

PSCI 5201 F
POLITICS IN PLURAL SOCIETIES

Wednesday 8.35 am - 11.25 am
Pl. confirm location on Carleton Central.

Instructor: Gopika Solanki
Office: Loeb C674
Office Hours: Friday 1.30 pm- 2.30 pm or by appointment
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores the inter-relationship between the individual, the plurality of groups, and the state. We shall discuss theoretical approaches to the construction, mobilization, and accommodation of plural identities in diverse polities. The first part of the course discusses the relationship between state-formation, governance, public policies, and conflict through the lenses of gender, race and ethnicity. The second part of the course studies some of the responses to cultural diversity. Is recognition of cultural groups desirable? What should be the extent and scope of cultural rights? What factors explain the successes and failures of institutional arrangements in varied empirical locations? The course draws upon debates and literature across sub-fields and disciplines.

READINGS

All assigned readings are available on Brightspace free of charge.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

To introduce students to canonical and contemporary debates on ethnic politics

To acquaint students with the state of the literature on the facilitation, management, and accommodation of cultural diversity

To familiarize students with the theoretical and conceptual innovations to the study of ethno-cultural pluralism in state and society

To introduce students to specific case studies and comparative methodology

To integrate the principles of EDIR and Indigenization into debates on pluralism

COURSE FORMAT

This is a seminar, based on discussion among and active participation by students.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

EVALUATION AT A GLANCE

Assignment	Due Date	Weight
Response Paper	Ongoing; sign-up by 24 September	15
Presentation	Ongoing	5
Attendance	Ongoing	12.5
Participation	Ongoing; cumulative	12.5
Research Paper Presentation	Last two weeks	5
In-Class Assessments	October 15; November 26	25
Final Research Paper	Due December 8	25

Response Paper (15%)

You are expected to hand in one short reading response paper (3-5 pages, double-spaced) during the semester, aligning with your oral presentation. The paper should cover at least two readings. The response paper is worth 15 percent of the final grade and should be handed in before the material is covered in class. The paper should focus on issues related to the theme of the week, outline various theoretical positions, compare points of agreements or tensions and respond critically to the discussion. In addition, your paper may also refer to themes across one or more readings covered in other weeks. You will be graded on your ability to grasp the main arguments, tensions, and inter-connections in the literature and on the clarity of the writing.

Presentation (5%)

Students are also expected to present the main argument of their response papers in class and field questions from their peers. This class presentation is 5 percent of the final grade. It is your responsibility to select and sign up to select the topic of your choice by the end of week three. Your presentation should not be longer than 10 minutes. The presentation should present an exposition and analysis of the content and provide criticism or points of reflection. Your presentation should also identify key themes, arguments, and positions within the readings.

Students will be graded on the analytical quality of the content and the ability to respond to questions posed to them.

In-Class Assessments (25%)

On October 15 and November 26, we will conduct in-class reflective writing assessments wherein you will be given questions based on previous weeks' readings and course concepts covered in class. You will have to answer two short questions. One question will be given to you a week in advance and the second question will be handed to you in class. You will be given 30 minutes to write both the answers. These in-class writing exercises are meant to help you develop analytical and writing skills while processing course materials. You will be graded on the depth of engagement with course concepts, quality of critical analysis, the use of specific examples and evidence, and the ability to connect to broader course themes.

Attendance and Participation (25%)

You are expected to attend and participate actively in all class discussions and complete the readings for each week. Together, class participation and attendance are worth 20 percent of the final grade. You will be evaluated on the frequency and quality of participation. You will also be assessed on your ability to formulate and pose critical questions to in-class presentations.

Panel Discussions: Presentation to Class of Research in Progress (5%)

You are required to present the outline of your research paper to the class. These presentations will take place in the final two weeks of the course. Your presentation should be 10 minutes long. It should include research questions, literature review, and an outline of how you plan to develop your paper.

Research Paper (25%)

You are required to write a 18-20 pp. research paper worth 25 percent of the final grade. Topics may include any issue relevant to the course; you are encouraged to select your topic in consultation with the instructor. Your paper should explore a research question and articulate an argument. You should use appropriate sources, methods, and evidence in the development of the project. You will be graded on the clarity of the research question, the use of appropriate methods and evidence in the development of the argument, the internal logical consistency of the paper, and the clarity of written expression (including writing style and citations).

Note:

Each class assignment is graded out of 100 marks. For late submissions, a penalty of two marks per day will be deducted from the assignment's grade. Students are not allowed to re-use and submit their own work from different courses and assignments for this course.

AI Policy

Only some Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools, such as spell-check or Grammarly, are acceptable for use in this class. Use of other AI tools via website, app, or any other access, is not permitted in this class. Representing work created by AI as your own is plagiarism.

COURSE SCHEDULE

September 3

Introduction and Overview

What are plural societies? How do we understand pluralism?

Recommended

Galston, William. 2005. *Public Matters: Politics, Policy and Religion in the 21st Century*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield.

Rawls, John. 1996. *Political Liberalism*. New York: Columbia University Press.

Connolly, William. 1991. *Identity/Difference: Democratic Negotiations of Political Paradox*. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell University Press.

Walzer, Michael. 1983. *Spheres of Justice: A Defense of Pluralism and Equality*. New York: Basic Books.

Coetzee, J.M. 1999. *Disgrace*. New York: Viking.

September 10

Religion, Nationalism, Colonial State-Formation, and Postcoloniality

Asad, Talal. 1999. "Religion, Nation-State, Secularism". In *Nation and Religion: Perspectives on Europe and Asia*. Eds. Peter van der Veer and Helmut Lehmann. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 178-196.

Casanova Jose. 2006. "Rethinking Secularization: A Global Comparative Perspective." *The Hedgehog Review* 8(1/2): 7-22.

Anderson, Ben. 1983. *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso. 1-102. Skim.

Chatterjee, Partha. 1993. *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories*. New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 3-34, 116-134.

Wolfe, Patrick. 2006. "Settler Colonialism and the Elimination of the Native." *Journal of Genocide Research* 8(4): 387-409.

September 17

The Making and Unmaking of Group Boundaries

Geertz, Clifford. 1973. "The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States." In *The Interpretation of Cultures*. Ed. Geertz, Clifford. New York: Basic Books. 255-269. Skim.

Brass, Paul. 1991. *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison*. Delhi: Sage. 69-102.

Posner, Daniel. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 529-545.

Miguel, Edward. 2004. "Tribe or Nation? Nation Building and Public Goods in Kenya versus Tanzania." *World Politics* 56(3): 327-362.

Thompson, Debra. 2013. "Through, Against and Beyond the Racial State: The Transnational Stratum of Race." *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* 26(1): 133-151.

Mamdani, Mahmood. 1996. *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Late Colonialism*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 3-34, 285-301.

September 24

Mobilizing Diverse Identities

Chandra, Kanchan. 2005. "Ethnic Parties and Democratic Stability." *Perspectives on Politics* 3(2): 235-252.

Jesudasan, James. 1996. "The Syncretic State and the Structuring of Oppositional Politics in Asia." In *Political Oppositions in Industrialising Asia*. Ed. Garry Rodan. London: Routledge. 128-160.

Rørbæk, Lasse. 2019. "Religion, Political Power, and the 'Sectarian Surge': Middle Eastern Identity Politics in Comparative Perspective." *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 19(1): 23-40.

Giusti-Rodrigues M. 2024. "From Social Networks to Political Parties: Indigenous Party-Building in Bolivia." *American Political Science Review*. 118(4):1803-1823.

Feola Michael. 2022. "Metapolitics and Demographic Anxiety on the New Right: Using and Abusing the Language of Equality." *Perspectives on Politics* 20(3):1012-1023.

October 1

Understanding Ethnic Violence

Fearon, James D. and David Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97(1): 75-90.

Varshney, Ashutosh. 2001. "Ethnic Conflict and Civil Society: India and Beyond." *World Politics* 53 : 362-398.

Kalyvas, Stathis. 2003. "The Ontology of Political Violence: Action and Identity in Civil Wars." *Perspectives on Politics* 1(3): 475-494.

Klein, Shira. 2025. "The Growing Rift between Holocaust Scholars over Israel/Palestine." *Journal of Genocide Research* pp. 1–21.

Uvin, Peter. 1999. "Ethnicity and Power in Burundi and Rwanda: Different Paths to Mass Violence." *Comparative Politics* 31(3): 253–71.

October 8

The Aftermath of Violence

Pugliese, Joseph. 2020. *Biopolitics of the More-than-Human: Forensic Ecologies of Violence*. Duke University Press. Chapter 2.

Mampilli, Zachariah and Shakala Thakur. 2024. "Rebel Taxation as Extortion or a Technology of Governance?: Telling the Difference in India's Northeast." *American Political Science Review* 462-493.

Roy Chowdhury, Arnab, and Ahmed Abid. 2022. "Treading the Border of (Il)legality: Statelessness, 'Amphibian Life,' and the Rohingya 'Boat People' of Asia." *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies* 23(1): 68–85.

Angell, Kim. 2025. "States, Cities, and Border Control: Do Sub-State Collectives have a Right to Protect Vulnerable People on the Move?" *American Journal of Political Science*
<https://doi.org/10.1111/ajps.12998>

Reno, William. 2017. "Fictional States & Atomized Public Spheres: A Non-Western Approach to Fragility." *Daedalus* 146 (4): 139–151.

October 15

Debates over Truth, Justice, and Reconciliation; In-Class Assessment 1

- Forst, Rainer. 2010. "The Justification of Human Rights and the Basic Right to Justification: A Reflexive Approach." *Ethics* 120(4): 711-740.
- Loyle, Cyanne and Benjamin Appel. 2017. "Conflict Recurrence and Postconflict Justice: Addressing Motivations and for Sustainable Peace Opportunities." *International Studies Quarterly* 6 (3): 690-703.
- Wilson, Richard. 2002. *The Politics of Truth and Reconciliation in South Africa*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. 62-94; 223-230.
- Lefort-Rieu, Claire. 2024. "Peacemaking in an Authoritarian Context in Africa: Promoting Peace from Below in Cameroon." *African Affairs* 123(490): 103-123.
- Appel, Benjamin J. 2018. "In the Shadow of the International Criminal Court: Does the ICC Deter Human Rights Violations?" *The Journal of Conflict Resolution*.62(1): 3–28.

October 22 Fall Break.

October 29 Multiculturalism and Its Critiques

- Kymlicka, Will. 1996. *Multicultural Citizenship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Ch. 2, 5.
- Wright, Matthew, Richard Johnston, Jack Citrin and Stuart Soroka. 2017. "Multiculturalism and Muslim Accommodation: Policy and Predisposition Across Three Political Contexts." *Comparative Political Studies* 50(1): 102-132.
- Wise, Amanda. 2010. "Sensuous Multiculturalism: Emotional Landscapes of Inter-Ethnic Living in Australian Suburbia." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 36(6): 917–937.
- Yeoh, Brenda. 2023. "Superdiversity's Entanglements: Postcoloniality, Migrant Precarity and the Politics of Encounter. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 47(8): 1650–1661.
- Coulthard, Glen. 2014. *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. Chapters 5, 6.

November 5 Multiculturalism and Beyond: Exploring Some Tensions

- Okin, Susan Moller. 1998. "Feminism and Multiculturalism: Some Tensions." *Ethics* 108 (July): 661–84.

Kuokkanen, Rauna. 2019. *Restructuring Relations: Indigenous Self-Determination, Governance, and Gender*. Oxford University Press. Chapter 5.

Burchardt, Marian, Yanasmayan, Zeynep and Matthias Koenig. 2019. "The Judicial Politics of Burqa Bans in Belgium and Spain -Socio-Legal Field Dynamics and the Standardization of Justificatory Repertoires." *Law and Social Inquiry* 44(2): 333-358.

Saba Mahmood. 2005. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1-39; 153-188.

French, Candea M. 2025. "French Law, Danish Cartoons, and the Anthropology of Free Speech." *Comparative Studies in Society and History*. Published online 2024:1-28.

November 12

Legal Pluralism

Solanki, Gopika. 2011. *Adjudication in Religious Family Laws: Cultural Accommodation, Legal Pluralism, and Gender Equality in India*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Conclusion.

Comaroff, John L. and Jean Comaroff. 2004. "Criminal Justice, Cultural Justice: The Limits of Liberalism and the Pragmatics of Difference in the New South Africa." *American Ethnologist* 31 (2): 188-204.

Bochmann, Annett. 2023. "Pluralism and Local Law in Extraterritorial Spaces." *Law & Society Review* 57(1): 83–102.

Buffam, Bonar. 2021. "Sacred Distinctions: Law and the Political Regulation of Sikh Gurdwaras in British Columbia." *Law & Society Review* 55(2):343-358.

Charpleix, L. 2018. "The Whanganui River as Te Awa Tupua: Place-based Law in a Legally Pluralistic Society." *The Geographical Journal* 184(1): 19–30.

November 19

Federalism and Consociationalism

Simeon, Richard and Christina Murray. 2004. "Multilevel Governance in South Africa." In *Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa*. Eds. Berman, Bruce, Dickson Eyoh and Will Kymlicka. Athens: Ohio University Press. 277-300.

Lijphart, Arendt. 1990. "The Power Sharing Approach." In *Conflict and Peacemaking in Multiethnic Societies*. Ed. Montville, Joseph. Washington, D.C.: Lexington Books. 491-509.

Miller, Lisa. 2010. "The Invisible Black Victim: How American Federalism Perpetuates Racial Inequality in Criminal Justice." *Law and Society Review* 44 (3-4): 805-842.

Wang, Joy. 2024. "Colonial Genealogies of Pluralism: Consociation as Disavowal in Contemporary Democratic Theory." *American Political Science Review*. Published online 2024:1-14.

Kaufman RR, Kelemen RD, Kolcak B. 2025. "Federalism and Democratic Backsliding in Comparative Perspective." *Perspectives on Politics*. 23(1):15-34.

November 26

Crafting Diverse Accommodative Arrangements; Student Presentations; In-Class Assessment 2

Horowitz, Donald. 2000. "Constitutional Design: An Oxymoron?" In *Designing Democratic Institutions*. Eds. Shapiro, Ian and Stephen Macedo. Eds. New York: New York University Press. NOMOS XLII. 253- 284.

Bariagaber, Assefaw. 2003. "Ethnicity and Constitutionalism in Ethiopia." In *Emancipating Cultural Pluralism*. Ed. Toffolo, Cris. Albany: State University of New York Press. 221-236.

Johnson, Olatunde. 2024. "Race, Affirmative Action, Antidiscrimination, and the Roberts Court." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*. 713(1): 124-40.

Horowitz, Donald. Making Moderation Pay: The Comparative Politics of Ethnic Conflict Management." In *Conflict and Peacemaking in Multiethnic Societies*. Ed. Montville, Joseph V. New York: Lexington Books. 451-476.

Reilly, Ben. 2002. "Electoral Systems for Divided Societies." *Journal of Democracy* 13 (2): 156-170.

Bashir, Bashir. 2015. On Citizenship and Citizenship Education: a Levantine Approach and Reimagining Israel/Palestine. *Citizenship Studies* 19(6-7): 802-819.

December 3

Partition and Secession; Pluralism and Beyond; Student Presentations and Reflections

Sambanis, Nicholas. 2000. "Partition as a Solution to Ethnic War: An Empirical Critique of the Theoretical Literature." *World Politics* 52(July): 437-483.

Chapman, Thomas and Philip Roeder. 2007. "Partition as a Solution to Wars of Nationalism: The Importance of Institutions." *American Political Science Review* 101(4): 677-691.

de Waal, Alex. 2023. "Making Sense of South Sudan." *African Affairs* 122(486): 1-9.

Braun, Bruce. 2004. "Querying Posthumanisms." *Geoforum* 35(3): 269–73.

Political Science Course Outline Appendix

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:

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/>

ood2Talk: 1-866-925-5454, <https://good2talk.ca/>

The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: <https://walkincounselling.com>

Academic consideration for medical or other extenuating circumstances: Students must contact the instructor(s) of their absence or inability to complete the academic deliverable within the predetermined timeframe due to medical or other extenuating circumstances. For a range of medical or other extenuating circumstances, students may use the online self-declaration form and where appropriate, the use of medical documentation. This policy regards the accommodation of extenuating circumstances for both short-term and long-term periods and extends to all students enrolled at Carleton University.

Students should also consult the [Course Outline Information on Academic Accommodations](#) for more information. Detailed information about the procedure for requesting academic consideration can be found [here](#).

Pregnancy: 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, please contact Equity and Inclusive Communities (EIC) at equity@carleton.ca or by calling (613) 520-5622 to speak to an Equity Advisor.

Religious obligation: 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](#).

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities: 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, please request your accommodations for this course through the [Ventus Student Portal](#) 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*). Requests made within two weeks will be reviewed on a case-by-case basis. For final exams, the deadlines to request accommodations are published in the [University Academic Calendars](#). 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).

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 its 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: <https://carleton.ca/equity/sexual-assault-support-services>.

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 will be provided to students who compete or perform at the national or international level. 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.

PETITIONS TO DEFER

Students unable to write a final examination because of illness or other circumstances beyond their control may apply within **three working days** to the Registrar's Office for permission to write a deferred examination. The request must be fully supported by the appropriate documentation. Only deferral petitions submitted to the Registrar's Office will be considered. [See Undergraduate Calendar, Article 4.3](#)

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). Permissibility of submitting substantially the same piece of work more than once for academic credit. If group or collaborative work is expected or allowed, provide a clear and specific description of how and to what extent you consider collaboration to be acceptable or appropriate, especially in the completion of written assignments.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

Please reference the [Academic Calendar](#) for each term's official withdrawal dates

OFFICIAL FINAL EXAMINATION PERIOD

Please reference the [Academic Calendar](#) for each term's Official Exam Period (may include evenings & Saturdays or Sundays)

For more information on the important dates and deadlines of the academic year, consult the [Carleton Calendar](#).

GRADING SYSTEM

The grading system is described in the Undergraduate Calendar section [5.4](#).

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Academic integrity is an essential element of a productive and successful career as a student. Students are required to familiarize themselves with the university's [Academic Integrity Policy](#).

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:

- any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT);
- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else's published or unpublished material, 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 that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty conducts 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 can include a final grade of "F" for the course.

RESOURCES (613-520-2600, phone ext.)

Department of Political Science (2777)	B640 Loeb
Registrar's Office (3500)	300 Tory
Centre for Student Academic Success (3822)	4 th floor Library
Academic Advising Centre (7850)	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre (6608)	501 Nideyinàn
Career Services (6611)	401 Tory