

Dissent and Dogma: How Ideology Shapes the World
Carleton University
Global and International Studies
Fall 2026 GINS 4090A Wednesdays 11:35-2:25

Professor Sandra Fahy, Ph.D.

Office Hours: Tuesday 3pm – 4:00pm in Dunton Tower 21st Floor, Office 2129

Email: sandra.fahy@carleton.ca “BGInS 1020” in subject line, address Professor Fahy

Lecture Dates: September 9, 16, 23, 30, October 7, 14, 21 (27th is reading week),

November 4, 11, 18, 25, December 2, 9

Assignment Dates in class on: September 30th October 21st November 18th December 9th

Readings*

Leon **Festinger** *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance* (\$19.99 – abe, amazon, or bookstore) Chapters 1, 2, 4, 6, (8, 10, 11 recommended)

Timur **Kuran** *Private Truths, Public Lies: the social consequences of falsification* (abe, amazon, or bookstore \$56.00) Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5 (online via MacOdrum Library)

Karl **Popper** *The Open Society and Its Enemies* (\$9.99- abe books, amazon, or bookstores) Chapter 5, 6 (selections), 7 (first half), 10 (online via MacOdrum Library)

Jonathan **Rauch** *Kindly Inquisitors: the new attacks on free thought* (\$26.99 amazon, abe books, or bookstore) Chapters 1, 2, 4, 5, afterword

* Some texts contain language that is considered outdated or obsolete. Its inclusion reflects the historical texts being studied and does not constitute an endorsement of the terminology.

These books are available online, in most bookstores and secondhand shops for reasonable prices. Students are expected to purchase physical books or print the readings.

Preparing for Course

Students prepare for class by purchasing or printing out our course reading materials. In this class we are practicing the art of reading on paper while taking notes by hand on the reading itself and in your notebook. Students are expected to take notes during lecture and discussion unless physical disability prohibits this. Reading materials off the computer or phone will not be permitted. Use of phones or computers is not permitted. Students are asked not to use headsets or earbuds during tutorial or lecture. Students are responsible for obtaining reading materials in print.

Assessment

- 1.) Two essays written in class (25% and 30%) You will have three hours to write on a given topic, you may use your books, printed chapters, handwritten notes and

intext references. Essays are handwritten. Students will not be penalized for spelling errors.

- 2.) Oral Presentation (15%) students will give a ten-minute oral presentation during which they introduce a contemporary/ historical case and link it to the chapter illuminating the argument and evidence. No power points. Students will lead a five-minute discussion on the presentation with the class. More instructions to follow.
- 3.) Reading Tickets (20%) Students use the following guideline as they read each chapter. Answer these questions in short form. 1.) One sentence explaining what does X author mean by the key term(s) in the chapter? 2. One quotation that stands out as significant, to you, and why. 3. Something that was unclear – indicated with a quote from that section and page reference. Roughly 150wrds.
- 4.) Final Class Session Synthesis and Debate class (10%). Instructions will be distributed on BrightSpace and in class several weeks prior to the day.

Students with accommodation will be notified via the PMC and exam center about the location of their written assignments.

It is your responsibility to read your emails. Attendance is required for this class. Students who do not attend at least 10 of our 13 meetings will not pass this class. Attendance is taken at each seminar. Missed Assignments: If you miss your oral presentation, you must provide a doctor note. You will be expected to do the oral presentation on the next opportunity. If you miss a written assignment, you are granted the opportunity to sit the assignment on the following Monday at 7:30am at Dunton Tower 21st floor. There are no exceptions to this. Students who miss an assignment will lose five points from the grade. You must contact the professor to arrange this.

Introduction to Our Course **“Dissent and Dogma: How Ideology Shapes the World”**

No matter the time or place, we find the human tendency towards conformity, cognitive dissonance, preference falsification and dissent. Human societies have always identified some behavior and thinking as correct and other thinking and behaviour as wrong. And yet, when we look across a range of societies and across time, differences among them exist. In fact, many societies and cultures disagree on fundamental issues such as the family, the role of the state, politics and law. Even within the same society and culture we do not agree. Is this from a lack of information or perspective? Or is it due to something else?

In Dissent and Dogma, we explore how ideology shapes global politics and social reality. We use various fields of study to achieve this aim, including psychology, sociology, philosophy, and international affairs. Students will learn how to think critically

(and recognize when thinking has been less than critical). Students will gain flexibility and rigor in developing panoptic perspectives. You will be able to evaluate your arguments using evidence, logic and intellectual fairness (recognizing the weakness and strength in various perspectives). You will learn to engage constructively with matters of disagreement through informed discussion and debate. We will apply our course concepts to contemporary political and international events, and as such you will have important transferable skills in critical reasoning, communication and decision-making for your professional life. This course aims to help you cultivate intellectual independence, curiosity, and openness to revising assumptions.

Learning Outcomes

Recognize and *recall* key concepts related to our course

Interpret current and historic cultural issues in the light of our reading materials

Identify the argument and supporting evidence in every reading

Develop cognitive flexibility and adaptability to intellectual challenges

Course Objectives

To empower you to listen, assess and make clear arguments

To enable you to write and speak clearly with reference to our course readings

To equip you to assess written and spoken arguments with sophisticated debate

Lecture Schedule GINS 4090

Class One September 9th Wednesday 11:35-2:35

What happens when my beliefs and reality conflict?

Festinger, Chapter One, An Introduction to the Theory of Dissonance p.1-31

Chapter Two, Consequences of Decisions p.32-47

Class Two September 16th Wednesday 11:35-2:25

Do I seek out information that challenges my thinking?

Festinger, Chapter Four, Effects of Forced Compliance p.84-97

Chapter Six, Voluntary and Involuntary Exposure to Information p.123-137

Class Three January 23rd Wednesday 11:35-2:25

Why do I publicly say something I privately don't believe?

Kuran, Chapter One, The Significance of Preference falsification p.3-21

Chapter Two, Private and Public Preferences p.22-44

Class Four September 30th Wednesday 11:35-2:25

How do the opinions of others and institutions shape my opinion?

Kuran, Chapter Three, Private Opinion, Public Opinion p.45-59

Chapter Four, The Dynamics of Public Opinion p. 60-83

Class Five  **October 7th Wednesday 11:35-2:25** In-Class Writing Assignment One (25%)

Class Six October 14th Wednesday 11:35-2:25

How do societies become closed to criticism?

Kuran Chapter Five, Institutional Sources of Preference falsification p.84-102

Class Seven October 21st Wednesday 11:35-2:25

Perfectly peacefully, yet profoundly unfree!

Popper Chapter Five, Nature and Convention, p.58-85

Popper Chapter Six, Totalitarian Justice, p. p.86-118 (selections)

October 26th - 30th 2026 University-Wide Fall Break

Class Eight November 4th Wednesday 11:35-2:25

"How can we so order political institutions that bad or incompetent rulers can be prevented from doing too much damage?"

Popper Chapter Seven, The Principle of Leadership, 119-135 (first half)

Class Nine November 11th Wednesday 11:35-2:25

"But our world has become so small that everybody is now a neighbor."

Popper Chapter Ten, The Open Society and Its Enemies 165-198

Class Ten  **November 18th Wednesday 11:35-2:25**
In-Class Writing Assignment Two (30%)

Class Eleven November 24th Wednesday 11:35-2:25

How can societies protect criticism and dissent?

Rauch Chapter One, New Threats to Free Thoughts p.1-30

Chapter Two, The Rise of Liberal Science, p.31-56

Class Twelve December 2nd Wednesday 11:35-2:25

Why is dissent difficult?

Rauch Chapter Four, The Fundamentalist Threat p.89-110

Chapter Five, The Humanitarian Threat, p.111-154

Afterword: Minorities, Moral Knowledge, and the Uses of Hate Speech p.165-182

Class Thirteen  **December 9th Wednesday 11:35-2:25**
Final Class Synthesis and Debate (20%)

Carleton University Freedom of Speech Policy

"As an institution of higher learning anchored in the ideals of open inquiry and debate, the University's students, staff, and faculty have the freedom of speech to articulate their views. Pursuant to the Carleton University Act, the essential purpose of the University is to engage in the pursuit of the advancement of learning, the dissemination of knowledge, and the intellectual development and betterment of its community. To achieve this purpose, members of the University have freedom of speech, which is defined as the right to examine, question, investigate, speculate, comment and criticize except insofar as limitations are necessary by law or the functioning of the University. The purpose of the University also depends upon an environment of respect and tolerance. Every member needs to be able to learn, teach, live and work free from harassment and discrimination... Disagreements and dissenting views make for a vibrant academic culture. The University strives to find a balance between allowing for critical views to be expressed civilly on campus and not obstructing the freedom of others to communicate their views. In exercising free speech, staff, students and faculty are encouraged to consider the value of mutual respect. Informed, thoughtful and respectful argument, even when disagreement is profound, benefits the University community and fosters its essential purpose." The full document can be accessed here: <https://carleton.ca/equity/policies-procedures/>

Plagiarism, Please ensure that you do not intentionally or unintentionally use the ideas or writing of others without referencing this writing. Be sure to read Carleton University's statement on plagiarism and how to avoid it: <https://carleton.ca/economics/courses/writing-preliminaries/pammett-on-plagiarism-and-paraphrasing/> There are significant consequences for plagiarism. Remember, your ideas and writing are valuable. You can reference others while building your thoughts in writing.

Course Copyright "My lectures and course materials (including all PowerPoint presentations, outlines, and similar materials) are protected by copyright. I am the exclusive owner of copyright and intellectual property of all course materials. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. You may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly for commercial purposes without my express written consent. You may not make recordings of lectures without my written consent."

Carleton University has a duty to accommodate students with institutional needs. Please see information on the following page: <https://carleton.ca/pmc/faculty-and-instructors/institutional-obligations/> Their website states, "Students with disabilities are responsible for identifying their needs for disability-related accommodation to the Paul Menton Centre by booking an intake appointment with a PMC Coordinator and bringing appropriate documentation to the first meeting." Please ensure that you do this, so that you can have the best experience of accommodation at Carleton. There are deadlines for this process. See Carleton dates and deadlines for specific dates." (<https://carleton.ca/registrar/registration/dates/>)

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request the processes are as follows: **Pregnancy** obligation: write to me 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. **Religious** obligation: write to me 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.

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your Letter of Accommodation at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in accommodation (if applicable). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made.

Links for helpful resources. Mental Health: <https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/student-mental-health/>

Substance Use: <https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/safe-substance-use/> Care and Support:

<https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/student-care-and-support/> Rights & Responsibilities:

<https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/student-rights-and-responsibilities/> Emergency Fund:

<https://carleton.ca/studentaffairs/student-emergency-fund/>

Grade Appeals: If you wish to appeal your grade, do so in a timely fashion. Prior to requesting your appeal, please ensure that you have identified the grading error on the assignment and notify me and the TA. If a mistake has been made, we will correct it asap. Approval of final grades: The instructor determines your grade in the course which is 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.

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