

POL 497, ACTIVISM & CHANGE

SPRING 2018 / TR, 2:20–3:40 / 107 MAHAR HALL / DR. CRAIG WARKENTIN

What's this course about?

POL 497 addresses people's varied efforts to effect political change. Toward that end, we'll examine civil society, social movements, and the broader dynamics of contentious politics, along with attendant issues determined in part by your interests.

What can I learn from this class?

If you complete assignments and actively participate, by the end of the semester you should be able to

- recognize key issues, actors, dynamics, and processes of contemporary social movements;
- discuss the politics that motivate campaigns for change and the resulting responses;
- forward workable prescriptions for effecting constructive political change; and
- articulate a personal understanding of contentious politics with attendant positions.

Of course, these goals can only be accomplished if we work together to create a classroom environment conducive to learning. With that in mind, be sure to familiarize yourself with SUNY Oswego's [Non-Discrimination Policy](#).

What books do I need?

- *Protest Politics Today*, by Devashree Gupta (Polity, 2017; ISBN 9780745671154)
- *The Social Movements Reader: Cases and Concepts*, 3rd ed., edited by Jeff Goodwin and James M. Jasper (Wiley, 2015; ISBN 9781118729793)
- *A Manual for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 8th ed., by Kate L. Turabian (University of Chicago Press, 2013; ISBN 9780226816388)

You'll need all three textbooks to successfully complete this course. Physical copies are strongly recommended, but eBooks are okay if you fully adhere to my electronics policy (below).

Should I also pay attention to the news?

It's always good to know what's going on in the world, so you're encouraged to keep an eye on the news. If you're a reader, the [Associated Press](#) and [Reuters](#) offer the best starting points for international news coverage. If you'd rather watch your news, [Agence-France Presse](#) and [Al Jazeera English](#) provide excellent reportage via their YouTube channels. For good national coverage, see [The Washington Post](#) and [The New York Times](#).

Can I use my phone in the classroom?

Phones, laptops, and other electronic devices must be silenced and stowed out of reach at all times, whether or not class is in session and whether or not I'm physically present in the room. Excepted from this rule are tablet devices, which are allowed during class if they're used solely to access course materials and don't cause a distraction.

If you violate this policy, I may do one or more of the following: (1) reduce your course participation grade; (2) invalidate any accrued extra credit points; or (3) dismiss you from the classroom for part or all of the period.

You occasionally might need to use a device during class, in which case(s) I'll let you know in advance so you can plan accordingly.

What other scary stuff should I know?

We might watch some videos in this class that contain violence, disturbing images, coarse language, or other adult content. If this poses a problem for you, let me know before Thursday, February 8 (after which I'll assume it's not an issue).

You also need to familiarize yourself with this syllabus, remember that you're responsible for whatever happens in class (whether or not you attend), and act accordingly.

I reserve the right to modify the syllabus, but I'll consult you before making changes that could affect your grade and announce any notable revisions in class.

What's your attendance policy?

I expect you to attend class and participate. Stuff happens, of course, but circumstances seldom warrant more than a couple absences (if any) during the semester. (Keep in mind that you can't participate if you're not present, and excessive absences can harm your course grade.) If you do miss a class, I'll trust you to make whatever arrangements you deem necessary.

In the event of inclement weather, prioritize your personal safety over class attendance. Of course, I'll let you know (via email) if I can't make it to campus and have to cancel class. Unless otherwise instructed, stay on schedule with readings and deadlines if we miss a class session (for any reason); we'll catch up and make adjustments if needed when we return.

How will my grade be calculated?

Your course grade will be determined by the number of points you accrue during the semester:

470-500 = A 420-434 = B 370-384 = C 320-334 = D
450-469 = A- 400-419 = B- 350-369 = C- 300-319 = D-
435-449 = B+ 385-399 = C+ 335-349 = D+ 000-299 = E

Required assignments and point values:

- Participation (100 points) – Attendance rate and classroom contributions
- Facilitation (25 points)* – Your assistance in leading a classroom session
- Response (25 points)* – A personal response to some assigned reading
- Questions (50 points) – Discussion questions that engage daily readings
- Project (275 points) – A substantive research paper, submitted in stages
- Presentation (25 points) – A summary of your project and conclusions

*You can either do (a) 2 Responses or (b) 1 Facilitation and 1 Response.

Detailed requirements and expectations for each assignment will be discussed in class, with supporting information posted on the class website.

Do you accept late assignments?

I reserve the right to give you a zero on any late or missed assignment. Submissions that don't meet stated requirements and expectations are subject to a score reduction or other penalty, to be levied at my discretion.

What happens if I cheat or plagiarize?

As a SUNY Oswego student, you must fully adhere to the [College Policy on Intellectual Integrity](#), according to which you're personally responsible "to assist in protecting the integrity of the degrees which this College grants by (1) not participating, either directly or indirectly, in intellectual dishonesty in any form, (2) actively discouraging intellectual dishonesty by others, and (3) reporting to the course instructor in a timely manner any known incidents of intellectual dishonesty."

Submission of your first graded assignment in this class serves as your formal acknowledgement that you fully understand the College Policy on Intellectual Integrity, including relevant definitions, consequences, and procedures. If you engage in proscribed behavior, I reserve the right to take any punitive action allowed by the university.

What if I have questions or need help?

I'll assume you're doing as well as you'd like to in this class unless you tell me otherwise. If you do need some extra help, just let me know and I'll do my best to assist you; I'll be glad to discuss with you any course-related questions or concerns you might have. You're always welcome to stop by during my office hours, catch me after class, or schedule an appointment.

If you have a disabling condition that could interfere with your ability to successfully complete this class, please contact [Disability Support Services](#) (155 Marano Campus Center, 315.312.3358, dss@oswego.edu).

What (and where) are your office hours?

Hours: 1-2 p.m. on Tue/Thu, 1:30-3 p.m. on Wed, and by appointment

Office: 435 Mahar Hall

Phone: 315.312.4080

Email: craig.warkentin@oswego.edu

Website: warkentin.xyz/497

How should I prepare for class?

Complete assigned readings before coming to class on the indicated dates (below). Always bring your textbook (or some other copy of the reading) and be prepared to discuss what you read.

TUE, JAN 23

MfW: Overview of Part I (3-4); Ch. 1, What Research Is and How Researchers

Think About It (5-11); Ch. 15, General Introduction to Citation Practices

(135-143); Ch. 18, Author-Date Style: The Basic Form (216-228)

SMR: 1. Editor's Introduction (3-8)

THU, JAN 25

PPT: Ch. 1, The Politics of Protest (1-31)

TUE, JAN 30

PPT: Ch. 2, The Activist (32-65)

THU, FEB 1

PPT: Ch. 3, The Organization (66-98)

TUE, FEB 6

PPT: Ch. 4, The Target (88-131)

THU, FEB 8

PPT: Ch. 5, The Message (132-172)

TUE, FEB 13

PPT: Ch. 6, The Tactic (173-204)

THU, FEB 15

PPT: Ch. 7, The Response (205-242)

TUE, FEB 20

PPT: Ch. 8, The Aftermath (243-277)

THU, FEB 22

PPT: Ch. 9, The Future (278-292)

TUE, FEB 27

SMR: Part II. When and Why Do Social Movements Occur? (9-12); 2. The Women's Movement (13-23); 3. The Gay Liberation Movement (24-29)

THU, MAR 1

SMR: 4. Occupy Wall Street (30-44); 5. The Egyptian Revolution (45-52)

TUE, MAR 6

SMR: Part III. Who Joins or Supports Movements? (53-58); 6. The Free-Rider Problem (59-64); 7. Recruits to Civil Rights Activism (65-75)

THU, MAR 8

SMR: 8. Who Are the Radical Islamists? (76-82); 9. Women's Mobilization into the Salvadoran Guerrilla Army (83-100)

TUE, MAR 20

SMR: Part IV. Who Remains in Movements, Who Drops Out, and Why? (101-104); 10. Generating Commitment among Students (105-113); 11. Sustaining Commitment among Radical Feminists (114-125); 12. True Believers and Charismatic Cults (126-135)

THU, MAR 22

SMR: 13. Are Frames Enough? (136-142); 14. The Emotional Benefits of Insurgency in El Salvador (143-152); 15. Classic Protest Songs: A List (153-154)

TUE, MAR 27

SMR: Part V. How Are Movements Organized? (155-158); 16. Social Movement Organizations (159-174); 17. Transnational Environmental Activism (175-183)

THU, MAR 29

SMR: 18. The Transnational Network for Democratic Globalization (184-195); 19. Meeting Arenas (196-212)

TUE, APR 3

SMR: Part VI. What Do Movements Do? (213-218); 20. Tactical Innovation in the Civil Rights Movement (219-223); 21. Armed Struggle in the South African Anti-Apartheid Movement (224-238); 22. Suicide Bombing (239-245)

THU, APR 5

SMR: 23. Everyday Life, Routine Politics, and Protest (246-253); 24. The Emotion Work of Movements (254-265); 25. Tactical Repertoires: Same-Sex Weddings (266-282)

TUE, APR 10

SMR: Part VII. How Do Movements Interact with Other Players? (283-286); 26. Farmworkers' Movements in Changing Political Contexts (287-301); 27. Movements in the Media (302-316); 28. What Shapes the West's Human Rights Focus? (317-324); 29. The Quest for International Allies (325-334); 30. Global Corporations, Global Unions (335-342)

THU, APR 12

No Class Meeting (Project Work Day)

TUE, APR 17

No Class Meeting (Project Work Day)

THU, APR 19

No Class Meeting (Project Work Day)

TUE, APR 24

SMR: Part VIII. Why Do Movements Decline? (343-346); 31. The Decline of the Women's Movement (347-353); 32. The Dilemmas of Identity Politics (354-362); 33. The Repression/Protest Paradox in Central America (363-370); 34. Counterinsurgency (370-378)

THU, APR 26

SMR: 37. Part IX. What Changes Do Movements Bring About? (379-382); 35. Defining Movement "Success" (383-386); 36. How Social Movements Matter (386-390); Environmental Justice (391-397); 38. Understanding Revolutions: The Arab Uprisings (398-404); 39. Why Nonviolence Sometimes Fails: China in 1989 (405-415)

TUE, MAY 1

Presentations

THU, MAY 3

Presentations