

**CARLETON UNIVERSITY
DEPARTMENT OF SOCIOLOGY AND ANTHROPOLOGY**

**SOCI 3220 E/ ANTH 3225C
WINTER 2026
COLLECTIVE MEMORY**

Instructor: Dr. Cihan Erdal

Office Hours: Tuesdays 3:00 – 4:00 pm or by appointment

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Method of Delivery: In-person on Thursdays, 18:05 – 20:55

Brightspace course page link: <https://brightspace.carleton.ca/d2l/home/393840>

In this course, you are expected to learn from your texts, your teacher and from one another. This requires striving towards understanding each other but it does not imply striving towards finding agreement. Our class will be racially, religiously, politically, culturally, generationally, and economically diverse. We will be of different gender identifications and sexual orientations and our lived experiences and reactions to the course material will reflect this diversity. Sharing our perspectives and interpretations on the course material will enhance everyone's learning experience and you are encouraged to openly express any disagreements with the authors you will read, with your fellow classmates, or with the Professor in the different participation fora that are available for this course. However, you are expected to conduct yourself in such a way that shows the utmost respect to others who may – or may not – share your views. Derogatory comments and hateful behavior towards others (and their views) will not be tolerated.

Carleton University acknowledges the location of its campus on the traditional, unceded territories of the Algonquin nation. In doing so, Carleton acknowledges it has a responsibility to the Algonquin people and a responsibility to adhere to Algonquin cultural protocols.

Course Description and Objectives:

This course provides a comprehensive introduction to the sociological field of collective memory. It explores the theoretical foundations of collective memory studies and examines critical debates surrounding the dimensions of social memory, temporality, and historiography. How do societies remember? How does memory operate within specific social, historical, and cultural contexts? What analytical tools do diverse sociological perspectives offer in understanding the sites and structures of collective remembrance in today's changing world? What does the fast-growing interdisciplinary enterprise of memory studies tell us about the politics of memory and temporality that shape the practices of social injustice and exclusion? Through a selection of classical and contemporary theorists of collective memory, along with

empirical applications addressing these central questions, the course invites students to engage with and deepen their understanding of the sociological significance of memory.

Learning Outcomes:

Throughout this course, students will develop an understanding of:

- Foundational and contemporary sociological frameworks that explain how memory operates, is constituted, contested, and reconstructed within and across communities,
- How the memory of a group, nation, tradition, or event is represented, transmitted, and transformed within specific social, cultural, and political contexts,
- How dominant and alternative regimes of temporality and historiography shape memory narratives in societies structured by multidimensional matrix of inequalities and oppression,
- The ways in which memory contributes to, and is constrained in, the development and enhancement of coalitional capacities for social justice engagement within the context of global power relations.

By the end of this course, students will have achieved:

- Increased knowledge of theories and methodologies that support the comprehension and examination of memory studies on a global scale.
- Developed skills to critically evaluate and apply concepts of memorialization, commemoration, and reconciliation in diverse contexts.
- Enhanced proficiency in applying a sociological approach to the question of memory, while also developing a multidisciplinary perspective by engaging with memory studies at the intersections of cultural studies, critical geography, anthropology, political history, social movement studies, and arts and media studies.
- Greater competence in applying theories related to the politics of memory and social justice.

Reading(s)/Textbook(s):

Students are not required to purchase textbooks or other learning materials for this course. All required readings will be accessible through Brightspace.

Outline of Class Sessions & Schedule:

Section I:

Week 1 (January 8): *Course Introduction*

Week 2 (January 15): *Social Frameworks of Memory*

Week 3 (January 22): *With and After Halbwachs*

Week 4 (January 29): *Sites of Memory: Memorialization, Commemoration, & Place*

Week 5 (February 5): *Family & Generational Memory*

Week 6 (February 12): *In-Class Presentations of First Brief Reports*

Section II:

Week 7 (February 26): *Memories of Democratization and Reconciliation*

Week 8 (March 5): *Gendered & (De)colonial Memories*

Week 9 (March 12): *Counter-Memories & Memory Activism*

Week 10 (March 19): *In-Class Presentations of Second Brief Reports*

Week 11 (March 26): *Memories of Displacement, Encampment, & Diaspora*

Week 12 (April 2): *Politics of Memory: Thinking with Enzo Traverso*

Roundtables—final assignment presentations and feedback [Date to be set with students]

Format

This course is designed as a seminar. While lectures will be provided, student presentations and discussions form a key part of our weekly work.

Course Requirements & Methods of Evaluation

Grading in this course is based on a combination of in-class presentations, short report assignments, final paper and class attendance.

| Item for Evaluation | Value | Deadline |
|---|-------|------------------------|
| Two brief reports and two presentations | 40% | February 12 & March 19 |
| Final paper | 45% | April 3 |
| Class participation and attendance | 15% | |

Overview of Assignments:

Brief Report Assignments (Due February 12 and March 19)

- Students are asked to investigate a case study that involves the formation, transmission, reconstruction and contestation of collective memory. This may be a memory site (such as a place, object, historical-political event, or symbol) where the memory of a group, event, or tradition is crystallized, preserved, or transformed.
- The case study could also be an art piece, documentary, photograph, film, dance performance, storytelling, or other cultural and aesthetic expression. Analyses should examine both the object/medium of remembrance and its broader social, historical, cultural and political context and the ways through which collective memory is shaped, represented, narrated, and reconstructed.
- For each assignment, students are expected to prepare **a brief in-class presentation and a written report of 5–7 pages** (double-spaced).

- The report should engage with key terms, concepts, or issues from **at least two of the required readings**, and must include a properly formatted bibliography.
- Students may choose to complete the project as a **team of two or three**, but prior approval from the professor is required. If a project is completed as a group, **all team members will receive the same grade** for the assignment.
- The written report is due on the **day of your in-class presentation**.

Final paper

- This is a major term paper of approximately 10–13 pages (double-spaced). While the paper may build on a topic previously explored in short research projects, it should go beyond simply combining those reports and align with the objectives outlined in the approved proposal. Final Paper is due on **April 3**.
- A one-page proposal for the final paper topic is due on **March 6**. Further details regarding the final paper assignment will be provided.