

Sociology 3J03E Summer

Spring 2017
Tues-Thurs 630-930
BSB 120
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Instructor: Carlos Torres
Office hours: TBA
Office location: KTH-607 ext. 20423

Course Description:

This course critically examines cultural theories of violence in relation to current forms of human rights issues. The course centers on the theme of human rights violations and how contested definitions of human rights connect to the pursuit of social justice. This course is an advanced seminar format and takes an approach that uses critical “conceptual analysis.” Students are invited to develop analytic thinking skills which allow for a rigorous examination of the course themes. *It is essential that students be in regular attendance at seminar sessions, and to complete the required readings before each class so that one is prepared to engage with classmates and participate in the seminar discussions and student presentations.*

Learning Objectives:

Students in the course will learn competing ways to conceptualize human rights violations, which will then facilitate connecting themes tied to social justice and equity. In addition to familiarizing students with debates in the field, students will benefit from a comparative approach to studying human rights. To deepen students comprehension and engagement with human rights, this course provides case studies that will be examined. One of the salient aims is for students to identify gaps and controversies in the field. By the end of the course, students will be able to distinguish a multiplicity of strategies of materializing human rights are articulated, expressed (symbolically) and how it is used to mediate violence and discrimination. The course is designed to challenge and enhance students on various fronts, including, epistemological, interpretive, communicative and in their articulations.

The URL cited above is accessible at the bottom of the department's "Course Outlines" web-page: <http://www.sociology.mcmaster.ca/undergraduate-program/course%20outlines>. Click on “Learning Outcomes”.

Required course materials:

One course reading kit, consisting of selected text chapters, essays and articles from various sources. The course pack is available at the McMaster bookstore.

Avenue to Learn:

All lecture notes and corresponding course material will be posted on avenue to learn. Grades are regularly posted there too.

Grading and Evaluation:

2 Tests in-class, which taken in isolation are worth 20% each, but combined amount to 40 % of your grade. The test is comprised of both multiple choice and written-answer type questions. Multiple choice and short answer will be weighed equally. All questions are based on course material. All tests are held during class time slots - There is no final exam in this course.

Missed Tests: Students who miss tests are not automatically entitled to receive a chance to write a make-up test. Vacations do not count as valid reasons to be absent from a test. Students with an exceptional reason for missing a course test, such as illness, compassionate grounds, etc., which is confirmed by supporting documentation (e.g., doctor's letter) may request accommodation from the Course Instructor. Further extensions or accommodations will require students to submit a formal petition to the Faculty of Social Sciences. *Note that make-up tests may not be in the exact same format as the in-class test that was missed.*

MSAF: The entire MSAF policy is available in the Undergraduate Calendar 2017-18 (Fall/Winter) >General Academic Regulations>Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term work. Please review the entire policy prior to submitting any requests.

http://academiccalendars.romcmaster.ca/content.php?catoid=11&navoid=1698#Requests_for_Relief_for_Missed_Academic_Term_Work

If you have any questions about the MSAF, please contact your Associate Dean's office.

2 Summaries (40%) due in class

Each summary is worth 20%, but students are required to write two for a total of 40% of your overall grade. Summaries of the readings are meant to be a small assignment consisting of 3 pages max. Students may select a reading and write a summary on it. Students can only submit a summary for the day that the reading is due. Students cannot write a summary for a reading that has already been addressed in class or that will be covered. Writing a summary consists of extracting salient ideas from the text. In the summary students are encouraged to engage with the text which means that students should account for the basis and/or rationality of the arguments presented in the reading. A critical evaluation of the overall claims made is encouraged by measuring it to prevailing themes discussed in the course such as power + hierarchy + ethnicity, for example. Other themes are just as valid.

Seminar Engagement

20% is allotted to seminar engagement. The aim of the participation tasks are to critically engage with weekly topics. This may be realized orally or in written format. Students will select which format they prefer to communicate their thinking. Students are highly encouraged to raise questions that show thoughtful engagement with the readings, articulate a synthesis of the main claims for assigned readings and construct critical commentaries about the topics raised.

Reading List

May 2, 2017 Introduction to the course

May 4, 2017 T.B.A

May 9, 2017 Evans, Tony The Idea of Human Rights in the Global Economy
Pp. 7-31 Human Rights in the Global Political Economy Reinner publishers (2011)

May 11, 2017 Nikhil Aziz “The Human Rights Debate in an Era of Globalization: Hegemony Discourse”

May 16, 2017 Sunera Thobani, “War and the Politics of Truth-making in Canada”

May 18, 2017
Fanon, Franz “Racism and Culture”
Fanon, Franz “On Violence”

May 23, 2017 Documentary Slavery by another name

May 25, 2017 **Test 1 will be administered in class**

May 30, 2017 State Terrorism and Human Rights Abuse;
Wright, Thomas, C “Dirty War in Argentina”

June 1, 2017
Video: Enslaved and Exploited: The Story of Sex Trafficking in Canada – Hope For The Sold
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kothPyoyvDE>

June 6, 2017
Vazquez, Rolando "Translation as Erasure: Thoughts on Modernity's Epistemic Violence"

June 8, 2017
Mouffe, Chantal “Agonistic Politics and Artistic Practices” pp.85-106

June 13, 2017
Clark, Cristy “The Centrality of Community Participation to the Realization of the Right to Water: The illustrative case of South Africa” pp.174-190

June 15, 2017 **Test 2 will be administered in class**

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

Academic dishonesty consists of misrepresentation by deception or by other fraudulent means and 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 kinds of academic dishonesty please refer to the Academic Integrity Policy, specifically Appendix 3, located at

<http://www.mcmaster.ca/policy/Students-AcademicStudies/AcademicIntegrity.pdf>

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 other credit has been obtained.
2. Improper collaboration in group work.
3. Copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

DEPARTMENTAL POLICIES:

Do NOT fax assignments. Please see your instructor for the most appropriate way to submit assignments.

The Sociology staff do NOT date-stamp assignments, nor do they monitor the submission or return of papers.

The McMaster Student Absence Form (<http://www.mcmaster.ca/msaf/>) is a self-reporting tool for Undergraduate Students to report absences that last up to 3 lectures and provides the ability to request accommodation for any missed academic work. Please note, this tool cannot be used during any final examination period.

You may submit a maximum of 1 Academic Work Missed request per term. It is YOUR responsibility to follow up with your instructor immediately regarding the nature of the accommodation.

If you are absent more than 3 lectures or exceed 1 request per term, or are absent for a reason other than medical, you MUST visit your Associate Dean's Office (Faculty Office). You may be required to provide supporting documentation.

This form should be filled out when you are about to return to class after your absence

Students should check the web, the white board and the Undergraduate Bulletin board outside the Sociology office (KTH-627) for notices pertaining to Sociology classes or departmental business (eg. class scheduling information, location of mailboxes and offices, tutorial information, class cancellations, TA job postings, etc.).

Computer use in the classroom is intended to facilitate learning in that particular lecture

or tutorial. At the discretion of the instructor, students using a computer for any other purpose may be required to turn the computer off for the remainder of the lecture or tutorial.

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.

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.