

Carleton University
Department of Political Science
carleton.ca/polisci

Fall 2022

FYSM / PSCI 1611
Politics on Netflix
Mondays 11:30-2:30 pm ET (by Zoom)

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Office Hours: Tuesdays 11 am -1 pm ET (by Zoom), beginning Sept. 20 (as I'll be away at a conference on Sept. 13. I will, however, be available by email.)

I will send around a sign-up sheet each week the day before. If those times don't work for you, email me and we can find another time.

Course Description: In this course, we will examine various offerings on Netflix through a political lens. We will ask three main questions: how are political topics dealt with in these works of art and entertainment? What kinds of political messages seep through even when the subject of the work isn't obviously political? How do we ascertain whether a work of film/TV is serving to subvert structures of power and inequality or to maintain them? We are using politics broadly here: thinking about power dynamics and social structures and dynamics related to race, class, gender, social capital, sexuality and respectability politics; as well as policy around issue-areas including climate change, inequality, multinational corporations, terrorism and counter-terrorism, occupation, and disease.

Learning Outcomes:

1. Learn how to watch film and TV critically, through a political lens
2. Improve your critical reading and analytical writing skills
3. Learn how to identify political and social themes and policy questions suggested by works of art and entertainment
4. Hone your seminar-speaking skills
5. Learn how to source scholarly literature from everyday topics
6. Learn how to write an op-ed

Evaluation:

Participation: 20%

Weekly Discussion-Forum Posts: 50%
Op-Ed: 30%

Participation: Your participation grade will be derived in two ways:
The “front row” method (10%) and the weekly google doc sheets (10%) I will use in-class.

Front Row method: You will sign up for FIVE class sessions in which you will sit in the “virtual” front row, meaning having your camera on and actively participating in the kind of guided discussion I normally run. I will send around the front-row sign-up sheet at the beginning of the term.

Google Doc sheets (in-class): each week, usually towards the end of the class, I will conduct some sort of live discussion/activity on a google doc. I will use these google docs each week as evidence that you were present and actively participating.

Discussion Forum Posts:

The weekly discussion-forum posts grade will consist of the following:

Film/Shows/Readings Reflections (& a Question) (25%), and ***Responses to Others’ Questions*** (25%). Each week, half of you will upload a short forum post (appx. 350 words). The first half of your post should briefly summarize the readings/films/shows for that week; the second half should include your analyses and critiques. **Conclude your post by referencing a single scene (with the hour/minute marker indicated) and posing an analytical question about that scene in the context of the show/film, and in the context of the broader themes discussed above.**

Critiques/Questions are due on Fridays (at 11 pm), starting Sept. 16. (You will start with the films/shows/readings from Class 2.)

The other half of the class will respond to your classmates’ scene question. (Each of you should choose one classmate to whom to respond on any given week.) *The responses are due on Mondays, starting Sept. 19 — by 11 pm.* Offer some answers of your own to the questions your classmates have proposed, and embed those answers within a broader political and scholarly context. To do so, mention news events, data and information from articles we’ve read for class, or those you uncover on your own via a library or google search. Make sure to cite your sources. Responses should be roughly 250 words, plus citations.

Responses to a classmate's question are due on *Mondays (at 11 pm)*, starting *Sept 19*.

Students whose last names begin with A-L should upload a *Reflections/Question post* for week 2 (the deadline is Friday, Sept. 16 at 11 pm). Students whose last names begin with M-Z should upload a *response* (to one classmate) by Monday (Sept. 19) at 11 pm. The following week, do the reverse. And so on, throughout the term.

Week	Group A (Surnames A-L)	Group B (Surnames M-Z)
2	Reading Summary and Questions	Response
3	Response	Reading Summary and Questions
4	Reading Summary and Questions	Response
5	Response	Reading Summary and Questions
6	Reading Summary and Questions	Response
7	Response	Reading Summary and Questions
8	Reading Summary and Questions	Response
9	Response	Reading Summary and Questions
10	Reading Summary and Questions	Response
11	Response	Reading Summary and Questions
12	Reading Summary and Questions	Response

Op-Ed:

You will write a 750-word op-ed (which stands for opposite the editorial page, and which is also known as an opinion piece). *Choose a film or show (either something we've viewed in the course or something else)*. Formulate the following title/headline:

Topic: "what X (film or show) teaches us about Y." Or: "what X (film or show) doesn't teach us about Y."

In addition to tackling either of these topic formats, you should include some prescriptive element stemming from your overall argument. By prescriptive, I mean "who should do what and why." We will discuss this more in class.

This is a hybrid assignment. The argument of the actual op-ed text needs to stand on its own. But you must also provide extended footnote citations and commentary (including additional data, context and evidence) in the footnotes. In your footnotes, draw on both scholarly and news-style sources that you uncover on your own. Each op-ed must have a clear question identified and a clear argument (which is your answer to the question). Draw on at least 8 sources, at least half of which should be scholarly ones.

Due: Friday, Dec. 9 by 11 pm (upload through Brightspace).

Late Penalties: one percentage point deduction per day late.

Books and Media

You will need a Netflix subscription for the duration of the semester, and possibly a New York Times subscription (if the New York Times website prompts you).

Optional book (especially to prepare for your op-ed):

Mira Sucharov, *Public Influence: A Guide to Op-Ed Writing and Social Media Engagement* (University of Toronto Press, 2019)

CLASS SCHEDULE

Class 1 (Sept. 12): Intro

Class 2 (Sept. 19): Social Media / Social Capital

Show: *Black Mirror* (S3 e1: "Nosedive")

Film: *Fyre: The Greatest Party that Never Happened*

Academic Article: Michèle Lamont, "From 'having' to 'being': self-worth and the current crisis of American society," *The British Journal of Sociology* 70, 3 (June 2019): 660-707/

Op-Ed: Sheila Marikar, "You Won't Find Your Self-Worth on Instagram," *The New York Times* (2 November 2019)
<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/11/02/opinion/sunday/instagram-social-media.html>

Class 3 (Sept. 26): War and Imperialism

Film: *Apocalypse Now Redux*

Article: Keith Solomon, "The Spectacle of War and the Specter of 'The Horror'" *Apocalypse Now and American Imperialism, The Journal of Popular Film and Television* (2007), Vol. 35 (1): 22-31

Op-Ed: Lan Cao, "Vietnam Wasn't Just an American War," *New York Times* 22 March 2018) <https://www.nytimes.com/2018/03/22/opinion/vietnam-wasnt-just-an-american-war.html>

Class 4 (Oct. 3): Sexuality & Respectability Politics

Show: *Sex Education* (S1, e1). Watch more if you like.

Show: *Never Have I Ever* (Watch as much as you can.)

Op-Ed: Andrea Barrica, "How to Make Sex More Dangerous," *New York Times* (11 March 2019) <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/03/11/opinion/sex-ed-children-danger.html>

Article: John Mercer, "Sex Positivity and the Persistence of Shame," *Sexualities* 21, 8: 1304-1307
<http://www.open-access.bcu.ac.uk/8185/1/John%20Mercer%20Sex%20Positivity%20and%20Shame.pdf>

(A sort of) **Op-Ed/Article:** Malavika Kannan, "In 'Never Have I Ever' Season 2, Flawed Brown Girls Are the Point," *Teen Vogue* (2 August 2021)
<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/in-never-have-i-ever-season-2-flawed-brown-girls-are-the-point>

*****No class: Thanksgiving (Oct. 10)*****

Class 5 (Oct. 17): Race & Society

Show: *Dear White People* (S1, e1). Watch more if you like.

Film (documentary): *13th*

Academic Article: Rose M. Brewer and Nancy A. Heitzeg, “The Racialization of Crime and Punishment: Criminal Justice, Color-Blind Racism, and the Political Economy of the Prison Industrial Complex,” *American Behavioral Scientist* (1 January 2008).

Op-Ed: Daniel A. Yudkin and Jay Van Bavel, "The Roots of Implicit Bias," *The New York Times* (9 December 2016)
<https://www.nytimes.com/2016/12/09/opinion/sunday/the-roots-of-implicit-bias.html>

Op-Ed: Charles Blow, “Library Visit, Then Held at Gunpoint,” *The New York Times* (24 November 2017)
<https://www.nytimes.com/2015/01/26/opinion/charles-blow-at-yale-the-police-detained-my-son.html>

*****No class: Reading Break (Oct. 24)*****

Class 6 (Oct. 31): Stand-Up Comedy and Social Change

WATCH THEM IN THIS ORDER:

Special: Dave Chappelle, *The Closer*

Special: Hannah Gadsby, *Nanette*

Academic Article: Linders Green, “The Impact of Comedy on Racial and Ethnic Discourse,” *Sociological inquiry* 86.2 (2016): 241–269.

Popular Article: Wired staff, "Seriously, We Really Need to Talk About Nanette," *Wired* (31 July 2018)
<https://www.wired.com/story/hannah-gadsby-nanette-discussion/>

Op-Ed: Roxane Gay, “Dave Chappelle’s Brittle Ego,” *The New York Times* (13 October 2021) <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/10/13/opinion/dave-chappelle-netflix-trans.html>

Class 7 (Nov. 7): Indigenous Identity & Politics

Film: *Indian Horse*

Academic Article: Augustine S. J. Park, “Settler Colonialism and the Politics of Grief: (22 July 2015): Theorising a Decolonising Transitional Justice for Indian Residential Schools,” *Human Rights Review* 16: 273-293.

Op-Ed: Melissa Mbarki, “Trudeau, Canada, fail to understand depth of First Nations fresh water problems,” *Toronto Star* (14 September 2021)
<https://www.thestar.com/opinion/contributors/2021/09/14/trudeau-canada-fail-to-understand-depth-of-first-nations-fresh-water-problems.html>

Op-Ed: Pamela Palmater, “Another Pope’s Apology Isn’t Enough When Catholic Church’s Cover-Ups and Hypocrisy Continue to this Day,” *The Toronto Star* (24 July 2022)
<https://www.thestar.com/opinion/contributors/2022/07/24/another-popes-apology-isnt-enough-when-catholic-churchs-cover-ups-and-hypocrisy-continue-to-this-day.html>

Class 8 (Nov. 14): Workplace Politics

Show: *The Office* (S1, e2, “Diversity Day”; S2, e2, “Sexual Harassment”)

Show: *Brooklyn Nine-Nine* (S4, e16, “Moo Moo”)

Academic Article: Jessica Birthisel and Jason A. Martin, “That’s What She Said: Gender, Satire, and the American Workplace on the Sitcom *The Office*,” *The Journal of communication inquiry*, 2013-01, Vol.37 (1), p.64-80

Op-Ed: Pamela Jeffery, “Decades of progress on gender equality in the workplace at risk of vanishing,” *The Globe and Mail* (2 August 2020)
<https://www.theglobeandmail.com/business/commentary/article-decades-of-progress-on-gender-equality-in-the-workplace-at-risk-of/>

Op-Ed: Nicole Taylor, “Black Employees, Don’t Sign Away Your Right to Speak Out,” *The New York Times* (23 June 2020)
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/06/23/opinion/nda-racism-separation-agreements.html?>

Class 9 (Nov. 21): Class & Inequality

Show: *Squid Game* (watch as much as you can; especially episodes 1 & 6)

Academic Article: Christine Walley, “Trump’s Election and the ‘White Working Class’: What We Missed,” *American ethnologist* 44.2 (2017): 231–236

Popular article: Roxana Hadadi, “A Game of Marbles Turns *Squid Game*’s Anti-Capitalist Critique Inside Out,” *Vulture* (7 October 2021)
<https://www.vulture.com/article/squid-game-gganbu-marbles-episode-capitalism-analysis.html>

Op-Ed: Samuel Scheffler, "Is Economic Inequality Really a Problem?" *The New York Times* (1 July 2020)

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/01/opinion/economic-inequality-moral-philosophy.html>

Class 10 (Nov. 28): Israelis and Palestinians

Show: *Fauda* (watch as much as you can; especially episodes 1 and 2)

Show: *Mo* (watch as much as you can)

Web explainer: Vox, "Everything You Need to Know About Israel-Palestine,"

<https://www.vox.com/2018/11/20/18079996/israel-palestine-conflict-guide-explainer>

Op-Ed: Marwan Barghouti, "Want Security? End the Occupation," *Washington Post*, January 16, 2002. <http://electronicintifada.net/v2/article1986.shtml>

Op-Ed: Sayed Kashua, "Fauda Creators Think Arabs are Stupid," *Haaretz* (12 January 2018) <https://www.haaretz.com/opinion/2018-01-12/ty-article/.premium/fauda-creators-think-arabs-are-stupid/0000017f-e48f-d9aa-afff-fddf180a0000>

Op-Ed: Rana and Milena, "Israel Just Declared Our Human Rights Work 'Terrorism.' But it Won't Silence Us," *Los Angeles Times* (6 November 2021) <https://www.latimes.com/opinion/story/2021-11-06/israel-human-rights-palestine-groups-designation-terrorism>

Op-Ed: Gil Troy, "Israel Has as Much Right to Defend Itself as Everyone Else," *The Jerusalem Post* (23 November 2021)

<https://www.jpost.com/opinion/israel-has-as-much-right-to-defend-itself-as-everyone-else-opinion-686796>

Class 11 (Dec. 5): The Politics of Nostalgia

Show: *Stranger Things* (watch as much as you can, but especially S3)

Academic Article: Kevin Lu, Greta Kaluzeviciute, and William Sharp, "Things Can Only Get Stranger: Theoretical and Clinical Reflections on Netflix's *Stranger Things*," *Journal of Popular Culture* (30 June 2022)

Academic Article: Kayla McCarthy, "Remember Things: Consumerism, Nostalgia, and Geek Culture in *Stranger Things*," *Journal of Popular Culture* (26 July 2019)

Op-ed: "I'm a Cold War Historian. We're in a Frightening New Era." *The New York Times* (1 March 2022)
<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/03/01/opinion/russia-ukraine-cold-war.html>

Class 12 (Dec. 9): Campus Politics

Show: *The Chair* (watch as much as you can; especially eps. 1-3).

Academic Article: Mark Carl Rom and Kristina Mitchell, "Teaching Politics in a Call-Out and Cancel Culture," *PS: Political Science & Politics* (24 June 2021)

Popular Article: Anne Applebaum, "The New Puritans," *The Atlantic* (31 August 2021) <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2021/10/new-puritans-mob-justice-canceled/619818/>

Op-Ed: Michelle Goldberg, "The Middle-Aged Sadness Behind the Cancel Culture Panic," *The New York Times* (20 September 2021)
<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/09/20/opinion/generation-cancel-culture.html>

Appendix

Covid-19 Pandemic Measures

It is important to remember that COVID is still present in Ottawa. The situation can change at any time and the risks of new variants and outbreaks are very real. There are a number of actions you can take to lower your risk and the risk you pose to those around you including being vaccinated, wearing a mask, staying home when you're sick, washing your hands and maintaining proper respiratory and cough etiquette.

Feeling sick? Remaining vigilant and not attending work or school when sick or with symptoms is critically important. If you feel ill or exhibit COVID-19 symptoms do not come to class or campus. If you feel ill or exhibit symptoms while on campus or in class, please leave campus immediately. In all situations, you should follow Carleton's symptom reporting protocols.

Masks: Masks are no longer mandatory in university buildings and facilities. However, we continue to recommend masking when indoors, particularly if physical distancing cannot be maintained. We are aware that personal preferences regarding optional mask use will vary greatly, and we ask that we all show consideration and care for each other during this transition.

Vaccines: While proof of vaccination is no longer required to access campus or participate in in-person Carleton activities, it may become necessary for the University to bring back proof of vaccination requirements on short notice if the situation and public health advice changes. Students are strongly encouraged to get a full course of vaccination, including booster doses as soon as they are eligible and submit their booster dose information in cuScreen as soon as possible. Please note that Carleton cannot guarantee that it will be able to offer virtual or hybrid learning options for those who are unable to attend the campus.

All members of the Carleton community are required to follow requirements and guidelines regarding health and safety which may change from time to time. For the most recent information about Carleton's COVID-19 response and health and safety requirements please see the University's COVID-19 website and review the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs). Should you have additional questions after reviewing, please contact covidinfo@carleton.ca.

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 for the university, that result from a student participating in activities beyond the classroom experience. Reasonable

accommodation must 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. <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.

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.

Plagiarism

Carleton's 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.

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.

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.