

CONTENTIOUS POLITICS
SOC279H1S Section L0101
Winter 2016
University of Toronto, St. George Campus

Course Director: Jasmin Hristov

Class Time and Location: Thursday 11am-1pm, WI 1016

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TA: Paul Pritchard

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Office Hours:

Course Description

This course introduces students to the study of contentious politics. The first part offers a theoretical overview on the subjects of political power, citizenship, and social inequality as well as a review of some prominent works on the political process and dynamics of contention approaches. The second part exposes students to empirical examples in the form of case-studies of social movements and political contention from different parts of the world, that have taken place within roughly the last twenty years. Here students have the opportunity to apply their knowledge of sociological theories and concepts to analyze contemporary social movement activity.

Learning Objectives

- 1) Demonstrate an understanding of the ways transnational forces interact with specific localities – including structures, processes, culture and social actors – as they are being facilitated, sustained, or contested by the latter.
- 2) Explain how social inequality is a source of political mobilization.
- 3) Identify examples that point to the transnationalization of movements and contention.
- 4) Demonstrate an understanding of the recent trends characterizing the relationship between social movements and states.
- 5) Assess the explanatory potential, limitations, and applicability of the theoretical approaches covered in the first part of the course, in light of the empirical examples examined the second part.

Prerequisite

The prerequisite to take SOC279H1S is SOC101Y1 or SOC102H1 or SOC103H1. Students without this prerequisite will be removed at any time discovered and without notice.

Course Format

Lecture

The lecture will consist of an interactive presentation by the instructor, at times accompanied by a video documentary. The first 10 minutes of lecture will be devoted for clarification questions and a brief review. Students are expected to engage seriously with the assigned readings before attending lecture.

Tutorials

The pedagogical approach of this course rests on the idea that learning is a collective process and thus, the classroom should be a community of learners. Tutorials are offered with the purpose of enriching your learning experience by facilitating the understanding of readings and lecture content as well as by offering a space for questions and discussion. During each tutorial, students will engage in two kinds of activity. The first will be to write a ten-minute learning reflection on the readings assigned for that day. This will be followed by a presentation of a discussion question by one or two students in the class which the rest of the class members will answer in groups. The tutorial leader and the presenter(s) will moderate the discussion. Tutorial time may also be used for answering any other questions students might have (whether clarification or discussion-oriented). Tutorial attendance is mandatory and part of your grade.

Tutorials are scheduled as follows:

T0101: Thursday 1-2pm, UC67

T0102: Thursday 1-2pm, UC376

T0201: Thursday 2-3pm, UC67

T0202: Thursday 2-3pm, UC376

Required Texts

- Sears, A. (2014). *The Next New Left: A History of the Future*. Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing.
- Course-pack of selected readings available online on Blackboard at NO COST for students enrolled in the course.

Video Documentaries

Any documentaries shown in class form an integral part of the course material. The test and exam will require you to incorporate the knowledge gained from documentaries into your answers.

E-mail /Online Communication

E-mail communication is for providing short answers to any clarification questions regarding the course content and/or organization and should be directed to your TA. Your emails will be responded within 2 days. If you require help with course material, please use tutorial time to bring up these questions or arrange to see me or your TA during office hours. Please check Blackboard regularly for course announcements.

Attendance

Regular attendance at lectures is required in order for you to do well in the course. Lectures explain *as well as supplement* the readings. One does not substitute for the other. If you need to miss lecture, you will not be penalized, however you should ensure that you know someone in the class from whom you can borrow lecture notes. Lecture *power-points* will be posted on Learning System/Blackboard. Keep in mind that these *do not contain all lecture content or explanations* but rather constitute an outline/point-form organization of the content, including some key definitions.

Use of Electronic Devices in Class

The use of electronic devices for purposes other than note-taking / course-related work is not allowed. It inhibits learning and is also disruptive and disrespectful.

Taping / Recording / Photographing Lectures

Lectures and course materials prepared by the instructor are the instructor's intellectual property covered by the Canadian Copyright Act. Students wishing to record lecture or other course material in any way are required to ask the instructor's explicit permission and may not do so unless permission is granted. This includes tape recording, filming, photographing PowerPoint slides, Blackboard materials, etc. Once obtained, such permission is only for that individual student's own study purposes and does not include permission to "publish" them in any way. It is absolutely forbidden for a student to publish an instructor's notes to a website or sell them in other form without formal permission.

Talking during Lecture

Talking to your classmates during lecture (even if you are whispering) is disturbing. Please refrain from talking unless you have been invited to do so by the instructor. If you are unclear about something that was said by the instructor, please put up your hand instead of asking your classmates. This will ensure that you or your classmates do not miss anything important and fall behind during lecture.

Blackboard

Announcements, handouts, lecture power-points, and any additional learning aids will be posted here, so please check the website twice a week.

Evaluation

Type of Assessment	Weighting	Due Date
Learning Reflections (written in tutorial)	20%	Every tutorial
Discussion Questions Presentation (in tutorial)	10%	Randomly assigned a date
Tutorial Participation	5%	ongoing
Test	25%	Feb.25, 2016
Final Exam	40%	Held during official examination period

**The final date to drop the course without receiving a grade is March 8, 2015.*

10-minute Weekly Learning Reflections Written in Tutorial

Students are required to write a learning reflection at the beginning of each tutorial on the assigned readings for that day. The reflection should consist of:

- ❖ an overview (summary) of the key themes/concepts raised in the readings (this should make-up two-thirds of the content of your reflection);
- ❖ a personal statement about / opinion on the themes (this should be about one-third of the content of your reflection).

Each reflection will serve as a record of the student's attendance and preparedness to participate in tutorial and will receive 1%. You will be submitting 10 reflections for the entire semester. The weekly submission of reflections is worth a total of 10%. The content quality of these will be evaluated cumulatively at the end of the course and is worth an additional 10% (for a total of 20% of the final grade). Reflections will be retained by the TA and will not be returned to students.

Missed Learning Reflections

Not attending tutorial on which a reflection is due, will lead to losing 1%. However, students have the right to miss up to two tutorials (sick days) for the entire course without a medical note and not lose marks. Reflections can only be written and submitted in tutorial.

****Every reflection MUST contain the following information:**

- ✓ your name
- ✓ your student number;
- ✓ the date;
- ✓ tutorial #;
- ✓ TA name.

Presentation of Discussion Questions (DQs)

Each student will be randomly assigned a tutorial date on which she/he will be responsible for presenting a discussion question(s) based on the readings assigned for that day. A hard copy of the questions should be distributed to each class member and the TA at the beginning of tutorial. Each question should be preceded by a brief (one-two sentences) background (preamble) that situates us in terms of the topic on which it is based. ***It should not have a right or wrong answer, not ask for clarification or factual information, but instead should invite us to think critically and creatively.*** The presenters will pick randomly students from the audience to share the group's answer with the class and should be prepared to respond to / comment on the groups' answers. ***The DQs will be evaluated in terms of their clarity, creativity, the amount of interest/discussion they generate, and the presenter's responses to classmates' answers and comments.***

Policy on Missed Tests

Students who miss a test will receive a mark of zero. Students who miss a test due to a medical or family crisis will be given the opportunity to write a make-up test if **within three days** they provide the instructor with a written request for special consideration which explains why the test was missed, accompanied by proper documentation from a physician or college registrar. A request should be accompanied by contact information (the student's telephone number and email address) so the date, time and place of the make-up test can be communicated to the student. In case of illness, you must supply a duly completed *Verification of Student Illness or Injury Form* (available at www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca). A doctor's note is not acceptable. The form must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the instructor, and submitted to her. If a family crisis prevents you from meeting a deadline, you must get a letter from your college registrar. The letter must be placed in a sealed envelope, addressed to the instructor, and submitted to her.

Policy on Disputing Term Test Grades

If you disagree with the grade you were given on your test, you must present your argument in writing and schedule a meeting with your TA **within three weeks** after the test was returned. Your letter must take into consideration the answers that were taken-up in class as well as the comments you received on the test and explain why despite of these, you are still convinced that your grade should have been higher. If you are not satisfied with the outcome of your meeting, you may contact the instructor.

Accessibility Needs

Students with diverse learning styles and needs are welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability or health consideration that may require accommodations, please feel free to approach me and/or Accessibility Services at (416) 978-8060 or visit: <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

The University of Toronto treats cases of academic misconduct very seriously. Academic integrity is a fundamental value of learning and scholarship at the U of T. Participating honestly, respectfully, responsibly, and fairly in this academic community ensures that your U of T degree is valued and respected as a true signifier of your individual academic achievement.

The University of Toronto's *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters* outlines the behaviours that constitute academic misconduct, the processes for addressing academic offences, and the penalties that may be imposed. ***You are expected to be familiar with the contents of this document.*** Potential offences include but are not limited to:

In papers and assignments:

- Using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement.
- Copying material word-for-word from a source (including lecture and study group notes) and not placing the words within quotation marks.
- Submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor.
- Making up sources or facts.
- Including references to sources that you did not use.
- Obtaining or providing unauthorized assistance on any assignment including:
 - working in groups on assignments that are supposed to be individual work;
 - having someone rewrite or add material to your work while "editing".
 - lending your work to a classmate who submits it as his/her own without your permission.

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing any unauthorized aid, including a cell phone;
- Looking at someone else's answers;
- Letting someone else look at your answers;
- Misrepresenting your identity;
- Submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Misrepresentation:

- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including doctor's notes.
- Falsifying institutional documents or grades.

****Students who commit an academic offence face serious penalties. All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated following the procedures outlined in the *Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters*. The consequences for academic misconduct can be severe, including a failure in the course and a notation on your transcript. Avoid plagiarism by citing properly: practices acceptable in high school may prove unacceptable in university. If you have questions about appropriate research and citation methods, seek out additional information from me, or from other available campus resources like the [U of T Writing Website](#).**

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND COURSE WORK

JAN 14

- Introduction to course objectives, expectations, organization and analytical framework.
 - No tutorials this week

PART ONE: THEORETICAL AND HISTORICAL BACKGROUND ON THE STATE, CITIZENSHIP, SOCIAL INEQUALITY AND SOCIAL CHANGE

JAN 21

- Mooers, C. (2014). The Birth of the Liberal Subject: Commodities, Money, and Citizenship. In *Imperial Subjects: Citizenship in an Age of Crisis and Empire*. New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, Inc., pp. 17-27 and 36-41.
- Wood, E.M. (1998). The Agrarian Origins of Capitalism. [selected excerpts]. *Monthly Review* 50(3) [ONLINE].
 - Discussion Question presentation dates assigned in tutorials
 - Learning reflections begin in tutorials

JAN 28

- McNally, D. (2002). The Colour of Money: Race, Gender, and the Many Oppressions of Global Capital. In *Another World is Possible*. Winnipeg: Arbeiter Ring Publishing, pp. 105-116.
 - Discussion Question presentations begin

FEB 4

- Harvey, D. (2005). The Neoliberal State. In *A Brief History of Neoliberalism*. New York: Oxford University Press, pp. 64-67; 69-71; 75-76
- Robinson, W. (2003). The Dialectics of Globalization and Development. In *Transnational Conflicts: Central America, Social Change and Globalization*. London: Verso, p. 9-20.

FEB 11

- McNally, D. (2011). Debt, Discipline and Dispossession: Race, Class and the Global Slump. In *Global Slump: The Economics and Politics of Crisis and Resistance*. Oakland, CA: PM Press, pp. 113-145.

FEB 18 BREAK

FEB 25 TEST IN CLASS

- No lecture or tutorial

PART TWO: UNDERSTANDING CONTENTIOUS POLITICS AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

MAR 3

- Tarrow, S. (2012). Theories of Contentious Politics. In *Strangers at the Gates: Movements and States in Contentious Politics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 6-26.
- Tilly, C. (2004). Social Movements as Politics. In *Social Movements, 1768-2004*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, pp. 1-15.
- Tilly, C. and Tarrow, S. (2007). Making Claims. In *Contentious Politics*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers, pp. 1-24.

MAR 10

- Cox, L. and Gunvald Nilsen, A. (2014). 'The Authors and the Actors of Their Own Drama': A Marxist Theory of Social Movements. In *We Make Our Own History: Marxism and Social Movements in the Twilight of Neoliberalism*. London: Pluto Press, pp. 55-93.
- Sears, A. (2014). Mass Insurgency in the 1930s-1940s. In *The Next New Left: A History of the Future*. Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing.

***March 13 is the last day to drop a course without receiving a grade**

MARCH 17

- Sears, A. (2014). Making a New Left 1960s-1970s; The Lean Years; What's Left in the Age of Austerity. In *The Next New Left: A History of the Future*. Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing.

PART THREE: CONTENTIOUS POLITICS AS A STRATEGY AND OUTCOME IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION: CASE-STUDIES FROM AROUND THE WORLD

MARCH 24

- Sears, A. (2014). Towards the Next New Left. In *The Next New Left: A History of the Future*. Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing.
- Heim Shepard, B. (2012). Labour and Occupy Wall Street: Common Causes and Uneasy Alliances. *The Journal of Labour and Society* 15 (March): 121-134.

MARCH 31

- Carty, V. (2006). Transnational Labour Mobilizing in Two Mexican Maquiladoras. In Johnston, H. and Almeida, P. (Eds.). *Latin American Social Movements*. Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Inc., pp. 215-229.
- Kroger, M. (2011). Promotion of Contentious Agency as a Rewarding Movement Strategy: Evidence from the MST-paper industry conflicts in Brazil. *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 38(2): 435-458.
- Le Mons Walker, K. (2008). From Covert to Overt: Everyday Peasant Politics in China and the Implications for Transnational Agrarian Movements. *Journal of Agrarian Change*, 8(2, 3): 462-488.

APRIL 7

- Mahmud, S. (2010). Why do Garment Workers in Bangladesh Fail to Mobilize? In Thompson, L. and Tapscott, C. (Eds.). *Citizenship and Social Movements*. London: Zed Books, pp. 60-83.
- Hanieh, A. (2011). Egypt's Uprising: not Just Question of Transition. In *The Arab Revolts against Neoliberalism*. Socialist Intervention Pamphlet Series, pp. 20-28.