

Carleton University
 Department of Political Science
 Carleton.ca/polisci/

Winter 2024



Source: Detail from Jenny Holzer, *Xenon for Bregenz* (2004)

Instructor: William Walters	Office Hours: Mons 14.30 – 16.30 or by appt.
Office: B753 Loeb	Email: william.walters@carleton.ca
Seminar: Weds. 14.35 – 17.25	Location: Check with Carleton Central

Prerequisite(s): fourth-year standing

DELIVERY FORMAT

In person

COURSE THEMES AND OBJECTIVES

Political science devotes considerably more attention to questions of publicity, transparency, citizenship and voice than it does to issues of secrecy, opacity, obfuscation and silence. This course will place these latter questions at the centre of our inquiry. If secrecy has been surprisingly marginal to political science, this perhaps reflects the ambiguous normative status of this category. How does secrecy shape power relations and politics? Is secrecy always a bad thing? Does secrecy have a history? Does the rise of the information society change the way states practice secrecy, and what does this mean for citizens? These are some of the questions we will address in the course. The course will focus primarily on the countries of the global North, but will also consider secrecy in contexts of authoritarian rule, and postcolonial democracies. Our approach will be interdisciplinary, drawing on some of the most insightful work on secrecy whether written by political scientists, geographers, historians, artists or archivists. It will also be empirical and located: we will approach secrecy not as something generic but a mutable complex of practices, ideas, and experiences that are best understood through cases, issues, and contexts.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

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

1. understand how secrecy shapes power and politics in liberal and illiberal regimes;
2. identify key concepts, methods and cases that scholars have used to explore questions of secrecy;
3. design and write a research proposal, and develop this into a paper, gaining skills and experience that could be used for work and especially for future applications for research funding (eg, OGS) and graduate school.

COURSE TEXTS

There is no textbook. All required readings will be available either through the regular journal links in the library catalogue, or as PDFs on ARES.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Readings and videos. Before class you are required to do the required readings for each module. In addition, for some of the modules I will post on Brightspace short videos and links which you should also consult.
2. Seminar attendance and active participation (15%). You are expected to attend the weekly seminars and actively participate in the discussions. Your grade will reflect your attendance and the quality of your engagement with the diverse course materials.
3. Forum posts (15%). There are no formal student presentations of readings in class. Instead, we will use forum posts to shape classroom discussions. **During the course you are required to make a total of FOUR posts on the Brightspace forum.** At each class we will look back on posts from the past week. Posts should not be a precis of the reading. Instead, your post could take the form of either (a) a question or point of clarification about a particular reading (b) something you like about the reading and why (c) something you don't like and why (d) connections to other readings, events, current affairs etc or (e) A response to someone else's post. You will be graded on the quality of your overall contribution to the forums. LENGTH: posts can be anything from a couple of sentences to a couple of paragraphs.
4. Short Essay (20%). For this assignment you will write a short review essay on one week's theme where you **critically discuss the three readings PLUS one addition of your choice.** Your addition should be relevant to that week's theme. **You can choose from weeks 2, 3, 4 or 5.** Due: **February 14th, 11.59pm.** Word length: **1500 words** (the bibliography is additional to the word count). Upload via Brightspace. Use Word format (**not PDF!**) and name the file *Yourfamilyname_ShortEssay_PSCI4809*
5. Research proposal and presentation (10%). This will be a proposal for the final paper which you will present at one of the miniconferences in weeks 11, 12 and 14. Guidelines for the proposal and presentation will be posted on Brightspace.
6. Research paper (40%). The paper will build on your proposal and presentation. Submit by: **Apr 10th, 11.59pm on Brightspace.** Length: **3000 words.** Use Word format (**not PDF!**) and name the file *Yourfamilyname_ResearchPaper_PSCI4809*

Late penalties: One half grade will be deducted for each day late. Hence, if your short essay #1 were submitted on Mar 16 instead of Mar 15, you would drop from, say, A to A-.

THEMES AND READINGS

1. Introduction (Jan 10)

- Walters, William (2021) *State secrecy and security: Refiguring the covert imaginary*: Routledge, 1-26.

2. Theoretical Perspectives on Secrecy (Jan 17)

- Rittberger, Berthold and Klaus H Goetz (2018) 'Secrecy in Europe.' *West European Politics* 41(4): 825-845.

- de Goede, Marieke and Mara Wesseling (2017) 'Secrecy and security in transatlantic terrorism finance tracking.' *Journal of European Integration* 39(3): 253-269.
- Hilgartner, Stephen (2012) 'Selective flows of knowledge in technoscientific interaction: Information control in genome research.' *The British Journal for the History of Science* 45(2): 267-280.

3. Forms of Secrecy (Jan 24)

- Moynihan, Daniel Patrick (1997) 'Secrecy as government regulation.' *PS: Political Science & Politics* 30(2): 160-165.
- Thompson, Dennis (1999) 'Democratic secrecy.' *Political Science Quarterly* 114(2): 181-193.
- Roberts, Alasdair (2012) 'Open secrets and dirty hands'. In: Austin Sarat, Lawrence Douglas and Martha M. Umphrey (eds) *The secrets of law*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 25-45.

4. Historicizing Secrecy (Jan 31)

- Birchall, Clare (2021) *Radical secrecy: The ends of transparency in datafied America*: U of Minnesota Press, 15-38.
- Galison, Peter (2010) 'Secrecy in three acts.' *Social Research* 77(3): 941-974.
- Siddiqi, Asif (2022) 'Atomized urbanism: Secrecy and security from the Gulag to the Soviet closed cities.' *Urban History*, 49: 190-210.

5. Powers of Silence and Voice (Feb 7)

- Schweiger, Elisabeth (2022) 'Fighting silence: Covert warfare and the uphill battle against the unsaid', *European Journal of International Relations* 28(1): 110-130.
- Alvinus, Aida and Alvita Holmberg (2019) 'Silence-breaking butterfly effect: Resistance toward the military within #MeToo', *Gender, Work and Organization* 26: 1255-1270.
- Ellsberg, Daniel (2010) 'Secrecy and national security whistleblowing.' *Social Research* 77(3): 773-804.
- Mundy, Liza (2018) 'The women code breakers who unmasked Soviet Spies', *Smithsonian Magazine*, September. <https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/women-code-breakers-unmasked-soviet-spies-180970034/>

6. Secrecy in Global Perspective (Feb 14)

- Anderson, David M. (2015) 'Guilty secrets: Deceit, denial, and the discovery of Kenya's "migrated archive"'. *History Workshop Journal*. 80(1): 142-160.
- Mainwaring, Sarah and Richard Aldrich (2021) 'The secret empire of signals intelligence: GCHQ and the persistence of the colonial presence.' *International History Review* 43(1): 54-71.
- Cobham, Alex, Petr Jansky and Markus Meinzer (2015) 'The financial secrecy index: Shedding new light on the geography of secrecy', *Economic Geography* 91(3): 281-303.

7. Winter Break (Feb 21)

8. Decentering Secrecy (I): Leaks, Exposures and Revelations (Feb. 28)

- Stampnitzky, Lisa (2020) 'Truth and consequences? Reconceptualizing the politics of exposure.' *Security Dialogue* 51(6): 597-613.
- Maass, Peter. (2013) 'How Laura Poitras helped Snowden spill his secrets', *New York Times* August 13. www.nytimes.com/2013/08/18/magazine/laura-poitras-snowden.html?hpw

- Van Veeeren, Elspeth (2019) 'Secrecy's subjects: Special operators in the US shadow war.' *European Journal of International Security* 4(3): 386-414.

9. Decenting Secrecy (II): Materials, Devices, Technologies (Mar 6)

- Paglen, Trevor (2010) 'Goatsucker: Toward a spatial theory of state secrecy.' *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 28: 759-771.
- Balmer, Brian (2004) 'How does an accident become an experiment? Secret science and the exposure of the public to biological warfare agents.' *Science as Culture* 13(2): 197-228
- EITHER: Constable, Marriane (2019) 'The paper shredder: Trails of law', *Law Text Culture* 23: 276-293
- OR: Wirtén, Eva (2021) 'In the service of secrecy: An enveloped history of priority, proof and patents', *Journal of Material Culture* 26(3): 241-261.

10. Regimes of Dis/closure and Non-disclosure (Mar 13)

- Logan, Tricia (2018) 'Questions of privacy and confidentiality after atrocity: Collecting and retaining records of the residential school system in Canada.' *Genocide Studies International* 12(1): 92-102.
- Gilbert, Emily (2016) 'From declassified documents to redacted files: Tracing military compensation'. In: Alison Williams, Neil Jenkins, Matthew Rech, et al. (eds) *The Routledge companion to military research methods*. Routledge, 30-43.
- Luscombe, Alex and Kevin Walby (2017) 'Theorizing freedom of information: The live archive, obfuscation, and actor-network theory', *Government Information Quarterly* 34: 379-387.

11. Aesthetics of Secrecy (& Miniconference I) (Mar 20)

- Birchall, Clare (2014) 'Aesthetics of the secret.' *New Formations* 83(3): 25-46.
- Bailey, Robert (2012) 'Unknown knowns: Jenny Holzer's redaction paintings and the history of the war on terror.' *October* 142: 144-161.
- Leone, Massimo. 2017. 'Silence propaganda: A semiological inquiry into the ideologies of taciturnity', *Signs and Society* 5(1): 154-182.

12. Disinformation, Misinformation, and Conspiracism (& Miniconference II) (Mar 27)

- van Dyk, Silke (2022) 'Post-truth, the future of democracy and the public sphere', *Theory, Culture and Society* 39(4): 37-50.
- Prasad, Amit (2022) 'Anti-science misinformation and conspiracies: COVID-19, post-truth and science and technology studies (STS)', *Science, Technology & Society* 27(1): 88-112.
- Johnson, Matthew and Brisson-Boivin, Kara (forthcoming) 'On the importance of digital media literacy, digital citizenship and civic engagement', CIGL.
- Visiting speaker: Dr Kara Brisson-Boivin, Director of Research, MediaSmarts and Adjunct Research Professor, Sociology, Carleton University.

13. No class (Apr 3)

Professor at International Studies Association annual meetings in San Francisco

14. Miniconference III (Apr 10)

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:

Academic consideration for medical or other extenuating circumstances: Please contact your instructor if you are experiencing circumstances that (a) are beyond your control, (b) have a significant impact your capacity to meet your academic obligations, and (c) could not have reasonably been prevented. Decisions on academic consideration are in your instructor's discretion; they will be guided by the course learning outcomes and the principle of good faith. Please see [here](#) for more details. For considerations relating to course work, your instructor may request that you complete the [Self-Declaration form](#). To apply for a deferral of your final exam, you must submit

the Self-Declaration form to the Registrar's Office no later than three days after the scheduled examination or take-home due date.

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.