

Carleton University
Winter 2020
Department of Political Science
<https://carleton.ca/polisci/>

PSCI 4317B/5915Z
Contemporary Political Theory

Thursday 14:35 – 17:25
Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Hans-Martin Jaeger
Office: B640 Loeb
Office Hours: Monday 13:00 – 16:00
Friday 13:00 – 14:30
(or by appointment)
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Course Description and Objectives

Against the background of the examination of the crisis/crises of the interwar period in PSCI 4316A/5915H, 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) – animating contemporary continental political thought from the mid-twentieth to the beginning of the twenty-first century much as in earlier periods, but now within a global horizon. Whether conceived in terms of 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 or sublimation of capitalism, a dislocation of sovereign power and (liberal) democracy, or risks to human and ecological existence, the global crisis experiences/diagnoses of modernity have profoundly shaped contemporary engagements with politics and the political. The course traces some of these engagements as well as a number of related questions revolving around *inter alia* political space and materiality, 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, Critical-theoretical, neo-republican, poststructural, postcolonial, postfoundational, and posthumanist/new-materialist 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.

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. Doing so should hone students’ analytical, interpretative, and critical skills in speech and writing. Students are encouraged to draw on their broader knowledge of the history of political thought and contemporary social and political 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.

Readings

You could consider purchasing all assigned books from your favorite bookseller, and especially the following ones (since we are reading substantial portions from them):

Schmitt, Carl (2003 [1950]) *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum*. New York: Telos.

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

Agamben, Giorgio (1998 [1995]) *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

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

These books have been ordered at the CU Bookstore. However, most of the books from which required readings have been assigned are also available as free pdf-files online. All books containing required readings have also been placed on reserve at the CU Library. The readings marked with an asterisk (*) are available through the CU Library's E-journals.

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 for one Class	10%	(Sign up for a date in the first class)
Two Reading Responses (500-600 words each)	30%	Sign up for two dates in the first class)
Term Paper (4200-4800 words for UG students, 4800-5400 words for GRAD students)	40%	Apr. 2

As per early feedback guidelines, the first of the two Short Essays will be returned by February 13.

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 for compelling reasons (e.g. medical or family emergency, observance of a religious holiday). Absences incurred for these reasons will be excused. All other absences are unexcused. 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 A- 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. 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 Wednesday, 2:30 p.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.

Two Reading Responses (2 x 15% = 30%). Each student has to write two short (500-600 word) reading responses on the required reading(s) for a particular class: the first one for one of the classes from January 16 to February 6, the second one for one of the classes from February 13 to March 26. You will be asked to sign up for dates for the two reading responses in the first class. You cannot write a reading response for the class in which you are presenting discussion questions. The reading responses are due in class on the day the reading(s) in question will be discussed. Late submissions of the reading responses will not be accepted except in cases of an excusable absence (e.g. medical reason, family emergency, religious observance) for which you provide appropriate documentation. The reading responses 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 responses should be coherent but do 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 (40%). Each student is required to write a term paper on a topic of her or his choice in consultation with the instructor. The term paper is **due** as a hard copy **on April 2** in class. 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 global, national, transnational, or local 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 engagement with primary and/or secondary sources beyond the class readings is required. If you choose (b), some engagement with literature related to the issue or phenomenon under investigation is required in addition to the use of one or several class readings. The length of the paper should be 14-16 pages double-spaced for undergraduate students (approximately 4200-4800 words plus bibliography), and 16-18 pages for graduate students (4800-5400 words plus bibliography). All sources (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 (and listed in the bibliography). 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.

In preparation for writing the research paper each student is required to come to the instructor’s office hours, if necessary by appointment, (at least) once in the course of the semester to discuss the topic of the paper and how the student will approach the topic. To prepare for this meeting you should write

some notes stating the proposed paper topic, your tentative argument about this topic, and how you will go about substantiating this argument (including a list of bibliographic references). It is strongly suggested that you hold this consultation with the instructor in February to give yourself sufficient time to work on the paper.

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. In case of a late submission you may send the paper as an email attachment (as a time stamp), but you must provide the instructor with an identical hard copy the following business day or as soon as possible thereafter. **In the absence of circumstances warranting an extension, failure to submit the Term Paper on the due date (or within seven calendar days of the due date) will automatically result in a failing grade for the course.**

CuLearn

The course has a CuLearn page which contains the course outline and electronic class handouts. Students' discussion questions will also be posted on CuLearn.

Class Schedule and Reading Assignments

- Jan. 9 **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.
- Jan. 16 **Carl Schmitt:** the crisis of Eurocentric global order and the search for a new *nomos*
 Schmitt, Carl (2003 [1950]) *The Nomos of the Earth in the International Law of the Jus Publicum Europaeum*. New York: Telos, pp. 37-39, 42-62, 67-83, 86-100, 140-151, 172-175, 181-192, 227-239, 243-247, 257-258, 316-322, 351-355.
- Jan. 23 **Hannah Arendt:** the rise of the social and the crisis of the public sphere
 Arendt, Hannah (1998 [1958]) *The Human Condition*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 1-78, 199-207, 248-257.

- Jan. 30 **Frantz Fanon:** the crisis of colonialism and decolonization
 Fanon, Frantz (1963) “Concerning Violence,” in Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York : Grove Press, pp. 35-106.
- Feb. 6 **Herbert Marcuse:** the crisis of sublimated capitalism and the working class
 Marcuse, Herbert (1969) *An Essay on Liberation*. Boston: Beacon Press. (entire)
- Feb. 13 **Jürgen Habermas:** the crisis of the public sphere and (critical theory in) the welfare and nation-state
 *Habermas, Jürgen (1974 [1964]) “The Public Sphere: An Encyclopedia Article,” *New German Critique* 3: 49-55.
 *Habermas, Jürgen (1986) “The New Obscurity: The Crisis of the Welfare State and the Exhaustion of Utopian Energies,” *Philosophy and Social Criticism* 11(2): 1-18.
 *Habermas, Jürgen (1994) “Three Normative Models of Democracy,” *Constellations* 1(1): 1-10.
 Habermas, Jürgen (1998 [1996]) Kant’s Idea of Perpetual Peace: At Two Hundred Years’ Historical Remove, in Habermas, *The Inclusion of the Other: Studies in Political Theory*. Cambridge: MIT Press, pp. 165-201.
- Feb. 20 Winter Break (no class)
- Feb. 27 **Michel Foucault:** the crisis of sovereignty and the birth of biopower
 Foucault, Michel (1977 [1975]) “The Body of the Condemned” and “Panopticism,” in Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*. New York: Vintage Books, pp. 3-31 and 195-228.
 Foucault, Michel (1978 [1976]) “Right of Death and Power over Life,” in Foucault, *The History of Sexuality, Vol. 1: An Introduction*. New York: Vintage Books, pp. 135-159.
 Foucault, Michel (1991 [1978]) “Governmentality,” in Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon and Peter Miller (eds.) *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, pp. 87-104.
- Mar. 5 **Giorgio Agamben:** the crisis of biopolitical sovereignty and the new *nomos* of the camp
 Agamben, Giorgio (1998 [1995]) *Homo Sacer: Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, pp. 1-38, 71-74, 81-90, 104-111, 119-135, 166-188.

- Mar. 12 **Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri:** the crisis of Empire and the birth of the multitude
Hardt, Michael and Antonio Negri (2000) *Empire*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, pp. xi-66.
- Mar. 19 **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/democraciaabierta/chantal-mouffe/populist-moment>.
- Mar. 26 **Ulrich Beck, Bruno Latour, Timothy Mitchell:** the crisis of the Anthropocene and the search for cosmopolitics
*Beck, Ulrich (2003) "Toward a New Critical Theory with a Cosmopolitan Intent," *Constellations* 10(4): 453-468.
*Beck, Ulrich (2004) "The Truth of Others: A Cosmopolitan Approach," *Common Knowledge* 10(3): 430-449.
*Latour, Bruno (2004) "Whose Cosmos, Which Cosmopolitics? Comments on the Peace Terms of Ulrich Beck," *Common Knowledge* 10(3): 450-462.
Mitchell, Timothy (2011) *Carbon Democracy: Political Power in the Age of Oil*. London: Verso, pp. 1-11, 231-254.
*Latour, Bruno (2016) "Onus Orbis Terrarum: About a Possible Shift in the Definition of Sovereignty," *Millennium: Journal of International Studies* 44(3): 305-320.
- Apr. 2 **Conclusion**

***** Term Paper due in Class *****

Academic Accommodations

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 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, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

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, visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/wp-content/uploads/Student-Guide-to-Academic-Accommodation.pdf

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. carleton.ca/pmc

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 is 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

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. <https://carleton.ca/senate/wp-content/uploads/Accommodation-for-Student-Activities-1.pdf>

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

Plagiarism

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.” This can include:

- 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;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in "substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct 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 may include a mark of zero for the plagiarized work or a final grade of "F" for the course. 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 and will not be date-stamped in the departmental office. Late assignments may be submitted to the drop box in the corridor outside B640 Loeb. Assignments will be retrieved every business day at **4 p.m.**, stamped with that day's date, and then distributed to the instructor. For essays not returned in class please attach a **stamped, self-addressed envelope** if you wish to have your assignment returned by mail. Final exams are intended solely for the purpose of evaluation and will not be returned.

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

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.

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 cuLearn. As important course and University information is distributed this way, it is the student's responsibility to monitor their Carleton and cuLearn accounts.

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/> and our website <https://carletonpss.com/>, or stop by our office in Loeb D688!"

Official Course Outline

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