

PECO 5001 – Methodologies of Political Economy (Winter 2026)
Wednesdays 11:35-2:25



"A Sudden Gust of Wind (After Hokusai)" by Jeff Wall, 1993

Instructor: David Hugill, david.hugill@carleton.ca

Office Hours: Wednesdays 14:30-15:30 (following class), or by appointment

Course Brightspace Page: <https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/367156>

Course Description

This seminar prepares students to undertake a significant independent research project at the graduate level. Designed largely as a workshop, the course provides hands-on training in how to design, conduct, and produce scholarly research. Course materials provoke students to think critically about methodology and their own methodological choices as researchers. Topics include the relationship of methodology to matters of theory and evidence, as well as to epistemology and the ethics and politics of knowledge production. These concerns will also be linked to more nuts-and-bolts issues, including how to turn a broad project topic into one or more researchable questions. It sets out to expand students' awareness of the range of methodologies they might enlist in their work and provide them with tools for evaluating the research methods best suited to their own questions, training, and objects of inquiry.

You should expect the following from our work this term:

- **Active Discussion:** This is a discussion-based seminar. It is critical that you do the readings in advance and come to class prepared to discuss their contents. The success of this course hinges on active in-class engagement. The significant weight given to participation (20%) as a portion of the final grade reflects this fact.
- **Challenging material:** The weekly readings (generally about 100-150 pages in length) are challenging. You should start reading at least a few days in advance of the seminar.
- **Timely feedback:** I will do my best to return all assignments within two weeks of submission.

Learning Outcomes

This course aims to give you opportunities to:

- Develop an in depth understanding of the mechanics of an MA thesis (or MRP)
- Survey a series of methodologies and think critically about how you might take them up in your own research
- Prepare a comprehensive research plan (proposal) for your major project
- Engage in comradely classroom exchanges
- Develop high-level communication skills

Texts & Course Materials

For a complete list of course texts, see “readings” section in the “course calendar” section of this syllabus. All readings will be available via the course ARES and Brightspace pages.

You are not required to purchase any texts.

Course Calendar

Date	Required Readings/Recommended Readings/In Class Activities
January 7	<p>Week 1: Introductions and Discussion of Course Policies</p> <p>Required Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A <p>Tasks/Assignments/Commentaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research Trajectory Paragraph due by midnight Sunday January 11
January 14	<p>Week 2: Historical Materialism and Marxist Forms of Inquiry</p> <p>Required Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Robert Heilbroner, "The Materialist Interpretation of History," in <i>Marxism: For and Against</i>, p. 61-92. Ellen Meiskins Wood, "The Separation of the 'Economic' and the 'Political' in Capitalism" (Chapter 1) <i>Democracy Against Capitalism</i> (Verso, 2016), p. 26-51. Karl Marx, "Preface," <i>A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy</i> (1859) https://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1859/critique-pol-economy/preface.htm Raymond Williams, "Materialism," in <i>Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society</i> (Revised Edition), p. 197-201 (Podcast/Video), David Harvey, "Marx's Historical Materialism," David Harvey's Anti-Capitalist Chronicles, https://open.spotify.com/episode/6NOB9TR8vEJHsmGk2U3inz (Spotify), https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UeibJ0S5lrM (Youtube), running time 29:22 <p>Tasks/Assignments/Commentaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly Bibliography Additions (all) Student Commentaries (~ 4)
January 21	<p>Week 3: Research Questions, Research Design</p> <p>Required Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wayne Booth et al, "Part II: Asking Questions, Finding Answers," p. 29-67 (includes chapter 3 "From Topics to Questions," and Chapter 4 "From Questions to a Problem") Michael Watts, "The Holy Grail: In Pursuit of the Dissertation Proposal" (Berkeley Institute of International Studies, 2001), https://dusk.geo.orst.edu/prosem/PDFs/InPursuitofPhD.pdf William Cronon's "Learning to Do Historical Research: A Primer for Environmental Historians and Others" website at https://www.williamcronon.net/researching/questions.htm (*please spend some

	<p>time exploring this resource and be sure to read the following entry): Hung Po-Yi and Abigail Popp, “How to Frame a Researchable Question: Putting Boundaries on Your Research,” https://www.williamcronon.net/researching/questions.htm</p> <p>In Class Workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty Panel 1: Developing an Effective Research Question (13:15-14:30), with Karen Hebert {tbc} (Geography and Environmental Studies), Prof. Lisa Mills (Public Policy and Administration), and Prof. William Walters (Political Science, Sociology and Anthropology). <p>Tasks/Assignments/Commentaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly Bibliography Additions (all) Student Commentaries (~4)
January 28	<p>Week 4: Critical Approaches + Feedback</p> <p>Required Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Max Horkheimer, “Traditional and Critical Theory,” in <i>Critical Theory: Selected Essays</i> (Continuum, 2002) p. 188-243. Katherine McKittrick, “The Smallest Cell Remembers a Sound,” in <i>Dear Science and Other Stories</i> (Duke University Press, 2021), p. 35-57. Erik Olin Wright, “The Tasks of Emancipatory Social Science,” in <i>Envisioning Real Utopias</i> (Verso, 2010), p. 10-29. Wendy Belcher, “Giving, Getting, and Using Others’ Feedback,” in <i>Writing Your Journal Article in 12 Weeks</i>, p. 221-234. <p>In Class Workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Peer Review Meeting 1 (last 30 minutes of class) <p>Tasks/Assignments/Commentaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A1 (“Provisional Research Question”) due Thursday January 29 at midnight (bring your draft or working doc to class for peer review exchange) Weekly Bibliography Additions (all) Student Commentaries (~3)
February 4	<p>Week 5: Conjuncture</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stuart Hall and Doreen Massey, “Interpreting the Crisis,” <i>Soundings</i> 44 (2010), p. 57-71. Jamie Peck, “Practicing Conjunctural Methodologies: Engaging Chinese Capitalism,” in <i>Dialogues in Human Geography</i> 14 (2023), p. 461-482. Eric Sheppard, Jamie Peck, and Helga Leitner, “Conjunctural Analysis,” in <i>The International Encyclopedia of Geography</i>,

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gillian Hart, "Enabling Connections: Relational Comparison in a Global Conjunctural Frame," in <i>The Routledge Handbook of Comparative Global Urban Studies</i> (Routledge, 2023), p. 289-299. Jamie Peck, "Transatlantic City, Part 1: Conjunctural Urbanism," <i>Urban Studies</i> 54 (2017), p. 4-30 https://doi.org/10.1177/0042098016679355 <p>Tasks/Assignments/Commentaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly Bibliography Additions (all) Student Commentaries (~5)
February 11	<p>Week 6: Comparison, Scope</p> <p>Required Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stefan Kipfer, "Comparison and Political Strategy: Internationalism, Colonial Rule and Urban Research After Fanon," <i>Urban Studies</i> 59 (2022), p.1636-1654. Gillian Hart, "Relational Comparison Revisited: Marxist Postcolonial Geographies in Practice," in <i>Progress in Human Geography</i> 42 (2018), p. 317-394. Jamie Peck, "Cities Beyond Compare?," <i>Regional Studies</i> 49 (2015), p.160-182. Kevin Haggerty and Aaron Doyle, "Cover Everything," in <i>57 Ways to Screw Up in Grad School</i> (University of Chicago Press, 2015), p.96-98. Liese Dart and Brian Hamilton, "Positioning Your Argument in a Wider Literature," https://www.williamcronon.net/researching/positioning.htm <p>In Class Workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Faculty Panel 2: Narrowing Scope, Setting Parameters (13:15-14:30), with Ania Zbyszewska {TBC} (Law and Legal Studies), Jessica Parish (School of Public Policy and Public Administration), and Graeme Auld (School of Public Policy and Public Administration) <p>Tasks/Assignments/Commentaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly Bibliography Additions (all) Student Commentaries (~3)
Winter Reading Break (February 16-20)	
February 25	<p>Week 7: Access, Ethics, Research in Settler Colonial Milieux</p> <p>Required Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Andrew Crosby and Jeffrey Monaghan, "Project Sitka, Policing, and the Settler Colonial Present," in <i>Policing Indigenous Movements: Dissent and the Security State</i> (Fernwood, 2018), p. 1-25. Audra Simpson, "On Ethnographic Refusal: Indigeneity, 'Voice', and Colonial Citizenship," in <i>Junctures: The Journal of Thematic Dialogue</i> 9: 67-80.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Eve Tuck, "Suspending Damage: A Letter to Communities," <i>Harvard Educational Review</i> 79 (2009), p. 409-427. <p>In Class Workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Access to Information Requests (13:00-14:00), with Dr. Andrew Crosby (Geography and Environmental Studies) <p>Tasks/Assignments/Commentaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weekly Bibliography Additions (all) <p>Tasks/Assignments/Commentaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A2 (Provisional Literature Review or Data Set Exercise) due Thursday February 26 at midnight Weekly Bibliography Additions (all) Student Commentaries (~3)
March 4	<p>Week 8: Discourse</p> <p>Required Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Teun A Van Dijk, "Critical Discourse Analysis," in <i>The Handbook of Discourse Analysis</i>, 2nd Edition (Wiley, 2015), 466-485. Bob Jessop and Ngai-Ling Sum, "Language and Critique: Some Anticipations of Critical Discourse Studies in Marx," <i>Critical Discourse Studies</i> 15(2018), p. 325-337. Adam Johnson and Othman Ali, "A Study Reveals CNN and MSNBC's Glaring Gaza Double Standard," <i>The Nation</i>, October 14, 2024, https://www.thenation.com/article/society/cnn-msnbc-gaza-media-bias-study/ + review project data set here: https://github.com/nationmag/Gaza-Media-Bias Adam Johnson and Othman Ali, "How the US Media Helped the Biden Administration Distance Itself From the Horrors of Gaza," <i>The Nation</i>, November 25, 2024, https://www.thenation.com/article/society/us-media-gaza-bias-reporting-genres/ + review source analysis chart here: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/198ZWpwKLzMa2UjQpIOpR5XRBIOL_zPBAJluMpJnQy8s/edit?gid=0#gid=0 Adam Johnson and Othman Ali, "How Sunday Morning News Shows Promote an Anti-Palestinian Agenda for Washington," <i>The Nation</i>, December 18, 2024, https://www.thenation.com/article/society/sunday-morning-news-shows-anti-palestinian-bias/ + review data set here: https://github.com/nationmag/Gaza-Media-Bias Joe Emersberger and Justin Podur, "The Media Myth of 'Once Prosperous' and Democratic Venezuela Before Chávez," <i>Fairness and Accuracy in Reporting</i>,

	<p>August 26, 2021, https://fair.org/home/the-media-myth-of-once-prosperous-and-democratic-venezuela-before-chavez/</p> <p>In Class Workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peer Review Meeting 2 (last 30 minutes of class) <p>Tasks/Assignments/Commentaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Bibliography Additions (all) • Student Commentaries (~6)
March 11	<p>Week 9: Research Relationships, Research Interviews</p> <p>Required Readings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Michael Burawoy, “The Extended Case Method,” <i>Sociological Theory</i> 16 (1998), p. 4-33. https://www.jstor.org/stable/202212 • Pierre Bourdieu, “Understanding,” in <i>The Weight of the World</i> (Stanford Press, 1999), p. 607-626. • Ruth Wilson Gilmore, “Scholar-Activists in the Mix,” in <i>Abolition Geography: Essays Towards Liberation</i>,” (Verso 2022), p. 92-103. <p>In Class Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faculty Panel 3: The Art of the Research Interview (13:15-14:30), with Prof. Jennifer Ridgley (Geography and Environmental Studies), Azar Masoumi (Sociology and Anthropology), and Monika Imeri (Geography and Environmental Studies). <p>Tasks/Assignments/Commentaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Bibliography Additions (all) • Student Commentaries (~5)
March 18	<p>Week 10: Mobilizing Data</p> <p>Required Readings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brett Christophers, “Electric Dreams,” in <i>The Price is Wrong: Why Capitalism Won’t Save the Planet</i> (Verso, 2024), p. 1-34. • Hannah Ritchie, “Climate Change: Turning Down the Thermostat,” in <i>Not the End of the World</i> (Little Brown, 2024), p. 66-114. <p>In Class Workshops</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to the Comparative Political Economy Database, with Wally Seccombe (TBC) <p>Tasks/Assignments/Commentaries</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A3 (Conjunctural Assessment Exercise) due Thursday March 19 at midnight

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weekly Bibliography Additions (all) • Student Commentaries (~3)
March 25	Week 11: Research Plan Presentations (Group A) Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Plan Presentations from all students in Group A Tasks/Assignments/Commentaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Meetings with Instructor (10 mins/ student), all students in Group A
April 1	Week 13: Research Plan Presentations (Group B) Presentations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research Plan Presentations from all students in Group B Tasks/Assignments/Commentaries <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Individual Meetings with Instructor (10 mins/ student), all students in Group B

Evaluation

Assignment	Weight	Description//due date
Research Trajectory Paragraph	N/A	A short reflection of your intellectual trajectory thus far, full instructions on Brightspace. Due: Sunday January 11 at midnight.
A1 – Provisional Research Question	10%	A provisional research question for your MA thesis/MRP, full instructions on Brightspace. Due: Thursday January 29 at midnight.
A2 – Provisional Literature Review or Data Set Exercise	15%	A provisional consideration of the literatures OR data sources that will be central to your inquiry, full instructions on Brightspace. Due: Thursday February 26 at midnight. N.B. – We will be building/considering these lists/data sets as part of our weekly discussions in the weeks leading up to this deadline.
A3 – Conjunctural Assessment Exercise	15%	A provisional consideration of the political economic conjuncture in which your inquiry will intervene. Due: Thursday March 19 at midnight.

A4 – Research Plan	30%	A research plan for your MA thesis/MRP. Due: Monday April 13 at midnight.
In Class Commentaries	10%	See full instructions on Brightspace, due throughout the term (sign up for two eligible weeks, each commentary is worth 5%)
Attendance, Commitment, Participation	20%	A quantitative/qualitative evaluation of your engagement (including attendance, active classroom participation, and commitment to peer review meetings) N.B. Participation is a significant portion of your mark because seminars when we all show up and are prepared to discuss the assigned readings in detail!
Total	100	

Additional Information

- Late assignments will be penalized by 3% per calendar day (to a maximum of 25% total); no assignments will be accepted after two weeks (unless an alternative arrangement has been made)
- Extensions on assignments (to a maximum of 72 hours, in most circumstances) will only be granted IN ADVANCE
- All assignments must follow the style guidelines outlined in the Chicago Manual of Style; citations can be formatted in either the “notes and bibliography” or “author-date” style, so long as one of these options is used consistently throughout the document
- All assignments will be assessed on the overall quality of presentation, including citation format, spelling, grammar, coherence of argument, etc. (see rubrics for each assignment on the course Brightspace page)

Tests and Examinations

- N/A

Final Grade Appeal

- 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.

Electronic Devices (for discussion in Week 1)

Following my colleague Emilie Cameron's lead, I would like PECO 5001 to experiment with a non-digital classroom. Here is EC's rationale (which I endorse): "Although I recognize many of us have developed reading and note-taking habits that are reliant on laptops, tablets, and other devices, there is strong evidence that taking notes by hand deepens learning significantly. I have also noticed a marked impact on class engagement and discussion when we all have laptops open, and a decline in my own understanding of texts that I read online. As such, I am asking that all electronic devices be stowed during class and that students bring hard copies of the readings with them. Audio recording of the class is not permitted. If you have an accommodation that requires the use of electronic devices, please speak with me at the beginning of the semester to discuss how best to support your learning in the course."

Generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) + Academic Integrity

Students may use AI tools for basic word processing and formatting functions, including:

- Grammar and spell checking (e.g. Grammarly, Microsoft Word Editor)

Please note that is not permissible to use AI tools to generate **ANY AMOUNT** of text for your assignments, nor comprehensively edit your work (beyond the basic functions listed above).

This policy ensures that student voices and ideas are prioritized and authentically represented, maintaining the integrity of the work produced by students while allowing basic support to enhance clarity, correctness, layout, and flow of ideas. The goal of adopting a limited use of AI is to help students develop foundational skills in writing and critical thinking by practicing substantive content creation without the support of AI

As our understanding of the uses of AI and its relationship to student work and academic integrity continue to evolve, students are required to discuss their use of AI in any circumstance not described here with the course instructor to ensure it supports the learning goals for the course.

The University Academic Integrity Policy defines plagiarism as "*presenting, whether intentionally 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, literary compositions and phrases, performance compositions, chemical compounds, artworks, 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:

- I. any submission prepared in whole or in part, by someone else, including the unauthorized use of generative AI tools (e.g., ChatGPT)

- II. using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, paraphrased material, algorithms, formulae, scientific or mathematical concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment
- III. using another's data or research findings without appropriate acknowledgement
- IV. submitting a computer program developed in whole or in part by someone else, with or without modifications, as one's own
- V. failing to acknowledge sources with proper citations when using another's work
- VI. and/or failing to use quotations marks.

Plagiarism is a serious offence that cannot be resolved directly by the course's instructor. The Associate Dean of the Faculty follows a rigorous [process for academic integrity allegations](#), including reviewing documents and interviewing the student, when an instructor suspects a violation has been committed. Penalties for violations may include a final grade of "F" for the course.

Please note that it is **NOT PERMISSIBLE** to employ any [generative artificial intelligence tools \(e.g. ChatGPT\)](#) in the completion of any aspect of course work in ENST 1000, with the lone exception of the basic grammar and spell checking functions listed in section 6.

Statement on Student Mental Health

As a 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. For more information, please consult <https://wellness.carleton.ca/>

Emergency Resources ([on and off campus](#))

- Suicide Crisis Helpline: call or text 9-8-8, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- For immediate danger or urgent medical support: call 9-1-1

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: call 613-238-3311, text 343-306-5550, or connect online at <https://www.dcottawa.on.ca/>
- Mental Health Crisis Service: call 613-722-6914 or toll-free 1-866-996-0991, or connect online at <http://www.crisisline.ca/>

- Empower Me Counselling Service: call 1-844-741-6389 or connect online at <https://students.carleton.ca/services/empower-me-counselling-services/>
- Good2Talk: call 1-866-925-5454 or connect online at <https://good2talk.ca/>
- The Walk-In Counselling Clinic: for online or on-site service <https://walkincounselling.com>

Requests for Academic Accommodations

Carleton is committed to providing academic accessibility for all individuals. You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term. The accommodation request processes, including information about the Academic Consideration Policy for Students in Medical and Other Extenuating Circumstances, are outlined on the Academic Accommodations website (students.carleton.ca/course-outline).

Policy on Classroom Recording

Please do not record classroom sessions.