

POLITICAL SOCIOLOGY

Fall 2021

Instructor: Anne-Marie Livingstone.
Email: alivingstone@mcmaster.ca
Lecture: Wednesday 2:30PM-5:30 PM.
Room: Zoom link will be provided to enrolled students.

Office: KTH 634
Office Hours: By appointment.

Course Description

The graduate seminar will introduce students to the broad field of political sociology and will be grounded in perspectives from the Canadian and international literature. Political sociology may be understood as “the study of power and the relationship between societies, states, and political conflict” (Manza, 2011). It is a diverse, inter-disciplinary field that straddles the boundaries between political science and sociology and comprises the study of “macro” and “micro” components.

The seminar readings and discussions will be approached in a way that is dialectical, moving between older and newer theories, macro and micro perspectives, local and global contexts, and historical and present-day realities. The aim is for students to have the opportunity to explore the strengths as well as limitations of different theories and perspectives, reflect critically on the connections between abstract concepts and empirical findings, and identify puzzles and questions that current research may not satisfactorily answer and that would be worth studying further.

While the course cannot cover in full what is a vast field, course readings have been selected with a diversity of perspectives in mind, an immersion in classical theories (i.e., Marx, Weber, Polanyi, Bourdieu, and Foucault), and a methodological focus on key areas of the discipline such as, the state, capitalism, citizenship, public policy, and social movements. Readings will also privilege perspectives that classical theories often overlooked, such as the work of feminist, Indigenous, and critical race scholars. Finally, the course material will engage students in learning about and discussing some of the most pressing issues of the day: the resurgence of nationalism, controversies around immigration and multiculturalism, the impact of neo-liberalism and rising inequality, welfare state reform, and the expansion of the criminal justice system.

Course Objectives

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

- Describe, compare, and contrast the pre-eminent theories and perspectives in political sociology;
- Understand major debates surrounding questions of the state, bureaucracy, the role of power, class/race/gender politics, public policy, the dynamics of social movements, citizenship, and political representation.

- Examine the interplay, overlap, and contradictions between concepts from the literature and empirical data;
- Think creatively and rigorously about the potential for theories to answer and explain complex empirical questions;
- Feel confident to build on the concepts, theories, and empirical findings from the literature in pursuing new and novel lines of inquiry.

Required Materials and Texts

There are no required texts. Unless otherwise stated, readings will be posted online and available in PDF format.

Class Format

For the duration of the fall 2021 semester, classes will be held on Zoom. If the circumstances permit and the safety of students can be assured, one or two classes may be held in person. Details of this will be announced later in the fall.

Classes may involve short introductory lectures; however, the main format will be small and large group discussions on the readings and topics. Students are expected to complete the readings on time and be ready to engage in in-depth discussions.

Course Evaluation – Overview

The seminar will encourage students to be self-directed in their learning and to play an active part in steering group discussions and learning activities. While each student will be responsible for his/her/their assignments, classroom discussions will be entirely group-oriented. The idea is that each person comes to class with unique experiences and knowledge to contribute and together we learn much more as a group than we would individually. Therefore, class discussions will be a space for open, creative, and thoughtful intellectual exchanges. In addition, respectful and non-judgemental behavior will be maintained throughout. The instructor will hold brief lectures throughout the term to give context to a topic or reading and to clarify any concepts and explanations.

Success in the course will depend on class participation, the completion of two response memos, and a final research paper. Written assignments will be graded based on the following considerations: a) attainment of the assignment objectives, b) the quality of analysis and critical thinking, c) the judicious use of empirical data to substantiate claims, d) persuasiveness of the argument, e) grammar and spelling.

1) Class Participation

No later than 11:59pm before the day of each class, students must submit a question for group discussion on Avenue to Learn. The question should be in reference to a least two of the assigned readings. Questions may take the form of:

- Interesting similarities and/or differences between the readings;
- An especially intriguing, compelling, or insightful observation in the readings;
- A puzzling, ambiguous, or contradictory element in or across the readings.

Full points will be awarded to students who submit a question for each class on time. Absences will be accepted if a student provides a written explanation. No more than one discussion question may be missed for students to earn full points.

2) Response Memos

Students will prepare 2 short response papers (3-4 pages in length) at two separate points in the term. In the first response memo due on October 20th, students are expected to compare and contrast selected theoretical and conceptual perspectives discussed in class. Students are free to choose 2-3 of their preferred readings to compare and contrast. This could consist of the full list of readings for one class or a selection of readings from different classes. Each response memo should include a brief overview of the readings (30% of the memo), an analysis of the ways in which the arguments converge and diverge, and the student's own assessment of the strengths and limitations of the perspectives and the implications for future research.

The second response memo will be due on November 24th and will be an opportunity for students to build on their developing grasp of concepts in political sociology to propose a theoretically-guided interpretation of an empirical phenomenon or research question. Students may elect a single or a couple of perspectives or schools of thought (e.g., Marxism, conflict theories, settler colonialism, political economy of race) as the interpretive lens. The empirical issue to be analyzed may be one covered in the readings or one the student is particularly interested in reflecting on. Before writing the memo, students must send a brief email message to the instructor explaining which concepts/theories and empirical issue the student intends to discuss in the memo.

3) Final Research Paper (9-10 double-spaced pages)

For the final research paper, students will propose a research project in which they identify an empirical problem, formulate research questions, and articulate a convincing conceptual framework for examining it. The research paper does not need to discuss the data collection methods. Students only need to demonstrate which analytical tools and approaches will be pertinent to their analysis and why. The format of the paper should include: a) an introductory paragraph to the subject and the paper's thesis (3/4 page), b) a brief synthesis of the literature on the topic (2 pages), c) the research question(s) for further study (1 paragraph), d) an elaboration of the conceptual framework for the research question(s) and supporting arguments (main body of the paper), e) tentative hypotheses for the study and concluding remarks (1-1.5 page).

Course Evaluation – Details

1. Weekly submission of discussion questions (15%)
2. Response memo (20%): due October 20th, 2021.
3. Response memo (20%): due November 17th, 2021.
4. Research Paper (40%) : due December 15th, 2021.
 - a. Abstract (5%) : due October 27th.

Weekly Course Schedule and Required Readings

WEEK 1 (September 15th)

Topic: Introduction the course and the field of political sociology

De Leon, C., and A. Clarno. (2020). "Power." In *New Handbook of Political Sociology*, edited by T. Janoski, C. De Leon, J. Misra, and I.W. Martin (Pp. 35-52). Calif: University of California Press.

Amenta, E., Nash, K., and Scott, A. (2012). *The Wiley-Blackwell Companion to Political Sociology*. Chapters 1-3 (Pp. 1-35) on Marx, Weber, and Durkheim.

WEEK 2 (September 22nd)

Topic: The State and the Market

Wimmer, A., and Feinstein, Y. 2010. "The Rise of the Nation State Across the World, 1816-2001." *American Sociological Review*, 75 (5): 764-790.

Dale, G. 2016. *Reconstructing Karl Polanyi: Excavation and Critique* (Chapter 5, "Reconstructing the Great Transformation"). London: Pluto Press.

WEEK 3 (September 29th)

Topic: Conceptions of the State

Skocpol, T. 1985. "Bringing the state back in: Strategies of Analysis in Current Research" In *Bringing the State Back In*, edited by P.B. Evans, D., Rueschemyer, D., and T. Skocpol (Pp. 3-38). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Bourdieu, P. 2018. "Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field." In *State/Culture: State Formation after the Cultural Turn*, edited by G. Steinmetz (Pp. 53-75). Ithaca: Cornell University Press.

Mann, M. 1986. "The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms, and Results." In *States in History*, edited by J. Hall (Pp. 109-136). Oxford: Blackwell.

WEEK 4 (October 6th)

Topic: Settler Colonialism

Nakano-Glenn, E. 2015. "Settler Colonialism as Structure: A Framework for Comparative Studies of U.S. Race and Gender Formation." *Sociology of Race and Ethnicity*, 1 (1): 52-72.

Statiulis, D., and R. Jhappan. 1995. "The Fractious Politics of a Settler Society: Canada." In *Unsettling Settler Societies: Articulations of Gender, Race, Ethnicity and Class*, edited by D. Statiulis and N. Yuval-Davis (Pp. 95-130). Calif: Sage Publications.

Kubik, W., Bourassa, C., and Hampton, M. 2009. "Stolen Sisters, Second Class Citizens, Poor Health: The Legacy of Colonization in Canada." *Humanity & Society*, 33 (1-2): 18-34.

WEEK 5 (October 20th)

Topic: Political Economy of Race

King., D.S., and Smith, R. 2005. "Racial Orders in American Political Development." *American Political Science Review*, 99 (1): 75-92.

Harris, C.I. 1993. "Whiteness as Property." *Harvard Law Review*, 106 (8) : 1707-1791. **Pages 1710 to 1736 inclusively.**

Nath, N. 2011. "Defining Narratives of Identity in Canadian Political Science: Accounting for the Absence of Race." *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 44 (1): 161-193.

Recommended:

Kim, C.J. "The Racial Triangulation of Asian Americans." *Politics & Society*, 27 (1): 105-138.

WEEK 6 (October 27th)

Topic : Immigration and Canadian Multiculturalism

Abu-Laban, Y., and Gabriel, C. 2013. "Contemporary Directions: Immigration and Citizenship Policy 1993-2001." In *Selling Diversity: Immigration, Multiculturalism,*

Employment Equity, and Globalization (Pages 61-104). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Razack, S. "The Muslims are Coming: the Sharia Debate in Ontario." In *Casting Out: The Eviction of Muslims from Western Law and Politics* (Pp. 145-172). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Jack-Davis, A. 2020. "Coronavirus: The Yellow Peril revisited." *The Conversation*, August 3rd, <https://theconversation.com/coronavirus-the-yellow-peril-revisited-134115>

WEEK 7 (November 3rd)

Topic: Nationalism and Populism

Calhoun, C. 1993. "Nationalism and Ethnicity." *American Sociological Review*, 19: 211-239.

Manza, J., and Crowley, N. 2018. "Ethnonationalism and the Rise of Donald Trump." *Contexts*, 17 (1): 34-39.

Mudde, C. 2013. "Three Decades of Populist Radical Right Parties in Western Europe." *European Journal of Political Research*, 52: 1-19.

WEEK 8 (November 10th)

Topic: Neo-liberalism and Globalization

Slobodian, Q. 2018. "Introduction." In *The Globalists: The End of Empire and the Birth of Neo-liberalism* (Pp. 1-26). Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Brown, W. 2003. "Neo-liberalism and the End of Liberal Democracy." *Theory and Event*, 7 (1).

WEEK 9 (November 17th)

Topic: The Welfare State

Ingram, H.M., and Schneider, A.L. 2005. "Introduction: Public Policy and the Social Construction of Deservingness." In *Deserving and Entitled: Social Constructions and Public Policy*, edited by H.M. Ingram and A.L. Schneider (Pp. 1-34) Albany: State University of New York Press.

Orloff, A. 1993. Gender and the Social Rights of Citizenship: The Comparative Analysis of Gender Relations and Welfare States." *American Sociological Review*, 58 (3): 303-328.

Dobrowolsky, A., and Jenson, J. 2004. "Shifting Representations of Citizenship: Canadian Politics of "Women" and "Children." *Social Politics*, 11 (2): 154-180.

WEEK 10 (November 24th)

Topic: The Law and Order State

Lemke, T. 2001. "The Birth of Biopolitics: Michel Foucault's Lecture at the Collège de France on Neo-liberal Governmentality." *Economy and Society*, 30 (2): 190-207.

Muhammad, K.G. 2011. "Where Did All the White Criminals Go?: Reconfiguring Race and Crime on the Road to Mass Incarceration." *Du Bois Review*, 13 (1): 72-90.

Murdocca, C. 2018. "There is Something in that Water: Race, Nationalism and Legal Violence." *Law and Social Inquiry*, 35 (2): 369-402.

WEEK 11 (December 1st)

Topic: Social Movements

Andrews, K.T. 2001. "Social Movements and Policy Implementation: The Mississippi Civil Rights Movement and the War on Poverty, 1965-1971." *American Sociological Review*, 66 (1): 71-95.

Kitschelt, H.P. 1986. "Political Opportunity Structure and Political Protest: Anti-Nuclear Movements in Four Countries." *British Journal of Political Science*, 16 (1): 57-85.

Meyer, D.S. 2003. "How Social Movements Matter." *Contexts*, 2 (4), 30-34.

Turgohan, E. 2017. "The Transformative and Radical Feminism of Grassroots Migrant Women's Movement(s) in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 50 (2) : 479-494.

WEEK 12 (December 8th)

Topic: Everyday Resistance

Scott, J. 1985. "Hegemony and Consciousness: Everyday Forms of Ideological Struggle." In *Weapons of the Weak*, P. 304-350. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Kelley, R. 1993. "We Are Not What We Seem: Rethinking Black Working Class Opposition in the South." *Journal of American History*, 80 (1): 75-112.

Recommended:

Sassoon, A. 1987. *Gramsci's Politics* (Pages 109-161. London: Routledge.

Course Policies

Submission of Assignments

Assignments must be submitted on Avenue to Learn by the 11:59pm on the due date and saved either in MS Word or PDF. The memos, abstract, and final paper must be double-spaced and written in 12 size font, either Times New Roman or Arial. Citations should follow the ASA style.

Late Assignments

Due dates have been selected to give students reasonable intervals to complete assignments on time. If students cannot meet the deadline for reasons beyond their control, they should inform the instructor as soon as possible.

Absences, Missed Work, Illness

Under exceptional circumstances a course instructor may approve an extension for the student for the completion of work in a course and assign an Incomplete grade (INC). The instructor will submit an incomplete grade with a 'Lapse To' grade, which is the grade that will default to at the date to clear incomplete grades. Normally this extension is in the range of a few weeks. A student who receives an incomplete grade must complete the work as soon as possible, and in any case early enough to allow the instructor to report the grade by the 'Final Date to Submit Results of Incomplete Grades'. If the INC grade is not cleared by the deadline, the lapsed grade will be recorded.

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.

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 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.

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 the School of Graduate Studies (askgrad@mcmaster.ca) normally within 10 working days of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

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.

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.

Faculty of Social Sciences E-mail Communication Policy

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.

Grades

Grades will be based on the McMaster University grading scale:

MARK	GRADE
90-100	A+
85-89	A
80-84	A-
77-79	B+
73-76	B
70-72	B-
0-69	F