

GINS 4090 A Fall 2025
Global Revolutions: Theory, History, Futures

CARLETON UNIVERSITY
Kroeger College of Public Affairs
Bachelor of Global and International Studies

Seminar: Thursdays | 11:35-14:25 pm | see Carleton Central for location

Instructor: Candace Sobers | **Office:** 2115 Dunton

E-mail: candace.sobers@carleton.ca | **Office Hours:** see Brightspace for details



Algonquin Territory Acknowledgement

Carleton University acknowledges the location of its campus on the traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin nation. In doing so, Carleton acknowledges it has a responsibility to the Algonquin people and a responsibility to adhere to Algonquin cultural protocols.

For further information: [Carleton Centre for Indigenous Initiatives](#).

Course Description

France, 1789. Mexico, 1910. Iran, 1979. For centuries revolutions have shattered the status quo and remade societies at the local, national, and global levels. Revolutions are both politics and metaphor; future-oriented, but invoking mythic pasts. This course provides a detailed investigation into the theory, history, and futures of political revolutions across the globe and until modern times. Using historical sources and critical scholarship, we will investigate the foundations of contemporary order, including ideologies, revolutionary movements, citizenship and belonging, and counterrevolutions.

Format: Meetings will take place once/week for a three-hour block. The majority of the time will be spent in class presentations and discussion based on examinations of historical documents, images, and films. Occasionally, students may be asked to watch a film, listen to a podcast, or visit a local exhibition.

Learning Outcomes: This course aims to re-consider the twentieth century from a global and international perspective, questioning the western-centred triumphalist narratives of the so-called “end of empires.” Students in this course will demonstrate an

understanding of the field, will research and interpret primary sources, will engage in critical historical discussions, and will complete a high-quality research project.

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

1. Describe the historical development of types of revolution and modes of resistance in the modern world;
2. Identify and explain several influential theories, institutions, events, processes, and agents in the historical development of types of revolutions and modes of resistance;
3. Explain key events through multiple disciplinary perspectives, including historical methods, memory studies, post- and decolonial thinking, and international relations (IR);
4. Demonstrate enhanced critical and historical thinking and research skills through the writing of an original research paper or project.

Readings and Texts

- Core readings will be posted on the course website (Brightspace), available through ARES, or as chapters in electronic books (eBooks). EBooks can be purchased from the publisher's website or from major online retailers. Note: the eBook provider may require an account or free third-party software.
- **If you are unclear on the general trajectory of 20th century international history you should read the following:** William R. Keylor, Jerry Bannister, and Tracey J. Kinney, The Twentieth-Century World and Beyond: An International History since 1900, Second Canadian Edition, Oxford University Press, 2011 (available online).
- You are responsible for checking the course website regularly and reading, watching, and/or listening to all material listed for each week. Occasionally, I will post additional articles or links that are course-related and informative. For the intellectually adventurous I will happily provide more challenging readings – *just ask*.

Assignments, Evaluation, and Grading

- Your grade in this course is comprised of two main components: a) participation/discussion and b) written assignments.

Participation	Ongoing	Ongoing	15%
Seminar Leader	Twice/course	Ongoing	20%x2 = 40%
Document Analysis	October 18	Week 7	15%
Proposal	November 8	Week 9	5%
Research Paper	December 5	Week 13	25%

(I) Participation (15%) - ongoing

- Seminar attendance is expected and attendance will be taken. The participation grade will reflect the extent to which students *contribute* to class discussions in an *informed and critical manner*, not only attendance. Participants are expected to arrive each week having completed the readings, prepared or answered the discussion questions (as applicable), and equipped to discuss the material.
- Students are expected to be in attendance for the duration of class (3 hours) each week. Arriving late/leaving at the break/leaving early does not count as 'attendance for the duration' and will be noted. Absences and weak and/or limited participation will result in a diminished final grade.
- If you are unavoidably prevented from attending class, please let the Instructor know as soon as possible (note: official documentation is required). Alternative arrangements are at the discretion of the Instructor.

(II) Seminar Leader (20% x2 = 40% total) - ongoing

- In groups of no more than 2-3, each participant will co-lead the seminar. This includes giving a 20-minute presentation on the week's reading and themes, preparing 2-3 discussion questions to distribute to the class two (2) days ahead of seminar (by Tuesday at 5:00 pm), preparing an engaging teaching activity, and writing a 3-5 page reflection to be submitted by the Friday. Each student will lead the seminar a minimum of twice/course. NOTE: do not summarize the history. This assignment must be completed in GoogleDocs and will be reviewed with the Revision History extension.

(III) Document Analysis (15%) - due week 7

- Primary sources (remember these?) are an essential source of information, especially if we are serious about destabilizing intellectual hierarchies (i.e. letting people from the past 'speak' for themselves). Choose a primary source from one of the listed online archives or an example of cultural production (artistic work, performance, sonic work, etc.) that reflects the themes of 20th century imperialism and resistance. Write an 8-10 page explanation/justification for your choice. Points for creativity, clarity, and historical specificity. This assignment must be completed in GoogleDocs and will be reviewed with the Revision History extension.

(IV) Research Paper or Project Proposal (5%) - due Week 9

- Students will write a 1-3 page proposal and abstract in anticipation of the main research paper or project. Points for creativity, clarity, and historical specificity. The

proposal should contain a short description, a tentative thesis, and a bibliography. This assignment must be completed in GoogleDocs and will be reviewed with the Revision History extension.

(V) Research Paper or Project (25%) – *final paper due Week 13*

- Students will write a 15–20-page research paper or project on one element/episode/aspect of modern revolution and/or resistance. Primary sources are imperative. This is a multi-stage process. This assignment must be completed in GoogleDocs and will be reviewed with the Revision History extension.

Grading: Final standing in courses will be shown by alphabetical grades. The system of grades used, with corresponding grade points is:

Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale	Percentage	Letter grade	12-point scale
90-100	A+	12	67-69	C+	6
85-89	A	11	63-66	C	5
80-84	A-	10	60-62	C-	4
77-79	B+	9	57-59	D+	3
73-76	B	8	53-56	D	2
70-72	B-	7	50-52	D-	1

Approval of final grades: Standing in a course is determined by the Course Instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by an Instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Submitting Term Work

Always keep a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments, or take-home tests submitted in your courses. You will be asked to submit drafts and rough notes, or to re-submit work for evaluation or for extension requests.

- **Submission of Term Work:** All writing in this course, including presentation notes, proposals, and essays, will be completed using GoogleDocs and reviewed with the Revision History extension. All assignments are due by 5:00 pm unless otherwise specified. After submitting to GoogleDocs, upload an identical copy of the assignments to Brightspace on the same day. Please note that I am under no obligation to accept emailed assignments.
- **Late penalties:** Late assignments will receive a -5% deduction for the first day, -5%/day thereafter, weekends count as one day. Please see extension policy below.
- **Policy on Extensions:** Extensions are granted solely at the discretion of the Instructor. While medical notes, appeals from the Registrar and PMC, etc., may be considered, please note that extensions are not guaranteed. No extension requests will be granted without evidence of significant preparatory work.
- **NOTE: No assignments will be accepted more than one week after the final day of classes. For Fall 2025 this date is Friday, December 12th, 2025. Assignments received after this date will receive an automatic grade of '0'.**

Statement on Academic Integrity

- The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentionally or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This includes reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source. Examples of sources from which the ideas, expressions of ideas or works of others may be drawn from include but are not limited to: books, articles, papers, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, art works, laboratory reports, research results, calculations and the results of calculations, diagrams, constructions, computer reports, computer code/software, material on the internet and/or conversations. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:
 - any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, **including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);**
 - using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
 - using another’s data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgment;

- submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own; and
 - failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another's work/generative AI output, and/or failing to use quotations marks.
- Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of "F" for the course or even suspension or expulsion from the University.

Course Policy on the use of Generative Artificial Intelligence tools (e.g. ChatGPT)

- **In this course any use of generative AI tools to produce assessed content outside of the course acceptable use guidelines is considered a violation of academic integrity standards and will result in Academic Misconduct proceedings. Review the posted guidelines on acceptable use carefully (on Brightspace).**
- For each assignment you **must** complete the assignment using the correct platform and complete and submit the course report on generative AI. Also, it is **required** to cite all the AI generated content properly. See:
<https://library.carleton.ca/guides/help/generative-ai-chatgpt-and-citations>

Course Policy on Re-Using and Re-Submitting Course Work

- In this course students may not submit substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once, that is, students may not re-use and/or re-submit their own work from a different course or from the same course if they are repeating. Re-using and/or re-submitting substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once will result in a lowered grade or the student may be asked to re-do the assignment, at the Instructor's discretion.

Statement on Student Mental Health

- As a student you may experience a range of mental health challenges that significantly impact your academic success and overall well-being. If you need help, please speak to someone. There are numerous resources available both on- and off-campus to support you. For more information, please consult
<https://wellness.carleton.ca/>.

Emergency Resources ([on and off campus](#))

- Suicide Crisis Helpline: call or text 9-8-8, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- For immediate danger or urgent medical support: call 9-1-1

Carleton Resources

- Mental Health and Wellbeing: <https://carleton.ca/wellness/>
- Health & Counselling Services: <https://carleton.ca/health/>
- Paul Menton Centre: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/>
- Academic Advising Centre (AAC): <https://carleton.ca/academicadvising/>
- Centre for Student Academic Support (CSAS): <https://carleton.ca/csas/>
- Equity & Inclusivity Communities: <https://carleton.ca/equity/>

Off Campus Resources

- Distress Centre of Ottawa and Region: call 613-238-3311, text 343-306-5550, or connect online at <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: call 613-722-6914 or toll-free 1-866-996-0991, or connect online at <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
- Empower Me Counselling Service: call 1-844-741-6389 or connect online at <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: call 1-866-925-5454 or connect online at <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: for online or on-site service <https://walkincounselling.com>

Request for Academic Accommodations

- Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances, are outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (students.carleton.ca/course-outline).
- **Pregnancy obligation:** Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, please review the [Student Guide to Academic Accommodation \(PDF, 2.1 MB\)](#)
- **Religious obligation:** Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the

need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, please review the [Student Guide to Academic Accommodation \(PDF, 2.1 MB\)](#)

- **Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities:** If you have a documented disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation or contact your PMC coordinator to send your instructor your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term. You must also contact the PMC no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more details, visit the [Paul Menton Centre website](#).
- **Survivors of Sexual Violence:** As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated, and where survivors are supported through academic accommodations as per Carleton's Sexual Violence Policy. For more information about the services available at the university and to obtain information about sexual violence and/or support, visit the [Equity and Inclusive Communities website](#).
- **Accommodation for Student Activities:** Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable accommodation must be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. Please contact your instructor with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. For more details, see the [Senate Policy on Accommodation for Student Activities \(PDF, 25KB\)](#).
- **Academic Consideration for Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances:** Due to medical and other extenuating circumstances, students may occasionally be unable to fulfil the academic requirements of their course(s) in a timely manner. The University supports the academic development of students and aims to provide a fair environment for students to succeed academically. Medical and/or other extenuating circumstances are circumstances that are beyond a student's control, have a significant impact on the student's capacity to meet their academic obligations, and could not have reasonably been prevented. Students may request Academic Consideration for Coursework or Other Academic Deliverable. For further information please review the [Procedure for Academic Consideration](#) and the [FAQ page](#).

Intellectual Property

- Student or professor materials created for this course (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the author(s). They are intended for personal use and may not be reproduced or redistributed without prior written consent of the author(s). I maintain the copyright to all course materials; they may not be posted, uploaded, transferred, or sold without my express written consent in advance.

Course Communications

- All email communication to students from BGIInS will be via official Carleton university e-mail accounts and/or Brightspace. As important course and University information is distributed this way, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their Carleton and Brightspace accounts. Please note that "I didn't check my email" will never be a valid excuse. A respectful tone is expected in all e-communication. Students can generally expect an e-mail response within 48 hours, weekends and holidays excepted.

Course Conduct

- In this course informed and critical discussion of complex and contentious issues is the central component of the learning experience. Thus, all participants are expected to arrive on-time, prepared to conduct themselves with decorum and civility, and to actively contribute to an atmosphere of scholarly inquiry and mutual respect. While spirited discussion and disagreement are encouraged, rudeness, combativeness, and disruption are not.



GINS 4090 A 2025: Discussion Schedule

Each week we will discuss a selection of works related to revolutionary theory, history, and outcomes. Representative readings are listed below; however, this list is not final and is subject to change and revision as our discussion progress.

Part I: Understanding Revolutions: Theory, Structure, Agency, Chance?

Week 1: Welcome and Introduction / What is a revolution?

September 4

Goldstone, Jack A. "What Is a Revolution?" *Revolutions: A Very Short Introduction*. Oxford University Press, 2013.

Goldstone, Jack A. "Introduction" and "Timeline of Revolutionary Events." *The Encyclopedia of Political Revolutions*. 1st ed., Routledge, 2014.

Arendt, Hannah. *On Revolution*, Viking, 1965

Access via Internet Archive:

<https://archive.org/details/OnRevolution/page/n9/mode/2up>

Wilson, Woodrow. *The Road Away from Revolution*. Project Gutenberg.

<https://ocul->

[crl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_CRL/hgdufh/alma991023411913405153](https://ocul-crl.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_CRL/hgdufh/alma991023411913405153)

Week 2: Causality and Formal Approaches

September 11

Baker, Keith Michael, and Dan Edelstein, eds. Introduction and Part I: Every Great Revolution is a Civil War. *Scripting Revolution: A Historical Approach to the Comparative Study of Revolutions*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015.

Skocpol, Theda. "Explaining Revolutions: In Quest of a Social-Structural Approach." *Social Revolutions in the Modern World*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press, 1994.

Goldstone, Jack A. "The Generations of Revolutionary Theory Revisited: New Works and the Evolution of Theory." *Critical Sociology* 50: 6 (2024): 1069–86.

Week 3: Connections, Leaders, Outcomes

September 18

Brinton, Crane. "Types of Revolutionists." *The Anatomy of Revolution*. 1st edition. New York: W.W. Norton & Co, 1938.

Cherstich, Igor, and Martin Holbraad. "The Revolutionary Leader: Charisma, Authority, and Exception." *Anthropologies of Revolution*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2020.

Goldstone, Jack A. "You Can't Always Get What You Want: Why Revolutionary Outcomes so Often Diverge from Revolutionary Goals." *Public Choice* 200: 3–4 (2024): 457–72.

Gill, Jungyun, and James Defronzo. "Revolution Without Borders: Global Revolutionaries, Their Messages and Means." *The SAGE Handbook of Globalization*, vol. 2, 2014.

Part II: The "Age of Revolutions": America, France, Haiti

Week 4: America, 1776

September 25

Kamensky, Jane, and Edward G. Gray. Introduction. *The Oxford Handbook of the American Revolution*. 1st ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Young, Alfred F., and Gregory H. Nobles. Introduction and one section of your choice from Part II: Historians Extend the Reach of the American Revolution. *Whose American Revolution Was It?: Historians Interpret the Founding*. New York: New York University Press, 2011.

Age of Revolutions [online]: <https://ageofrevolutions.com/>

Group work: Revisiting the Revolution at 250

Week 5: France, 1789

October 2

McPhee, Peter. Introduction and Chapter 4. *Liberty or Death: The French Revolution*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016.

Desan, Suzanne, et al. Chapter 6 and Chapter 11. *The French Revolution in Global Perspective*. Cornell, NY: Cornell University Press, 2013.

Bell, David A. "Questioning the Global Turn: The Case of the French Revolution." *French Historical Studies* 37:1 (2014): 1-24.

Week 6: Haiti, 1791

October 9

Popkin, Jeremy D. Introduction, Chapter 1 and Chapter 2. *A Concise History of the Haitian Revolution*. 1st ed. Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012.

Dubois, Laurent. Prologue and Chapter 1. *Avengers of the New World the Story of the Haitian Revolution*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap, 2005.

Geggus, David Patrick. Part I. *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*. Columbia, SC: University of South Carolina, 2001.

Part III: Communist Revolutions: Russia, China, Cuba

Week 7: Russia, 1917

October 16

Fitzpatrick, Sheila. Introduction and Chapter 2. *The Russian Revolution*. Fourth edition. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2017.

Rendle, Matthew. "Making Sense of 1917: Towards a Global History of the Russian Revolution." *Slavic Review* 76: 3 (2017): 610–18.

White, Elizabeth, and Daniel Orlovsky. "Gender and the Russian Revolution." *A Companion to the Russian Revolution*. Chichester, UK: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd, 2020.

Fall Break – No Classes – October 20-24

Week 8: China, 1949

October 30

Zarrow, Peter Gue. Chapter 2 and Chapter 18. *China in War and Revolution, 1895-1949*. London: Routledge, 2005.

Manela, Erez. Part II: China's Place Among Nations. *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*. Oxford, NY: Oxford University Press, 2007.

Bianco, Lucien, and Krystyna Horko. Politics. *Stalin and Mao: A Comparison of the Russian and Chinese Revolutions*. 1st ed. Hong Kong: The Chinese University Press, 2018.

Week 9:

November 6

Cuba, 1959

Chomsky, Aviva. Introduction and Chapter 1 - Part three: revolution, a war of a process. *A History of the Cuban Revolution*. 2nd ed. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2015.

Sweig, Julia. "Introduction." *Inside the Cuban Revolution: Fidel Castro and the Urban Underground*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2002.

McKelvey, Charles. "The Cuban Revolutionary Project." *The Evolution and Significance of the Cuban Revolution: The Light in the Dark*. Springer International Publishing, 2018.

Part IV: Social Revolutions: Mexico, Algeria, Iran

Week 10: Mexico, 1910

November 13

Heatherton, Christina. How to Make a Flag: Internationalism and the Pivot of 1848. *Arise! Global Radicalism in the Era of the Mexican Revolution*. 1st ed. Minneapolis, MI: University of California Press, 2022.

Calvente, Lisa B. Y, and Guadalupe García. Chapter 1. *Imprints of Revolution: Visual Representations of Resistance*. Lanham, MA: Rowman & Littlefield International Ltd, 2016.

Mraz, John. Chapter 2. *Photographing the Mexican Revolution Commitments, Testimonies, Icons*. 1st ed. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 2012.

Week 11: Algeria, 1962

November 20

Fanon, Frantz. Chapter 14. The Algerian War and Man's Liberation. Extracts from *Toward the African Revolution*. London: Monthly Review Press, 1967.

Sajed, Alina. "How We Fight: Anticolonial Imaginaries and the Question of National Liberation in the Algerian War." *Interventions* 21: 5 (July 4, 2019): 635–51.

Perego, Elizabeth. "The veil or a brother's life: French manipulations of Muslim women's images during the Algerian War, 1954–62." *The Journal of North African Studies* 20:3 (2015): 349–373.

Week 12: Iran, 1979

November 27

Panah, Maryam. Chapter 1. *The Islamic Republic and the World: Global Dimensions of the Iranian Revolution*. London: Pluto Press, 2007.

Foran, John. Part II – Iran, 1977–1979. *Taking Power: On the Origins of Third World Revolutions*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Figueroa, William. "China and the Iranian Revolution: New Perspectives on Sino-Iranian Relations, 1965–1979." *Asian Affairs* 53: 1 (January 3, 2022): 106–23.

Week 13: The Present and Future of Revolution

December 4

TBA

Goldstone, Jack A, Grinin, Leonid, and Korotayev, Andrey. Introduction. *Handbook of Revolutions in the 21st Century: The New Waves of Revolutions, and the Causes and Effects of Disruptive Political Change*. 1st ed. Springer International Publishing, 2022.

