PSCI 5410
Postcolonial Theories and Practices
8:35 a.m. – 11:25 p.m. Monday
Please confirm location on Carleton Central

Instructor: Cristina Rojas
Office: DT 1502
Office Hours: Monday 12:30 – 2:00 p.m.
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Course description

This seminar analyses the relation between modernity and colonialism to frame the understanding of what is history and who makes it; who is human and the hierarchical grading of humanity according to sexual, racial, ethnic and/or religious categories; how these hierarchies translate into the worthiness of certain forms of speech, reasoning and labour and the devaluation of others. Against the modern/colonial conviction that there is one-world, the seminar explores the ecology of knowledges, beings, life projects, economies and relations between human beings and nature (earth-beings).

Objective

The objective of the seminar is to broaden the perception of what modern thought considers possible and to question the modern premise of one-universal-world that inhibits the existence and tends to assimilate alternative worlds already in place.

Organization

Each section is divided in two parts. The first part engages students in debates pertaining to the relation between modernity/coloniality and history, knowledge, development, among others. All students participating in the seminar must read the required readings for each section and formulate questions for discussion. The second part focuses on the ‘ecology of practices’, a concept inspired by the work of Isabelle Stengers\(^1\). The discussion of these practices is led by one or two students presenting short reflections on these practices. Only students presenting will read the literature on ecological practices for the week and write short papers to distribute to the remaining students.

Assessment

- **Participation and Seminar questions**: students are asked to formulate thought-provoking question for discussion in the seminar. The questions may point to a particularly passage,

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\(^1\) An ecology of practices demand that ‘no practice be defined as “like any other’. Approaching a practice then means approaching it as it diverges, that is, feeling its borders, experimenting with the questions which practitioners may accept as relevant, even if they are not their own questions, rather than posing insulting questions that would lead them to mobilise and transform the border into a defence against their outside.’ Isabelle Stengers, 2005, Introductory notes on an ecology of practices, *Cultural Studies Review*; 11:1, 193-196
contention issue or concept formulated by the authors. Students must send their questions (maximum two) the Friday before the respective class and be prepared to explain the relevance of the question in class. Students must attend all seminar meetings and be prepared to discuss the reading for that week. This is a reading-intensive seminar, and keeping up is an absolute requirement. Weekly participation in seminar discussion is worth 15% of the grade.

**Seminar Papers.** Students must write three short seminar papers:

- **Seminar paper 1:** It is a concise (~2,500 words) and thoughtful reflection on the literature provided for one of the topics of the seminar. The paper must demonstrate a rich understanding of the reading material and the student’s own position on this material. The paper is neither a summary of readings nor a "report" on the articles. The paper must be centered on an argument about the student’s particular standpoint or controversy around a key concept or issue. The topic of the paper will be chosen in advance following the class outline and schedule. On the occasion of the scheduled presentation, the student will make a ~10 min. presentation of the summary of the paper. A copy of the paper must be sent to all the participants of the seminar by email by 5pm on the Friday before the seminar meeting. The paper is worth 25% of the grade.

- **Seminar paper 2:** It is a concise and reflective discussion on the decolonizing practices (~2,500 words). The student must choose one or two articles under the heading of ‘ecology of practices’. The paper must contain a brief summary of the practice and a reflection on the practice engaging the literature provided in the seminar. The paper is worth 25% of the grade.

Note: students choosing the seminar paper 1 during the first 6 weeks must write the seminar paper 2 during the last 6 weeks and vice versa.

- **Seminar paper 3:** At the end of the seminar, you will be required to write a proposal of 2000 words describing a research project or community activity that you want to undertake as part of your MA thesis or MPE or doctoral project. This project must be written for a research (SSHRC, OGS) or a financing organization (foundation or voluntary organization). These proposals must circulate one week in advance of the final class and presented in the final class (April 9). The proposal is worth 35% of the grade.

**Late Work:**
Late work will not be accepted except in extraordinary circumstances (and must be cleared with the professor at least one week in advance).

**There can be no rescheduling of presentations. Please plan accordingly.**

**Summary of Assessments and dates:**

- Seminar paper 1, 25% (date varies)
- Seminar paper 2, 25% (date varies)
- Participation 15% (ongoing)
- Proposal 35% (written paper is due April 2; presentation April 9)

**Text:**

No text is required. Readings are available on Ares.
Class Schedule and Readings:

Class 1 January 8 Modernity/Coloniality


Recommended Readings:

Seth, S. 2013 "Once Was Blind but Now Can See": Modernity and the Social Sciences", International Political Sociology. 7, 136–151

Class 2 January 15 De/colonizing History


Ecology of Practices:


Recommended readings

**Class 3 January 22 De/colonizing Knowledge**


Mbembe A. 2016. Decolonising the university: new directions. *Arts and Humanities in Higher Education* 15 29–45


**Ecology of Practices**


**Recommended readings**


Santos, B. Beyond abyssal thinking. From global lines to ecologies of knowledges. *Eurozine*. [www.eurozine.com](http://www.eurozine.com), 1-33


**Class 4 January 29 De/colonizing Labour**


**Ecology of practices**


Recommended Readings


Class 5 February 5 De/colonizing Development


Ecology of Practices:


Recommended Readings:


Class 6 February 12 Race and Posthumanism


**Ecology of Practices:**


**Recommended readings:**


**February 19 No class (reading week)**

**Class 7 February 26 Ontological Turn**


**Ecology of Practices:**


**Recommended readings:**


**Class 8 March 5 Indigenous Cosmopolitanism**


Ecology of Practices


Recommended Readings


Class 9 March 12 De/colonizing Feminism


Ecology of Practices:


Additional readings


**Class 10 March 19 De/colonizing Justice**


Ecology of Practices


**Recommended readings:**


**Class 11 March 26 Territory and urban space**


Escobar, A. Thinking-feeling with the Earth: Territorial Struggles and the Ontological Dimension of the Epistemologies of the South. *Revista de Antropología Iberoamericana*, vol. 11, núm. 1, enero-abril, 2016, pp. 11-32


Ecology of Practices


Horn, P. Indigenous ‘Rights to the City’. Lessons from a Comparison of two Latin American Cities, N-Aerus xvi, 1-16

Simpson, Leanne. “Land as pedagogy: Nishnaabeg intelligence and rebellious transformation.”
Recommended Readings:


Class 12 April 2 Climate Change


Ecology of Practices


Recommended readings

Haraway D 2015 Anthropocene, capitalocene, plantationocene, chthulucene: Making kin, Environmental Humanities, 6, 159-165

Class 13 April 9 Presentation of final papers

Academic Accommodations

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. 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-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (if applicable).
After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (if applicable).

**For Religious Observance:** Students requesting accommodation for religious observances should apply in writing to their instructor for alternate dates and/or means of satisfying academic requirements. Such requests should be made during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist, but no later than two weeks before the compulsory academic event. Accommodation is to be worked out directly and on an individual basis between the student and the instructor(s) involved. Instructors will make accommodations in a way that avoids academic disadvantage to the student. Instructors and students may contact an Equity Services Advisor for assistance (www.carleton.ca/equity).

**For Pregnancy:** Pregnant students requiring academic accommodations are encouraged to contact an Equity Advisor in Equity Services to complete a *letter of accommodation*. Then, make an appointment to discuss your needs with the instructor at least two weeks prior to the first academic event in which it is anticipated the accommodation will be required.

**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:

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<th>Percentage</th>
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<th>Percentage</th>
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<td>90-100</td>
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<td>67-69</td>
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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. Holding social events, debates, and panel discussions, 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 numerous opportunities which will complement both academic and social life at Carleton University. To find out more, visit https://www.facebook.com/groups/politicalsciencesociety/ or come to our office in Loeb D688.
Official Course Outline: The course outline posted to the Political Science website is the official course outline.