

GOVT329: POLITICS OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Spring 2009

- Writing Intensive Course-



Time: Tuesday, Thursday, 11.00 – 12.15

Room: Kirby 106

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Office Hours: by appointment and on Tuesday and Thursday, 4.00 – 5.30 p.m.
(with the exception of every first Tuesday of the month)

“One's destination is never a place, but rather a new way of looking at things.” Henry Miller

COURSE OVERVIEW:

In the past decade the visibility of social movement activism rose dramatically in the USA and in other parts of the world. While this type of political engagement has long been considered unconventional, uncontrolled, and even crazy, it increasingly exerts pressure both in local and global politics. Today, when people engage in sustained, public, defiant challenges to existing power arrangements, they often find supporters to act together with in a globally interconnected manner.

Beside the their diversity of global-local linkages, social movements take on widely differing forms ranging from violent confrontations to nonviolent vigils and often highly innovative methods of recruitment and persuasion. As one of the primary means by which individuals combine their grievances, social movements both respond to and contribute to major periods of social change.

In this course, we will put special emphasis on the connections between global and local aspects in the varying forms of 20th and 21st century activism. We will explore the interplay of social movements and politics by studying different manifestations of liberal, global justice, and Islamic movements worldwide.

OBJECTIVES:

Our primary concern in this class is *theoretical*: to understand *why* and *how* people organize to change society or some part of it.

Our second, but equally crucial common axis of analysis in this class is *empirical*: to discover the interplay between global and local forms of social movement organizing.

To resolve these fundamental puzzles bridging social movement theory and empirical case studies, we will consider:

- Who joins social movements? What causes people to include in their everyday routines an often encompassing engagement in social movements?
- What shape does members' engagement take, and why?
- How do members' identities – race, class, gender, sexual orientation, and religion – impact the membership, structure, and goals of social movements?
- How do competing movements interpret and use cultural symbols, music, and language to address their local and international audience?

Combining the theoretical and the empirical aspects, the members of this class will read scholarly literature, gather primary materials, analyze data, and write reflectively in order to

- learn from examples of social movement activism,
- apply the theory of social movements, and
- gain experience in scholarly research.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

Participation	10 %
Moodle Discussion Forum	10 %
Research Paper	
Proposal	5 %
Participant Observation/Activist Interview	10 %
Midterm (4%) and Final (6%) Peer Review	10 %
Midterm Research Paper	20 %
Final Research Paper	30 %
Presentation	5%
Extra-credit	5 %

EVALUATION:

Grades will be assessed by bringing together two sets of criteria.

- 1) Presentations will be evaluated on the basis of clarity, organization, coherence, logical flow, creativity, depth and intensity.

Evaluations of written assignments will also measure the above characteristics by condensing and quantifying them through the following three aspects:

- a) **Accuracy** of content: use of lecture/class discussions and reading materials,
- b) **Integration**: analytical ability to conceptualize problems,
- c) **Format**: adequate and appropriate usage of language and style.

- 2) Since each of us is in a different stage in our educational process, the assessment will also be based on the progress relative to each student's starting point in the course. General improvement, excellence, creative and positive attitudes that facilitate the learning experience will be considered.

Accommodations for students with disability:

In compliance with Lafayette College policy and equal access laws, I am available to discuss appropriate academic accommodations that you may require as a student with disability. Requests for accommodations need to be made during the first two weeks of the semester, except for unusual circumstances, so arrangements can be made. Students must register with the Office of the Dean of the College for disability verification and for determination of reasonable academic accommodations.

Cell phones:

The ringer on your cell phone should be turned off during class and the phone should be stored in your bag.

Academic integrity:

Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information. In case of doubt, please consult the "Principles of Intellectual Honesty" in the Student Handbook and feel free to discuss your concerns with the Professor and reference librarians.

Late assignment policy:

Past the deadline, the following deductions will take place:

Assignment received *within* 24 hours past the deadline: -10% value of assignment.

Assignment received *within* 48 hours past the deadline: -20% value of assignment.

Assignment received *within* 72 hours past the deadline: -30% value of assignment.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

❖ **1) Class Participation (10%)**

Participation means regular attendance and active engagement.

❖ **A) Attendance**

Students will not be penalized because of documented illness and will be offered the opportunity to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment missed due to participation in religious observances. It is the student's responsibility to inform the Professor of absences in advance and to obtain a Dean's excuse from the Dean of Studies. Absence is defined as not coming to class or coming 5 minutes late. Unexcused absences will lower the final grade. The amount lowered will depend on the number of absences, up to one full grade.

❖ **B) Participation**

Participation includes listening carefully, thoughtfully, and respectfully to what others have to say and responding accordingly. The quality of our sessions depends a great deal on the level of preparation students bring to the class. It is important that students complete the readings in time, reflect on them and be ready to engage in a discussion. Expression of students' questions and opinions plays an important role in making class a stimulating experience for everyone.

These are the guidelines for evaluating students' class participation:

Basics: Does the student demonstrate a sensitive understanding of the assigned material? How talented was the student at getting right to the central argument?

Creativity: Did the student come up with some interesting idea or question for all of us to consider? Did his/her comments take opposing arguments into consideration?

Comparative aspect: To what extent were the readings previously discussed during this course considered for the materials presently under review?

Argumentation: How well was evidence used to support the claims?

Flow of discussion: Did the student offer comments that encouraged others to participate? Were the comments useful in keeping the discussion on track?

Note: There is a strong distinction between attendance and participation. *Attending every class, without ever speaking up, does not constitute participation.* To receive credit for participation, students are required to ask questions, raise issues, express opinions, etc. regarding the topics covered, as well as respond to the questions.

❖ **2) Writing Assignments**

In addition to the mid-term exam, periodic writing assignments will provide the opportunity for more in-depth analysis of particular ideas and issues.

❖ **A) Discussion Forum Posts/Short Essay Reflection Papers (10%)**

Moodle Forum postings and Reflection Papers provide occasions when you can synthesize what you have learned from the assigned readings. In these exercises you need to combine elements from the assigned texts and respond to questions and write a short critical analysis.

When requested, students will need to prepare a worksheet of questions, insights, critical comments, and key passages from the class readings and place it on the Moodle discussion site. You will post your initial response by Monday at 6 pm for Tuesday classes and by Wednesday at 6 pm for Thursday classes. Between that time and the start of the next class at 11 am, you

should read all the postings and (when indicated) respond to one or more of them. The summaries of reflections should be one paragraph long and include a complete bibliographic citation. Your forum posts will get a separate grade. Posts may be marked “G” (Good/1), “OK” (Adequate/0.5) or “I” (Incomplete, Inaccurate or Insulting, 0).

covered, as well as respond to the questions.

❖ **B) Research Project (75%)**

The research paper is your chance to deepen your knowledge on a particular social movement that you are interested in. The research paper is expected to be comparative regarding the global-local linkages of the movement under investigation, as well as creative and critical in its outlook.

The Midterm Research Paper needs to be 10 pages and the Final should be an extension of this research to 20 pages (including references). The Final Research Paper needs to incorporate a) comments from Professor and peers, and b) insights from the Participant Observation/Activist Interview.

The research paper requires reading beyond the course materials. Quality of research is one of the major components of the grade. You should combine the assigned readings in class with materials you find on your selected topic.

The exact topic of the research essay is of the student’s own choosing, but the research question should be developed on the basis of the assigned texts. You are encouraged to conduct a more detailed investigation about one of the case studies we discuss in class. The topics of the papers should be selected in consultation with the instructor.

Time-line for completion:

- 1) First meeting on paper topics: **early February**. Please stop by during my office hours or set up an appointment. Arrive at the meeting with a short list of possible research themes. Make sure that you ask reference librarians for advice early. Make an arrangement with a classmate to review each other’s midterm and final papers.
- 2) Proposal (2 pages) due: **noon Friday, February 20**.
- 3) Midterm Peer Review due: **8 pm Tuesday, March 10** on Moodle.
- 4) Midterm Research Paper (10 pages) due: **noon Friday, March 13** in Kirby 201 mailbox.
- 5) Participant Observation /Activist Interview (4 pages) due: **noon Friday, April 24** in Kirby 201.
- 6) Peer Review of Final Research Paper due: **8 pm Friday, May 8** on Moodle.
- 7) Final Research Paper (20 pages) due: **noon Tuesday, May 12** in Kirby 201 mailbox.

Consult the handout on “**Research Project Guidelines**” for further information.

❖ **3) Presentation 5%**

Each student will present the research paper before the due date of the final.

You will also constructively critique classmates' presentations in class.

❖ **4) Extra Credit Assignments** (maximum 5 points, one point per event)

These activities require an advance approval from the Professor and can include the following opportunities:

(1) Talks or workshops attended. Students should hand in a one-page double-spaced review that needs to accomplish three parts: a) provide a brief summary of the topics and arguments covered, b) identify significant insights for you, c) explain how the event enhanced your understanding of topics covered in the course.

(2) Write a one-page paper that critically responds to recommended videos and movies. Same format applies as above.

You should interpret the grades for written assignments in the following terms:

A or A- will be given to assignments that display serious and energetic engagement with the material, prove sophisticated in the subtleties of assigned texts, demonstrate an ability to move beyond what we have covered in class and exhibit a capacity to draw connections between non-obvious points. Regarding format requirements, an A or A- paper is well organized, with a coherent introduction as well as a conclusion that does more than summarize, contains no typographical errors, exhibits elegant as well as clear prose and provides adequate citations. Because form is an integral part of the assignment, no matter how original or sophisticated, I will not give an A or A- to sloppy work.

Some form of B grade will be given to assignments that indicate a good grasp of the materials and develop a coherent argument and capacity to write decent prose. Such works are average in a sense that they are strong in content, but weak in form, or vice versa. A B+ demonstrates at least a clear potential to be truly excellent and composed, but does not go beyond a solid understanding of the text under consideration. An assignment is a B- which, although coherently argued and decently composed, does not go beyond a solid understanding of the text under consideration. A B range grade indicates that you are doing an acceptable job of assimilating the material.

Some form of C grade will go to assignments that I find seriously flawed. For example, if your argument is poorly organized (i.e., it jumps from one topic to another without reason, or after reading your work, I cannot identify your central argument), or if it does not provide evidence and argumentation necessary to articulate and defend your claim.

Students are strongly encouraged to consult the Writing Associates to review drafts of their work. Extensive consultation with colleagues is considered standard practice in social science, as long as the work of others is not stolen. The respective authors need to be acknowledged by referencing them. In case of doubt, please consult the "Principles of Intellectual Honesty" in the Student Handbook and feel free to discuss your concerns with the instructor.

Please note that you are responsible for saving all your graded materials until the semester ends.

READINGS:

The course is designed to respond to world events as well as students' interests. All participants are welcome to suggest appropriate supplementary reading.

Manfred B. Steger. 2009. *Globalisms: The Great Ideological Struggle of the Twenty-First Century*. Third edition. Rowman and Littlefield. ISBN13: 978-0-7425-5587-7

Valentine Moghadam. 2009. *Globalization and Social Movements*. Rowman and Littlefield. ISBN13: 978-0-7425-5572-3

Margaret Keck and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. *Activists beyond Borders*. Cornell University Press. ISBN 0-8014-8456-1

Bill Moyer. 2001 (2007). *Doing Democracy*. New Society Publishers. ISBN 13: 978-0-086571-418-2 (fifth reprint)

Jeff Goodwin and James Jesper, eds. 2005. *The Social Movements Reader*. Blackwell Publishing. ISBN 13: 0-631-22196-4

COURSE SCHEDULE:

The Professor may modify the sequence of classes and assignments as needed by special projects, guest lectures, etc.

Week 1 INTRODUCTIONS: Perspectives on Social Movement Activism

T January 27, 2008 Introduction

Dr. Fábíán's introduction

Student introduction activity

Course content overview

Class discussion: Why did you decide to you take this course? Interests? Hope to gain?

Student requirements: Course policies and grading

Course issues discussion: lecture outlines, Moodle, instructional methods, examples of final projects.

R January 29 Social Movement Theories and the Movement Action Plan

Moyer, Ch. 1. Pp. 10-20, and Ch. 5, pp. 100-114

Moghadam, Ch. 1, pp. 1-16

Week 2 ROLES OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

T February 3 Four Roles

Moyer, Ch. 2, pp. 21-41, Review at least 2 of the 5 case studies in Part III, pp. 116-186
Moghadam, Ch. 2, pp. 17-36

R February 5 What Do Movements Do?

Goodwin and Jasper eds., Part VII pp. 219-254

Weeks 3-4 STAGES OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

T February 10 Eight Stages

Moyer, Ch. 3, pp. 42-87

R February 12 When and Why Do Social Movements Occur?

Goodwin and Jasper eds., Part VII pp. 9-48

T February 17 Opportunities or Obstacles? What kinds of “opportunities” did each movement have or create? What are the risks and benefits of having celebrities and/or elites involved in the movement? Why is media attention important for the movement? What problems does it create?

Presentation by Ms. Luhrs, Kirby Librarian
Goodwin and Jasper eds., Part VIII pp. 255-312

R February 19 Decline?

Goodwin and Jasper eds., Part IX pp. 313-344

Start preliminary investigation regarding your research topic.

Make arrangements with peer for midterm review and set up an appointment with the Professor to discuss your choice of research topic.

Proposal is due: noon Friday, February 20

Weeks 5-6 MEMBERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS

T February 24 Who Joins? Believing in the Power of Social Movements

Moyer, Ch. 4, pp. 87-98
Goodwin and Jasper eds., Part III pp. 49-88
Segments from: *Hate.com*

R February 26 Who Remains and Who Drops Out?

Goodwin and Jasper eds., Part IV pp. 89-128

T March 3 Ideology

Steger, Ch. 1, pp. 1-20
Goodwin and Jasper eds., Part V pp. 129-162

R March 5 Organization

Goodwin and Jasper eds., Part VI pp. 163-218

Segments from: *This Is What Democracy Looks Like* (2007)

<http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=-2007206186362541122>

PEER REVIEWS are due: 8 pm March 10

Week 7 DEFINING SUCCESS

What kinds of effects can social movements have on different aspects of society? How can we say that a movement is successful? What are the unintended effects of social movement activity?

T March 10

Goodwin and Jasper eds., Part VI pp. 345-369

Steger, Ch.2, pp. 21-50

R March 12

Steger, Ch. 3. 51-96

MIDTERM IS DUE: noon Friday, March 13

Spring break, March 16-21

Weeks 8-13 ACTIVISTS BEYOND BROADERS

“The longer you look back, the farther you can look forward.” Winston Churchill

T March 24 Transnational Advocacy Networks in IR

Keck and Sikkink, Ch. 1, pp. 1-38

R March 26 Historical Precursors to Modern Transnational Advocacy Networks

Keck and Sikkink, Ch. 2, pp. 39-79

T March 31 In-class film: *Amazing Grace* (2006, 118 min)

Read: William Wilberforce (1759-1833) and Antislavery movements

R April 2 Challenges from the Political Right: National Populism and Jihadist Globalism

Steger, Ch. 131-158

Moghadam, Ch. 3, pp. 37-62

In class video segment from: *Faith & Politics: The Christian Right or In Search of bin Laden*

T April 7 Challenges from the Political Left: Justice Globalism

Steger, Ch. 4, pp. 97-130

Moghadam, Ch. 5, pp. 91-118

R April 9 Human Rights Advocacy in Latin America

Keck and Sikkink, Ch. 3, pp. 79-120
In-class video segment from: *Madres de la Plaza Mayo*

T April 14 Environmental Advocacy Networks

Keck and Sikkink, Ch. 4, pp. 121-165

R April 16 Transnational Networks on Violence against Women

Keck and Sikkink, Ch. 5, pp. 165-198

T April 21 Feminism on a World Scale

Moghadam, Ch. 4, pp. 63-90

In-class video segment from: *A Veiled Revolution*

R April 24 and T April 28 GLOBAL JUSTICE GAME

"Believe in yourself. Trust in one another." Students for a Democratic Society (SDS)

<http://www.globaljusticegame.mrap.info/intro.html>

Participant Observation /Activist Interview due noon Friday, April 24 in Kirby 201.

**R April 30 UNDERSTANDING GLOBALIZATION AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS:
REFLECTIONS**

Moyer, pp. 186-200

Keck and Sikkink, Ch. 6, pp. 199-218

Steger, Ch. 6, pp. 159-168

Moghadam, Ch. 6, pp. 119-128

Week 14

T May 5, and R May 7 CONCLUSIONS: PRESENTATIONS OF CASE STUDIES

Peer Review of Final Research Paper due: 8 pm Friday, May 8 on Moodle

Final research paper is due noon Tuesday, May 12, in Kirby 201 .

“One cannot level one’s moral lance at every evil in the universe. There are just too many of them. But you can do something, and the difference between doing something and doing nothing is everything.” Dan Berrigan.