9 (March 10, 2022): Deportation/Anti-Deportation

Readings:

Tanya Golash-Boza, 'Punishment Beyond the Deportee: The Collateral Consequences of Deportation' *American Behavioral Scientist* 63:9 (2019): 230-234.

William Walters, 'Anti-Deportation' in *State Secrecy and Security: Refiguring the Covert Imaginary* (London: Routledge, 2021): 116-143.

Leah F. Vosko, *Disrupting Deportability: Transnational Workers Organize* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2020): 11-41.

Peter Nyers, 'Abject Cosmopolitanism: Anti-Deportation and the Politics of Protection', *Third World Quarterly* 24:6 (2003): 1069-1093.

Week 10 (March 17, 2022): Digital Borders

Readings:

Mark Latonero and Paula Kift, 'On Digital Passages and Borders: Refugees and the New Infrastructure for Movement and Control', *Social Media + Society* (2018): 1-11.

Michael Bourne, Heather Johnson, and Debbie Lisle, 'Laboratizing the Border: The Production, Translation and Anticipation of Security Technologies', *Security Dialogue* 46:4 (2015): 307-325.

Polly Pallister-Wilkins, 'How Walls Do Work: Security Barriers as Devices of Interruption and Data Capture', *Security Dialogue* 47:2 (2016): 151-164.

Georgios Glouftisios, 'Designing Digital Borders: The Visa Information System (VIS), in Marijn Hoijtink and Matthias Leese, eds., *Technology and Agency in International Relations* (London: Routledge, 2019): 164-187.

Week 11 (March 24, 2022): Beyond Borders?

Readings:

Bridget Anderson, Nandita Sharma, and Cynthia Wright, "'We are all foreigners": No Borders as a practical political project', in Peter Nyers and Kim Rygiel (eds), *Citizenship, Migrant Activism and the Politics of Movement* (New York: Routledge, 2012): 73-91.

Harald Bauder, 'The Possibilities of Open and No Borders', *Social Justice* 39:4 (2014): 76-96.

Todd Miller, *Empire of Borders: The Expansion of the U.S. Border Around the World* (London: Verso, 2019): 229-257.

Nick Vaughan-Williams, 'Desecuritizing Strangeness: Vernacular Counter-Narratives of Border Security', in *Vernacular Border Security: Citizens' Narratives of Europe's 'Migration Crisis'* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2021): 167-198.

Week 12 (March 31, 2022): ISA Conference

No class.

Week 13 (April 7, 2022): Presentation of Student Research

3MT Presentations

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

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

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.