ADVANCED CONCEPTS IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS THEORY
POLSCI 771
Term 2, Winter 2019

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Seminar: Tuesdays, 8:30-11:20  
Classroom: LRW 3001

Office: KTH-508  
Office Hours: Tuesdays, 2:10-4:00

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Course Description
Taking the International Relations canon as read, this course will delve into emergent trends and debates in and of relevance to International Relations theory. A range of new theoretical interventions will be examined in depth, as will questions of epistemology, methodology, ethics, representation, disciplinarity, and more. Novel subject matters and approaches such as those associated with a nascent literature on childhood will also be considered. A strong working knowledge of the main issues, debates, and theoretical traditions of IR is assumed. Though not exhaustive, the current IR comprehensive exam reading lists (available from the Political Science main office) give some indication of the sort of prior grounding that is assumed.

Course Objectives
By the end of the course students should:

- Have a deeper understanding of the extradisciplinary origins 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 March 19, 2019

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 March 19th).

**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 5 (i.e., up to and including the week of February 5th). Please note that papers must be submitted in hard copy and cannot be accepted electronically or by fax.

**Essay (45%), due in class March 19, 2019**

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 (JAN 8) Intro to Course**

- **Topic:** Introduction to the Course
- **Readings:** None

**Week 2 (JAN 15) Telling Stories**

- **Topic:** Telling Stories: Another Look at IR’s Account of Itself
- **Assigned Readings:**

- **Recommended Readings:**


**Week 3 (JAN 22) Disciplinary Practice**

**Topic: Disciplinary Practice and Disciplined Knowledge**

**Assigned Readings:**


**Recommended Readings:**


**Week 4 (JAN 29) Ethics, Poststructuralism, IR**

**Topic: Ethics, Poststructuralism, IR**

**Assigned Readings:**


**Recommended Readings:**


Week 5 (FEB 5) Methodological Turn in IR?  
Topic: A Methodological Turn in IR? Ethnographic Research and Writing
Assigned Readings:


Recommended Readings:


Week 6 (FEB 12) Postcolonialism  
Topic: Postcolonialism
Assigned Readings:


Recommended Readings:


• Geeta Chowdhry and Sheila Nair, eds., *Power, Postcolonialism and International Relations: Reading Race Gender and Class* (London: Routledge, 2002), passim.


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

**Week 8 (FEB 26) Indigeneity and IR**

**Topic: Indigeneity and IR**

Assigned Readings:


Recommended Readings:


• Allaine Cerwonka, *Native to the Nation: Disciplining Landscapes and Bodies in Australia* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004).


**Week 9 (MAR 5) Pop Culture**

**Topic: Pop Culture**

Assigned Readings:


• Nick Robinson, “Videogames, Persuasion and the War on Terror: Escaping or Embedding the Military-Entertainment Complex?” *Political Studies* 60:3 (2012).

Recommended Readings:


Week 10 (MAR 12) Simulating Security & Selves
Topic: Simulating Security and Selves in Crisis and War
Assigned Readings:


• Hugh Gusterson, People of the Bomb: Portraits of America’s Nuclear Complex (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2004), pp.51-81.

**Recommended Readings:**


**Week 11 (MAR 19) Childhood**

**Topic:** Childhood

**Assigned Readings:**


**Recommended Readings:**


**Note:** Essay due in class

**Week 12 (MAR 26) NO CLASS, Conference**
No class – ISA Conference

**Week 13 (APR 2) Resilience**
**Topic:** Resilience
**Assigned Readings:**


**Recommended Readings:**


**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:

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<th>MARK</th>
<th>GRADE</th>
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<tr>
<td>90-100</td>
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<td>73-76</td>
<td>B</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-72</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<td>69-0</td>
<td>F</td>
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**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.