

PSCI 4316A/5915A
Contemporary Political Theory
Monday 11:35 – 14:25
Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Hans-Martin Jaeger
Office: C 671 Loeb
Office Hours: Monday 15:00 – 17:00 in person
(or by appointment in person or online)
Phone: (613) 520-2600 ext. 2286
Email: hansmartin.jaeger@carleton.ca

Course Description and Objectives

Against the background of the current “polycrisis” (the rise of “populist” and “post-truth” politics; war in Ukraine and the decline of “liberal international order;” zombie-neoliberal economics and inequality; climate change and food security; pressures and restrictions for international migration and mobility; precarious health care, housing, and affordability; enduring colonial legacies, racism, and misogyny, etc.) this course considers the experience and diagnosis of crisis as a recurring leitmotif – a “structural signature of modernity” or “collective singular” (Koselleck 2006; Jordheim and Wigen 2018) – in contemporary continental (or continental-related) political thought from the early twentieth to the beginning of the twenty-first century. Whether conceived in terms of a dislocation of sovereign power or democracy, the end of Eurocentric political and international order, earth and world alienation, the rise of the social and decline of the public sphere, the legacies of colonialism and continuities of racism, or the depoliticizations or violence of contemporary capitalism and security states, the crisis experiences and diagnoses of modernity have profoundly shaped contemporary engagements with politics and the political. The course traces some of these engagements and related issues including the ontology of the political and political space, political morality and political economy, conflict and consensus, power and resistance, society and the state, and international and global order in selected works of contemporary liberal, conservative, feminist, Critical-theoretical, neo-republican, poststructural, postcolonial, and postfoundational political thought (albeit without much attention to these classifications). In conjunction with their intellectual merits, we will consider how different theorizations are situated in their historical settings and intellectual and political context, and how they may operate as interventions in contemporary political practice. Contrary to a long-standing “provincial” self-understanding (or, in the modern period, “methodological nationalism”) in Western political thought, an important premise of this course is that contemporary continental (and perhaps all Western) political thought must be investigated within an inherently transnational or global (and often colonial-imperial) horizon.

Apart from the critical consideration of its subject matter, the objective of the course is to familiarize students with important concepts, debates, and intellectual fault lines in contemporary political thought.

In class discussions and assignments, students are expected to formulate their own views on the merits and limitations of different theoretical approaches. Students are encouraged to draw on their broader knowledge of the history of political thought and contemporary political and international issues as a background for the theoretical discussions. As a seminar, the course has a mixed format putting the main emphasis on class discussion but alternating this with student presentations and short introductory or synthetic presentations by the instructor.

Course Format

This is an in-person course (with an online option reserved for unforeseen special circumstances for individual classes).

Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students should be able to

- identify and describe central concepts and claims of the political thinkers and theories discussed in the course,
- explain and illustrate the significance of these concepts and claims in their respective contexts and as they may relate to contemporary politics,
- comparatively and critically assess the contributions and limitations of different theories and approaches in contemporary political thought.

Generally, assignments and class activities are intended to hone students' analytical, interpretative, and communication skills in speech and writing.

Readings

You could consider purchasing the assigned books from your favorite bookseller, and especially the following ones which have also been ordered at the CU bookstore (since we are reading substantial portions from them):

Schmitt, Carl (2007) *The Concept of the Political*, expanded edition. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Woolf, Virginia (1966 [1938]) *Three Guineas*. San Diego: Harvest Books.

Marcuse, Herbert (1969) *An Essay on Liberation*. Boston: Beacon Press.

Mouffe, Chantal (2005) *On the Political*. New York: Routledge.

Mbembe, Achille (2019) *Necropolitics*. Durham: Duke University Press

These books have been ordered at the CU Bookstore. Many of the books from which required readings have been assigned are also available as free pdf-files online. All required readings (including books

and journal articles) are available through the Carleton University Library’s ARES online reserve system (via Brightspace or the Library website).

Requirements and Evaluation

<u>Requirement</u>	<u>Percentage of Grade</u>	<u>Due Date</u>
Attendance and Class Participation	20%	Weekly
Discussion Questions and Discussion Lead-off	10%	Sign up for a date in the first class
Reading Response (500-600 words)	10%	Sign up for a date in the first class
Term Paper Outline (500 words max.)	10%	Nov. 6 (or earlier)
Presentation of Draft Term Paper (5-10 minutes)	10%	Dec. 4/Dec. 8
Term Paper (3500-4000 words for UG students, 4500-5000 words for GRAD students)	40%	Dec. 9

Attendance and Class Participation (20%). Attendance is mandatory. Please notify me in advance (in person or by email), if you have to miss a class. Excusable absences include medical reasons, family emergencies, and observance of a religious holiday. Unexcused absences will lower your grade for class participation. Three or more unexcused absences will additionally lower your grade for class participation by one third of a letter grade (e.g. from B+ to B). Six or more unexcused absences will additionally lower your grade for class participation by a full letter grade (e.g. from B to C). To benefit from the course, it is essential that you read the assigned texts prior to class meetings, and that you participate actively and regularly in class discussions. Your class participation will be evaluated based on the quality and frequency of your contributions, with greater weight given to quality. It is expected that you engage with other students’ and the instructor’s ideas constructively, critically, and respectfully (including consideration of how diverse personal experiences may inform different perspectives on the questions under discussion). Quality contributions to class discussions (questions, comments) demonstrate that you have read and comprehended the assigned materials; that you can analytically reflect and critically comment on the central ideas of the readings; and that you can make connections between these ideas and other themes or readings in the course.

Discussion Questions and Discussion Lead-off for one Class (10%). Each student has to prepare two to three discussion questions related to the required reading(s) of one class meeting. These questions must be circulated by email to the entire class at least 24 hours prior to our seminar (i.e. by Sunday, 11:30 a.m. at the latest). The students preparing the questions will also be responsible for leading off the class discussion by briefly explaining the intellectual, political, or pedagogical rationales of their

questions. You will be asked to sign up for the class in which you will present discussion questions in the first class.

Reading Response (10%). Each student has to write a short reading response (500-600 words) on the required reading(s) of one class. You will be asked to sign up for a date for your reading response in the first class. You cannot write a reading response for the class in which you are presenting discussion questions. The reading response is due on Brightspace the day on which the reading(s) will be discussed before the beginning of class. Late submissions of the reading responses will not be accepted except in cases of an excusable absence for which you provide appropriate documentation. The reading response should identify central arguments or ideas of the assigned texts, elucidate their meaning, and assess their persuasiveness. This elucidation and assessment can take (or combine) different forms including (but not limited to)

- an “interpretation/analysis,” i.e. an analytical dissection, interpretative commentary, or “consistency test”/critique (e.g. discussion of internal tensions or contradictions) and assessment of the coherence of the text(s);
- a “contextualization” of the text(s) within a (or several) particular tradition(s) of political thought and an assessment of its/their contribution(s) to that tradition (e.g. pitfalls, improvements, refinements, etc.);
- a “critique,” i.e. a critical assessment of the normative status of the text(s) and/or critique of its/their political/practical, ideological, or ethical implications.

The reading response should be coherent but does not require the organization of an essay or the use of outside sources. However, when you refer to (or quote) specific points in the reading(s) you must provide the corresponding page reference(s).

Term Paper Outline (10%). The term paper outline (500 words max. plus bibliographical references) should state and briefly describe the question the paper will seek to address and provide a short explanation of its significance. It should also state a tentative argument in response to this question and outline how this argument will be organized (e.g. different steps/aspects/sections of the argument in the essay). Finally, it should list four to six relevant bibliographical sources (i.e. books or academic articles including at least one class reading). The term paper outline can be submitted on Brightspace at any time during the term, but **at the latest on Nov. 6**. An initial consultation about your ideas for the term paper with the instructor is strongly encouraged, preferably no later than October.

Presentation of Revised Term Paper Outline (or Draft Term Paper) (10%). Taking into account the feedback received on the term paper outline by the instructor, each student will present their draft term paper (completed or in progress) in a mini-conference held in class on **Dec. 4** and **Dec. 8**. The presentation must be limited to 5-10 minutes (with another approx. 5-10 minutes allotted to discussion, questions, suggestions, or comments by your colleagues and the instructor).

Term Paper (40%). Each student is required to write a term paper on a topic of their choice related to the course content. The term paper is due on Brightspace on Saturday, **December 9**. The topic of the paper can either be

- (a) a purely theoretical discussion elucidating the meaning and assessing the persuasiveness of a theoretical question, issue, approach, or debate broached by one or several of the course readings in greater depth; or

- (b) a discussion of how the theoretical approach of one (or several) of the authors discussed in the course relates to a substantive political, social, or historical issue or phenomenon (whether in a local, regional, national, non-/trans-/post-national, or global context).

If you choose (a), you could rework and extend the discussion of one of your reading responses into a longer paper (relying on some of the strategies for interpretation and assessment outlined above) or, of course, write a longer paper on another question, issue, approach, or debate related to the course material. Apart from an “interpretation/analysis,” “contextualization,” or “critique” (or some combination thereof), you could also interpretatively/analytically and/or critically consider two (or three) theoretical approaches or authors discussed in the course comparatively.

If you choose (b), you have to discuss how the chosen theoretical approach(es) allow(s) for thinking about the issue or phenomenon you wish to consider, and/or what its/their implications might be for political practice. However, the focus of the paper should still be a theoretical discussion.

Whether you choose (a) or (b), *the paper must present and defend a clear argument*, i.e. a reasoned statement about the theoretical approach, question, issue, or debate at hand, or about the relationship between a theoretical approach and the substantive issue or phenomenon chosen for investigation. If you choose (a), some research of, and engagement with, primary and/or secondary sources beyond the class readings is required. If you choose (b), some research of, and engagement with, literature related to the issue or phenomenon under investigation is required in addition to the use of at least one or several class readings. The length of the paper should be approximately 11-13 pages double-spaced for undergraduate students (3500-4000 words plus bibliography), and 15-17 pages for graduate students (4500-5000 words plus bibliography). All sources used (class readings or outside sources including books, articles, internet sources, etc.) must be acknowledged and properly referenced in the text, with page citations where appropriate. They must also be listed in a bibliography at the end of the paper. Any recognized citation style is fine (parenthetical or footnotes), just be consistent. The paper should have an introduction which states your research question and argument, a main part which develops different aspects or steps of the argument, and a conclusion which summarizes the main findings of the analysis (and may point to broader implications). Please include a word count. Evaluation of the paper is based on (in declining order of importance):

- (a) the merits (originality, persuasiveness) of your argument;
- (b) the logic and clarity of your argument, and your general understanding of the subject matter;
- (c) the appropriateness and relevance of the cited readings (including a consistent citation style);
- (d) correct English grammar, spelling, and usage.

There will be no extension of the deadline for submission of the paper, except in cases of a documented medical or family emergency. Late submissions will be accepted but penalized by one third of a letter grade per day (e.g. from A- to B+) for up to seven calendar days. **It is not possible to receive a passing grade for the course without submission of the term paper.**

Use of Artificial Intelligence

As stated in the Appendix below, any use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as, but not limited to ChatGPT) to produce assessed content – in this course, discussion questions, the reading response, the term paper outline, and the term paper – is considered a violation of academic integrity

standards. The instructor reserves the right to question students about how they produced assessed content and ask for relevant documentation. The use of AI tools for merely editorial purposes (including and limited to correction of spelling, grammar, and sentence structure) is permitted but (if applied) must be declared in a footnote at the beginning of the written assignment.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

- Sept. 11 **Introduction:** crisis, what crisis?
Koselleck, Reinhart (2006) "Crisis," *Journal of the History of Ideas* 67(2): 357-400.
Jordheim, Helge and Einar Wigen (2018) "Conceptual Synchronisation: From Progress to Crisis," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 46(3): 421-439.
- Sept. 18 **Carl Schmitt:** the crisis of sovereign order, the concept of the political, and the (new) *nomos* of the Earth
Schmitt, Carl (2007 or 1996 [1932]) "The Concept of the Political," in Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 19-79.
Schmitt, Carl (2003 [1950]) *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum*. New York: Telos, "Author's Foreword" and Part I, Ch. 1 ("Law as Unity of Order and Orientation"), pp. 37-49.
Schmitt, Carl (2003 [1955]) "The New *Nomos* of the Earth," in Schmitt, *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum*. New York: Telos, pp. 351-355.
- Sept. 25 **Virginia Woolf:** the twin crisis of patriarchy and peace, and the politics of difference and indifference
Woolf, Virginia (1966 [1938]) *Three Guineas*. San Diego: Harvest Books [entire, but omit Notes and References].
- Oct. 2 **Hannah Arendt:** the crisis of the human condition and the revival of a public realm
Arendt, Hannah (1998 [1958]) *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 1-78, 199-207, 248-257.
- Oct. 9 Thanksgiving holiday

- Oct. 16 **Frantz Fanon:** the crisis of colonialism and decolonization, violence, and the creation of a new humanity
 Fanon, Frantz (1963) “Concerning Violence” and “Conclusion” in Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York : Grove Press, pp. 35-106, 311-316.
- Oct. 23 Fall break
- Oct. 30 **Herbert Marcuse:** the crisis of sublimated capitalism, the great refusal, and global liberation
 Marcuse, Herbert (1969) *An Essay on Liberation*. Boston: Beacon Press [entire].
- Nov. 6 **Jürgen Habermas:** the crisis of the public sphere (and critical theory), deliberative democracy, and global constitutionalism
 Habermas, Jürgen (1974 [1964]) “The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article,” *New German Critique* 3: 49-55.
 Habermas, Jürgen (1987 [1981]) “The Tasks of a Critical Theory of Society,” in Habermas, *The Theory of Communicative Action, Vol. 2. Lifeworld and System: A Critique of Functionalist Reason*. Boston: Beacon Press, pp. 374-403.
 Habermas, Jürgen (1994) “Three Normative Models of Democracy,” *Constellations* 1(1): 1-10.
 Habermas, Jürgen (2014) “Plea for a Constitutionalization of International Law,” *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 40(1): 5-12.
- ***** **Deadline for submission of Term Paper Outline on Brightspace** *****
- Nov. 13 **Michel Foucault:** the crisis of sovereignty and subjectivity, governmentality, and the archaeology of power
 Foucault, Michel (2003 [1976]) “*Society Must Be Defended:*” *Lectures at the Collège de France 1975-1976*. New York: Picador, Lectures 2 and 11, pp. 23-41, 239-263.
 Foucault, Michel (2007 [1978]) *Security, Territory, Population: Lectures at the Collège de France 1977-1978*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, Lecture 4, pp. 87-114.
 Foucault, Michel (2014 [1980]) *On the Government of the Living: Lectures at the Collège de France 1979-1980*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, [most of] Lecture 4, pp. 74-92.
 Foucault, Michel (2011 [1984]) *The Courage of Truth: Lectures at the Collège de France 1983-1984*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, Lecture 1, pp. 1-22.

- Nov. 20 **Chantal Mouffe:** the crisis of (neo)liberal democracy/cosmopolitanism and the rebirth of the political (and populism?)
- Mouffe, Chantal (2005) *On the Political*. New York: Routledge, chs. 1-2, 4-6 (skim ch. 3).
- Mouffe, Chantal (2016) “The Populist Moment,”
<https://www.opendemocracy.net/en/democraciaabierta/populist-moment/>
- Nov. 27** **Achille Mbembe:** the crisis of postcolonial democracy, necropolitics, and the posthumanist ethics of a shared world
- Mbembe, Achille (2019) *Necropolitics*. Durham: Duke University Press, pp. 1-20, 33-41, 66-92, 117-129, 139-145, 156-170, 177-179, 184-189.
- Dec. 4 ***** **Mini-conference I: Presentation & Discussion of Draft Term Papers** *****
- Dec. 8 ***** **Mini-conference II: Presentation & Discussion of Draft Term Papers** *****
- Dec. 9** ***** **Term Paper due on Brightspace** *****

Appendix

Student Mental Health

As a university 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. Here is a list that may be helpful:

Emergency Resources (on and off campus): <https://carleton.ca/health/emergencies-and-crisis/emergency-numbers/>

- **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: (613) 238-3311 or TEXT: 343-306-5550, <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
 - Mental Health Crisis Service: (613) 722-6914, 1-866-996-0991, <http://www.crisisline.ca/>
 - Empower Me: 1-844-741-6389, <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
 - Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>
 - The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

Requests for Academic Accommodation

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. For an accommodation request, the processes are as follows:

Pregnancy accommodation: 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 accommodation regarding a formally-scheduled final exam, you must complete the Pregnancy Accommodation Form ([click here](#)).

Religious accommodation: 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 [click here](#).

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, reach out to your instructor as soon as possible to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. For more details, [click here](#).

Accommodation for student activities: Carleton University recognizes the substantial benefits, both to the individual student and to the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom. Reasonable accommodation will be provided to students who engage in student activities 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 information, please [click here](#).

For more information on academic accommodation, please contact the departmental administrator or visit: students.carleton.ca/course-outline.

Sexual Violence Policy

As a community, Carleton University is committed to maintaining a positive learning, working and living environment where sexual violence will not be tolerated. 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: carleton.ca/sexual-violence-support.

Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is an essential element of a productive and successful career as a student. Carleton's [Academic Integrity Policy](#) addresses academic integrity violations, including plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, misrepresentation, impersonation, withholding of records, obstruction/interference, disruption of instruction or examinations, improper access to and/or dissemination of information, or violation of test and examination rules. Students are required to familiarize themselves with the university's academic integrity rules.

Plagiarism

The Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional 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, websites, 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;
- 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 acknowledgement;
- 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 and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Use of Artificial Intelligence

Unless explicitly permitted by the instructor in a particular course, any use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools to produce assessed content (e.g., text, code, equations, image, summary, video, etc.) is considered a violation of academic integrity standards.

Procedures in Cases of Suspected Violations

Violations of the Academic Integrity Policy are serious offences which cannot be resolved directly with the course's instructor. When an instructor suspects a violation of the Academic Integrity Policy, the Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student. Penalties are not trivial. They may include a mark of zero for the assignment/exam in question or a final grade of "F" for the course. More information on the University's Academic Integrity Policy can be found at: <https://carleton.ca/registrar/academic-integrity/>.

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).

Submission and Return of Term Work

Papers must be submitted directly to the instructor according to the instructions in the course outline. The departmental office will not accept assignments submitted in hard copy.

Grading

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor, subject to the approval of the faculty Dean. 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

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.

Carleton E-mail Accounts

All email communication to students from the Department of Political Science 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 University email accounts and Brightspace.

Carleton Political Science Society

The Carleton Political Science Society (CPSS) has made its mission to provide a social environment for politically inclined students and faculty. By hosting social events, including Model Parliament, debates, professional development sessions and more, CPSS aims to involve all political science students at Carleton University. Our mandate is to arrange social and academic activities in order to instill a sense of belonging within the Department and the larger University community. Members can benefit through our networking opportunities, academic engagement initiatives and numerous events which aim to complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, visit us on Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/CarletonPoliticalScienceSociety/>.

Official Course Outline

The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.
