

**THEORIES OF POLITICAL COMMUNITY**  
**POLSCI 757 / GLOBALST 741**  
**Term 2, Winter 2020**

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**Seminar:** Wednesday, 11:30-2:20  
**Classroom:** KTH 709

**Office:** KTH 510  
**Office Hours:** Wednesdays, 2:30-4:30pm

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## **Course Description**

This course is organized around key themes for political community with a special focus on the idea of 'the people' as 'constituent power,' meaning the sovereign author of the law with the power to make or break the political order. It considers questions such as who are "the people"? Is law above the people, or are the people above the law? What happens when populism or political leadership becomes self-defeating? And is violence the beginning or end of politics?

## **Course Objectives**

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

- deliver informed judgments on political events by placing them in a wider context of social, historical and normative developments, and to defend this position in written and verbal form;
- investigate a specific historical case using relevant questions about the role of political community derived from these theories; and
- Identify and anticipate challenges to political communities that arise with regard to issues of representative authority.

## **Required Materials and Texts**

There are no required textbook(s). Students will have assigned readings as listed under the Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings Section.

## **Class Format**

This course will adapt a seminar format.

## **Course Evaluation – Overview**

1. Participation – 20%, ongoing
2. Weekly Reflection Papers – 30%, beginning January 15
3. Research Design – 10%, due February 12
4. Major Research Paper – 40%, due April 1

## **Course Evaluation – Details**

### **Participation (20%), ongoing**

Includes preparation for class by reading course materials, developing questions and insights for discussion, contributing meaningfully in a manner that deepens awareness of the themes of the reading or that week's topic, and maintaining a collegial environment of mutual respect and supportive learning.

### **Reflection Papers (30%), beginning January 15**

Submit a one-page, single-spaced (500 word) reflection paper on that week's course readings. Papers should be dropped to my mailbox in KTH or posted on Avenue no later than 1:00 p.m. on the day of class. At the end of the course the three best grades will be selected and used to calculate the final grade for the assignment.

### **Research Design (10%), due February 12**

A two-page (minimum, there is no maximum) outline of the research topic that clearly identifies a primary research question and outlines a research plan for how to address it.

### **Major Research Paper (40%), due April 1**

A 16-20 page paper that draws on a theoretical perspective from the class readings and develops it with regard to a specific case, or in light of a particular theoretical critique. Requirements will be discussed further in class, and I am happy to discuss with students how different theoretical approaches might work for their specific topic.

- Students are expected to provide legible copies of the assignments. Submission by e-mail is not acceptable unless specifically requested by the instructor.
- A consistent citation system is crucial. I recommend the **Chicago in-text** system. If you do not choose to follow that system, please indicate at the end of your paper what citation system you used for the paper.

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

### **Week 1 (JAN 8) Introduction**

Readings: no readings

### **Week 2 (JAN 15) Theology**

Readings:

- Carl Schmitt (2005) Political Theology. Chicago: University of Chicago Press (66). Available online at: [http://ebooks.bharathuniv.ac.in/gdlc1/gdlc4/Arts\\_and\\_Science\\_Books/arts/philoso\\_phy/Books/Political%20Theology.pdf](http://ebooks.bharathuniv.ac.in/gdlc1/gdlc4/Arts_and_Science_Books/arts/philoso_phy/Books/Political%20Theology.pdf)
- Walter Benjamin "[Critique of Violence](#)" in Reflections Peter Demetesz (ed.) New York: Schocken Books, pp. 277-300, (23).

### **Week 3 (JAN 22) Sovereignty and Constituent Power**

Readings:

- Abbé Sieyès (1798), [What is the Third Estate?](#) (17)
- Thomas Hobbes (1651) "Of Man" chapters 1-7, 11-15. Leviathan. New

York: Penguin Books (51). A different version is available [online](#).

- James R. Martel (2007) "Introduction: Hobbes' Conspiracy against sovereignty" in *Subverting the Leviathan: Reading Thomas Hobbes as a Radical Democrat* New York: Columbia University Press, pp. 1-19 (19).
- Kevin Olson (2016) "Sovereignty is an Artificial Soul" in *Imagined Sovereignities: The Power of the People and other Myths of the Modern Age*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 18-38 (20).

#### **Week 4 (Jan 29) Survival**

Readings:

- Giorgio Agamben (1998) [Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life](#). Daniel Heller-Roazen (trans.) Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press (105).

#### **Week 5 (FEB 7) Founding**

Readings:

- Hannah Arendt(1963) "Foundation II: Novus Ordo Saeclorum," *On Revolution*. New York: Viking Press, pp. 171-206 (35).
- Jacques Derrida (1986) "Declarations of Independence" *New Political Science* 15: 7-15 (8).
- Bonnie Honig (1991) "Declarations of Independence: Arendt and Derrida on the Problem of Founding a Republic" *American Political Science Review* 85(1): 84- 113 (29).
- Melissa Matthes (2000) "A Conversation Between Republicanism and Feminism" and "Livy and the Repetition of Republican Foundations" in *The Rape of Lucretia and the Founding of Republics*. University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State University Press, pp. 23-50 (27).

#### **Week 6 (FEB 12) Populism**

Readings:

- Cas Mudde (2004) "The populist zeitgeist." *Government and Opposition* 39(4): 541-63 (22)
- Jason Frank (2017) "Populism and Praxis" in *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (16pp)
- Andrew Arato (2013) "Political Theology and Populism" *Social Research* 80 (1): 143-72 (29).
- Paulina Ochoa Espejo (2017) "Populism and the Idea of the People" in *The Oxford Handbook of Populism*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, (23pp).

Notes: Research Design due

**Week 7 (FEB 19) Winter mid-term recess, NO CLASS**

**Week 8 (FEB 26) Voice**

Readings:

- Aletta Norval (2009) Democracy, pluralization, and voice. *Ethics & Global Politics* 2 (4): 297-320.
- Michael Saward (2006) "The representative claim." *Contemporary Political Theory*, 5, 297–318.
- Lisa Disch (2015) "The 'constitutive turn' in democratic representation: A normative dead-end?" *Constellations*, 22 (4), 487–99.

**Week 9 (MAR 4) Ventriloquism**

Readings:

- Steven Connor (2000) "What I say goes" in *Dumbstruck: A Cultural History of Ventriloquism*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 11-51 (40)
- Mark Reinhardt (2002) "Who speaks for Margaret Garner? Slavery, Silence and the Politics of Ventriloquism" *Critical Inquiry* 29 (1): 81-119 (38)
- Elizabeth Wingrove (2016) "blah blah WOMEN blah blah EQUALITY blah blah DIFFERENCE" *Philosophy and Rhetoric* 49 (4): 408-19 (11).
- Heidi Lourens (2018) "Driving in unheard silence: Disability and the politics of shutting up" *Journal of Health Psychology* 23 (4): 567-76 (9).

**Week 10 (MAR 11) Performativity**

Readings:

- Judith Butler (2015) "We the people" – Thoughts on Freedom of Assembly" in *Notes Toward a Performative Theory of Assembly*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, pp. 154-192 (38).
- Linda Zerilli (2005) "Feminists Know Not What They Do: Judith Butler's Gender Trouble and the Limits of Epistemology" in *Feminism and the Abyss of Freedom*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

**Week 11 (MAR 18) Paper workshop**

Readings:

- No readings

**Week 12 (MAR 25) Class cancelled**

Readings:

- No readings

### **Week 13 (APR 1) Violence**

Readings:

- Simon Stow (2007) "Pericles at Gettysburg and Ground Zero: Tragedy, Patriotism, and Public Mourning," *American Political Science Review* 101 (2): 195-208 (13).
- Bonnie Honig (2015) "Public Things: Jonathan Lear's Radical Hope, Lars von Trier's Melancholia and the Democratic Need" *Political Research Quarterly* 68 (3):623-36 (13)
- Barbara Ehrenreich (2006) "Conclusion: The Possibility of Revival" in *Dancing in the Streets: A History of Collective Joy*. New York: Picador, 247-61 (14).

Notes: Major Research paper due.

## **Course Policies**

### **Submission of Assignments**

- Students are expected to complete the assignments on schedule, except in cases of illness or immediate personal emergency.
- Submission by e-mail will not be accepted unless specifically requested by the instructor.

### **Grades**

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

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

### **Late Assignments**

- Late penalties of 10% per day (including weekends) will be assigned to work that arrives after the assignment deadline.
- Grade appeals should be made no sooner than 24 hours after the work is returned. If sufficient grounds exist, an assignment will be re-evaluated. Please note that re-evaluation may also result in a grade being lowered.

## **Absences, Missed Work, Illness**

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons please contact me in advance or as soon as possible via email if you are going to be absent.

## **Avenue to Learn**

In this course we will be using Avenue to Learn. Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of this course, 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 this course will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

## **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 requiring a RISO accommodation 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

## **University Policies**

### **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.

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.

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

- 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.

### **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](mailto: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.