

THEORIES OF INTERNATIONAL POLITICS

Term 1, Fall 2018

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Course Description

This course is designed to acquaint students with the main currents in the growing range of theoretical approaches that characterize the contemporary field of International Relations. We begin the first half of the course with a selection of readings that review ‘the state of the field’ and its origins, asking whose voices have dominated IR and whose interests and perspectives they speak. We then move to debates about epistemology and methodology, inquiring into what it means to make knowledge claims in our discipline and weighing various approaches to authorizing them. From there, we begin a genealogy of theory in International Relations, surveying the ‘Great Debates’ that give shape to the field’s story about its own origins before examining contemporary mainstream approaches. The second half of the course takes us through a series of critical interventions that have variously contested the mainstream and one another. Some of these are well established, others are still struggling toward recognition, and others even now are only appearing at the critical margins of the discipline. Part of what fashions the concerns of this course is the way in which particular epistemological, methodological, and traditional norms inform expectations within International Relations about what sorts of questions it is appropriate to ask, how we ought to go about answering those questions, and whose voices speak with authority in theory and practice. The overall objective, however, is to give students a broad grounding in the wide (and widening) theoretical terrain of the field.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course students should:

- Have a deeper understanding of key theoretical currents in international relations.
- Recognize and evaluate key concepts from contemporary social theory and how they both play a part in and help us to make sense of international relations.
- Have built on and refined research and writing skills through argumentative essays.
- Have developed skills in leading and participating in group discussions.

Required Materials and Texts

- All required readings are available online via e-Journals from the Library website and/or are accessible in the Department of Political Science.

Class Format

The course will operate on a weekly seminar format based on regular and consistent participation by all students.

Course Evaluation – Overview

1. Seminar Participation – 25%

2. Short Paper – 30%, due in class two weeks after chosen topic is covered
3. Longer Paper – 45%, due in class November 27, 2018

Course Evaluation – Details

Seminar Participation (25%)

Students will be graded on their participation in class discussions. Consistent participation informed by each week's assigned readings is expected. Beginning on week 2, one or two students per week will give short presentations (10-15 minutes in length) at the start of class. Presentations should offer students' critical assessments of the week's readings, highlighting common themes and making connections where appropriate. It is assumed that all students will come to class having read and thought about the assigned readings, so presentations should not simply summarize them. Each presentation should end by suggesting three or four questions with the aim of stimulating class discussion. (NB: presenters need only address the *assigned* readings for the week – recommended readings are intended to give additional background and elaboration of topics necessary for the longer paper due on November 27th).

Short Paper (30%), due in class two weeks after chosen topic is covered

Students will prepare a short paper of 8-10 pages in length. Topics will deal with issues raised in the assigned readings from a week selected by the student and will be developed individually by students in consultation with the instructor. This paper should deal with a topic from weeks 2 through 7 (i.e., up to and including the week of October 23rd excluding week 5, which is Reading Week). Please note that papers must be submitted in hard copy and cannot be accepted electronically or by fax.

Essay (45%), due in class November 27, 2018

Students will prepare an analytic essay of approximately 15 pages in length. Topics will deal with issues raised in the assigned and recommended readings of the course and will be developed individually by students in consultation with the instructor. Please note that papers must be submitted in hard copy and cannot be accepted electronically or by fax.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

Week 1 (Sept 11) Introduction

Topic: Introduction to the Course

Readings: None

Week 2 (Sept 18) What is IR Theory, What Is It For, and Whose Is It?

Topic: What Is International Relations Theory, What Is It For, and Whose Is It?

Assigned Readings:

- Martin Wight, "Why is There No International Theory?" in Herbert Butterfield and Martin Wight, eds., *Diplomatic Investigations: Essays in the Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1966).
- Stanley Hoffman, *Janus and Minerva: Essays in the Theory and Practice of International Politics* (London: Westview Press, 1987), pp.3-24.
- Steve Smith, "The Self Images of a Discipline: A Genealogy of International Relations Theory," in Ken Booth and Steve Smith, eds., *International Relations Theory Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).
- Robert Cox, "Social Forces, States and World Orders: Beyond International Relations Theory," *Millennium* 10:2 (Summer 1981).
- Cynthia Enloe, "Margins, Silences and Bottom Rungs: How to Overcome the Underestimation of Power in the Study of International Relations" in *The Curious Feminist: Searching for Women in a New Age of Empire* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004), pp. 19-42.

Recommended Readings:

- Barry Buzan and Richard Little, "Why International Relations Has Failed as an Intellectual Project and What to Do About It," *Millennium* 30:1 (2001).
- Stephen M. Walt, "International Relations: One World, Many Theories," *Foreign Policy*, 110 (Spring 1998).
- Richard Falk, "False Universalism and the Geopolitics of Exclusion: The Case of Islam," *Third World Quarterly* 18:1 (March 1997).
- Marysia Zalewski, "'All These Theories Yet the Bodies Keep Piling Up': Theories, Theorists, Theorising," in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski, eds., *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- Martin Hollis and Steve Smith, *Explaining and Understanding International Relations* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1990), pp.45-91.

Week 3 (Sept 25) Epistemology and Method

Topic: Epistemology & Method: What Can We 'Know' & How Will We 'Know' It?

Assigned Readings:

- Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1979), pp.1-17.
- Mark Neufeld, *The Restructuring of International Relations Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), pp.22-46.
- Steve Smith, "Positivism and Beyond," in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski, eds., *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- James Der Derian, "The Boundaries of Knowledge and Power in International Relations," in James Der Derian and Michael J. Shapiro, eds., *International/Intertextual Relations: Postmodern Readings of World Politics* (New York: Lexington Books, 1989), pp.3-10.
- Didier Bigo and R.B.J. Walker, "Editorial: International, Political, Sociology," *International Political Sociology* 1:1 (2007), pp. 1-5.

Recommended Readings:

- Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading: Addison-Wesley, 1979), pp.18-78.
- R.B.J. Walker, *Inside/Outside: International Relations as Political Theory* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), pp.1-25.
- Jim George, *Discourses of Global Politics: A Critical (Re)Introduction to International Relations* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1992), pp.1-39.

Week 4 (Oct 2) Worlds Apart

Topic: Worlds Apart: Classical Realism and the Critique of Idealism

Assigned Readings:

- Woodrow Wilson, "'The Fourteen Points,' Address to the U.S. Congress, 8 January 1918," in Karen Mingst and Jack Snyder, eds., *Essential Readings in World Politics* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001).

- E.H. Carr, *The Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939: An Introduction to the Study of International Relations*, 2nd edition (London: Macmillan, 1962), pp.11-94.
- Hans Morgenthau, *Politics Among Nations: The Struggle for Power and Peace*, 6th edition (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1985), pp.3-17.
- Michael C. Williams, "Hobbes and International Relations: A Reconsideration," *International Organization* 50:2 (Spring 1996).

Recommended Readings:

- Peter Wilson, "The Myth of the 'First Great Debate,'" *Review of International Studies* 24:5 (December 1998).
- Hedley Bull, "Hobbes and the International Anarchy," *Social Research*, 48:4 (Winter 1981).
- Mark Heller, "The Use & Abuse of Hobbes: The State of Nature in International Relations," *Polity*, 13:1 (Fall 1980).
- J. Ann Tickner, "Hans Morgenthau's Principles of Political Realism: A Feminist Reformulation," *Millennium*, 17:3 (1988).
- Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (New York: Penguin Books, 1972), pp.400-8.
- Richard Ned Lebow, "Thucydides, Power Transition Theory, and the Causes of War," in Richard Ned Lebow and Barry S. Strauss, eds., *Hegemonic Rivalry: From Thucydides to the Nuclear Age* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1991).
- David Bedford and Thom Workman, "The Tragic Reading of the Thucydidean Tragedy," *Review of International Studies*, 27:1 (January 2001).

Week 5 (Oct 9) Fall mid-term recess, NO CLASS

Week 6 (Oct 16) Worlds of Conflict

Topic: Worlds of Conflict: Neorealism and Hegemonic War

Assigned Readings:

- Robert O. Keohane, "Theory of World Politics: Structural Realism and Beyond," in Ada W. Finifter, ed., *Political Science: The State of the Discipline* (Washington: American Political Science Association, 1983).

- Robert O. Keohane, *After Hegemony: Cooperation and Discord in the World Political Economy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1984), pp.31-46.
- Robert Gilpin, *War and Change in World Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp.186-210.
- David A. Lake, "Leadership, Hegemony, and the International Economy: Naked Emperor or Tattered Monarch With Potential?" *International Studies Quarterly* 37:4 (December 1993).

Recommended Readings:

- Paul W. Schroeder, "Historical Reality vs. Neo-Realist Theory," *International Security* 19:1 (Summer 1994).
- Andrew Linklater, "Neorealism in Theory and Practice" in Ken Booth and Steve Smith, eds., *International Relations Theory Today* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1995).
- Friedrich Kratochwil, "The Embarrassment of Changes: Neo-Realism as the Science of Realpolitik Without Politics," *Review of International Studies* 19:1 (January 1993).
- Isabelle Grunberg, "Exploring the 'Myth' of Hegemonic Stability," *International Organization* 44:4 (Autumn 1990).

Week 7 (Oct 23) Worlds of Inequality

Topic: Worlds of Inequality: Marxian- and Gramscian-Inspired Approaches

Assigned Readings:

- John Maclean, "Marxism and International Relations: A Strange Case of Mutual Neglect," *Millennium* 17:2 (Summer 1988).
- Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Inter-State Structure of the Modern World-System," in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski, eds., *International Theory: Positivism and Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).
- Stephen Gill and David Law, *The Global Political Economy: Perspectives, Problems and Policies* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1988), pp.54-80.
- Samir Amin, "1492," *Monthly Review*, 44:3 (July-August 1992).

- Anna Stavrianakis, "Call to Arms: The University as a Site of Militarised Capitalism and a Site of Struggle," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 35:1 (December 2006), pp. 139-154.

Recommended Readings:

- Andre Gunder Frank, "The Development of Underdevelopment," *Monthly Review*, 18:4 (September 1966).
- Immanuel Wallerstein, "The Rise and Future Demise of the World Capitalist System: Concepts for Comparative Analysis," *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 16 (1974).
- Stephen Gill, "Gramsci and Global Politics: Towards a Post-Hegemonic Research Agenda," in Stephen Gill, ed., *Gramsci, Historical Materialism and International Relations* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
- Kees van der Pijl, "Transnational Class Formation and State Forms," in Stephen Gill and James H. Mittelman, eds., *Innovation and Transformation in International Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
- A. Claire Cutler, "Locating 'Authority' in the Global Political Economy," *International Studies Quarterly* 43:1 (March 1999).

Week 8 (Oct 30) Worlds Collide

Topic: Worlds Collide: From Strategic Studies to Security Studies

Assigned Readings:

- Phil Williams, "Nuclear Deterrence," in John Baylis, Ken Booth, John Garnett and Phil Williams, *Contemporary Strategy I* (New York: Holmes & Meier, 1987).
- Philip Green, *Deadly Logic: The Theory of Nuclear Deterrence* (Columbus: Ohio State University Press, 1966), pp.255-76.
- Ken Booth, *Strategy and Ethnocentrism* (London: Croom Helm, 1979), pp.13-31.
- Carol Cohn, "Sex and Death in the Rational World of Defense Intellectuals," *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society*, 12:4 (1987).
- Hugh Gusterson, "Missing the End of the Cold War in International Security," in Jutta Weldes, et al., *Cultures of Insecurity: States, Communities, and the Production of Danger* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999).

Recommended Readings:

- Hans Morgenthau, "Death in the Nuclear Age," in Hans Morgenthau, *Politics in the Twentieth Century*, vol.3 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962).
- Stephen Walt, "The Renaissance of Security Studies," *International Studies Quarterly* 35:2 (June 1991).
- Edward Kolodziej, "Renaissance in Security Studies? Caveat Lector!" *International Studies Quarterly* 36:4 (December 1992).
- David Baldwin, "Security Studies and the End of the Cold War," *World Politics* 48:1 (October 1995).
- Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams, "Broadening the Agenda of Security Studies: Politics and Methods," *Mershon International Studies Review* 40, Supplement 2 (October 1996).

Week 9 (Nov 6) Gender and International Relations

Topic: Gender and International Relations

Assigned Readings:

- Jacqui True, "Feminism," in Scott Burchill and Andrew Linklater, eds., *Theories of International Relations* (New York: St. Martin's 1996).
- J. Ann Tickner, "You Just Don't Understand: Troubled Engagements Between Feminists and IR Theorists," *International Studies Quarterly* 41:4 (December 1997).
- Cynthia Enloe, *Bananas, Beaches and Bases: Making Feminist Sense of International Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), xi-xv, 1-18.
- J. Ann Tickner, *Gender in International Relations: Feminist Perspectives on Achieving Global Security* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), pp.1-25.
- Catherine Eschle and Bice Manguashca, "Bridging the Academic/Activist Divide: Feminist Activism and the Teaching of Global Politics," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 35:1 (December 2006), pp. 119-137.

Recommended Readings:

- Chandra Talpade Mohanty, "Under Western Eyes: Feminist Scholarship and Colonial Discourses," *Boundary 2* 12:3/13:1 (Spring/Fall 1984).

- Sandra Whitworth, "Theory and Exclusion: Gender, Masculinity and International Political Economy," in Richard Stubbs and Geoffrey Underhill, eds., *Political Economy and the Changing Global Order*, 2nd edition (Toronto: Oxford University Press, 2000).
- V. Spike Peterson, "Whose Crisis? Early and Post-Modern Masculinism," in Stephen Gill and James H. Mittelman, eds., *Innovation and Transformation in International Studies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997).
- Marysia Zalewski and Jane L. Parpart, eds., *The Man Question in International Relations* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1998), passim.
- Cynthia Enloe, *Maneuvers: The International Politics of Militarizing Women's Lives* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), pp.235-87.
- Sandra Whitworth, "Gender, International Relations, and the Case of the ILO," *Review of International Studies* 20:4 (October 1994).
- Christine Sylvester, "The Contributions of Feminist Theory," in Steve Smith, Ken Booth and Marysia Zalewski, eds., *International Theory: Positivism & Beyond* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996).

Week 10 (Nov 13) Deconstruction and the Linguistics

Topic: Deconstruction and the Linguistic Turn: Post-structuralism

Assigned Readings:

- Jim George, *Discourses of Global Politics: A Critical (Re)Introduction to International Relations* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1994), 191-219.
- David Campbell, *Writing Security: US Foreign Policy and the Politics of Identity* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1992), pp.1-15.
- R.B.J. Walker, "State Sovereignty and the Articulation of Political Space/Time," *Millennium* 20:3 (Winter 1991).
- V. Spike Peterson, "Security and Sovereign States: What is at Stake in Taking Feminism Seriously?" in V. Spike Peterson, ed., *Gendered States: Feminist (Re)Visions of International Relations Theory* (Boulder: Lynn Rienner Publishers, 1992).
- Jim George, "Realist 'Ethics,' International Relations, and Post-Modernism: Thinking Beyond the Egoism-Anarchy Thematic," *Millennium* 24:2 (Summer 1995).

Recommended Readings:

- Richard K. Ashley, "The Geopolitics of Geopolitical Space: Toward a Critical Social Theory of International Politics," *Alternatives* 12:4 (October 1987).
- Richard K. Ashley and R.B.J. Walker, "Speaking the Language of Exile: Dissident Thought in International Studies," *International Studies Quarterly* 34:3 (September 1990).
- Dalby, Simon, "Security, Modernity, Ecology: The Dilemmas of Post-Cold War Security Discourse," *Alternatives* 17:1 (Winter 1992).
- Jean Baudrillard, *The Gulf War Did Not Take Place*, trans. Paul Patton (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995).
- David Campbell, "The Deterritorialization of Responsibility: Levinas, Derrida, and Ethics After the End of Philosophy," *Alternatives* 19:4 (Fall 1994).
- Vivienne Jabri, "Restyling the Subject of Responsibility in International Relations," *Millennium* 27:3 (1998).
- Jenny Edkins, *Poststructuralism and International Relations: Bringing the Political Back In* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1999), esp. pp.125-46.

Week 11 (Nov 20) NO CLASS, Conference

No class – Conference

Week 12 (Nov 27) The Constructivist Turn

Topic: The Constructivist Turn

Assigned Readings:

- Jeffrey T. Checkel, "The Constructivist Turn in International Relations Theory," *World Politics* 50:2 (January 1998).
- Alexander Wendt, "Anarchy is What States Make of It: The Social Construction of Power Politics," *International Organization*, 46:2 (Spring 1992).
- Vendulka Kubálková, "A Constructivist Primer," in Vendulka Kubálková ed., *Foreign Policy in a Constructed World* (New York: ME Sharpe, 2001).
- Emanuel Adler, "Seizing the Middle Ground: Constructivism in World Politics," *European Journal of International Relations* 3:3 (September 1997).

- Birgit Locher and Elisabeth Prügl, "Feminism and Constructivism: Worlds Apart or Sharing the Middle Ground?" *International Studies Quarterly* 45:1 (March 2001), pp. 111-129.

Recommended Readings:

- Alexander Wendt, "Constructing International Politics," *International Security* 20:1 (Summer 1995).
- David Dessler, "Constructivism Within a Positive Social Science," *Review of International Studies*, 25:1 (January 1999).
- John Gerard Ruggie, "What Makes the World Hang Together? Neo-Utilitarianism and the Social Constructivist Challenge," *International Organization* 52:4 (Autumn 1998).
- Alexander Wendt, *Social Theory of International Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), passim.
- Erik Ringmar, "Alexander Wendt: A Social Scientist Struggling with History," in Iver B. Neumann and Ole Waever, eds., *The Future of International Relations: Masters in the Making?* (London: Routledge, 1997).
- Steve Smith, "Wendt's World," *Review of International Studies* 26:1 (January 2000).

Note: Long Paper essay due in class

Week 13 (Dec 4) Reading IR

Topic: Reading IR: Postcolonialism

Assigned Readings:

- Edward W. Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), pp.1-28.
- Phillip Darby and A.J. Paolini, "Bridging International Relations and Postcolonialism," *Alternatives* 19:3 (Summer 1994).
- Sankaran Krishna, "The Importance of Being Ironic: A Postcolonial View on Critical International Relations Theory," *Alternatives* 18:3 (Summer 1993).
- Phillip Darby, *The Fiction of Imperialism: Reading Between International Relations & Postcolonialism* (London: Cassell, 1998), pp.9-33.

- Arlene B. Tickner, "Core, periphery and (neo)imperialist International Relations," *European Journal of International Relations* 19:3 (September 2013) 627-46.

Recommended Readings:

- Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (New York: Vintage, 1993), pp.3-61, 191-209.
- Arjun Appadurai, "Putting Hierarchy in Its Place," *Cultural Anthropology* 3:1 (February 1988).
- Sandra Harding, *Is Science Multicultural? Postcolonialisms, Feminisms, and Epistemologies* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1998), pp.146-87.
- Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg, eds., *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1988).
- Kwame Anthony Appiah, "Is the Post- in Postmodernism the Post- in Postcolonial?" *Critical Inquiry* 17:2 (Winter 1991).
- Albert J. Paolini, *Navigating Modernity: Postcolonialism, Identity, and International Relations* (Boulder: Lynne Rienner, 1999), 169-200.
- Geeta Chowdhry and Sheila Nair, eds., *Power, Postcolonialism and International Relations: Reading Race Gender and Class* (London: Routledge, 2002), passim.
- James Der Derian, "The Pen, the Sword, and the Smart Bomb: Criticism in the Age of Video," *Alternatives*, 19 (1994), pp. 133-140. [Response to Krishna's review article above].
- Ken Booth, "Security and Self: Reflections of a Fallen Realist," in Keith Krause and Michael C. Williams (eds), *Critical Security Studies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), pp. 83-119.
- Bice Maiguashca and Mireille Thornton "Activism, Academia and Education," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 35:1 (December 2006), pp. 101-104.
- Eric Herring, "Remaking the Mainstream: The Case for Activist IR Scholarship," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 35:1 (December 2006), pp. 105-118.
- Mark Coté, Richard Day, Greig de Peuter (eds.), *Utopian Pedagogy: Radical Experiments Against Neoliberal Globalization* (University of Toronto Press, 2007).

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

Written work must be submitted in hard copy in class and cannot be accepted electronically or by fax.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

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

Late Assignments

Late papers will be accepted, but will be subject to a late penalty of 5 per cent per weekday to a maximum of 5 days, after which they will not be accepted and a mark of 0 will be recorded. In the interest of fairness to all students, there will be no exceptions to this unless you have arranged with me in advance for an extension. Papers submitted after deadlines (including excused late papers) will be marked, but comments will not be provided.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

Extensions on assignments can be arranged in the event of illness or similar circumstances. All extensions must be arranged in advance of the day on which a paper is due.

In light of the format of the course and the emphasis on regular and consistent participation in class discussions, attendance is mandatory. Some absences (such as in cases of illness, for example) may be unavoidable. Please contact me in advance (or as soon thereafter as possible) via email if you are going to be absent.

University Policies

Academic Integrity Statement

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

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

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

It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

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

Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities

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

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

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

Course Modification

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