

McMaster University

Arts & Science 2A06: Social and Political Thought

Fall and Winter 2021–2022 Course Outline

Administrative Details

Class Time: Thursday, 11:30am–2:20pm

Classroom: Fall: PGCLL-M12; Winter: T13-127

Format: This course will be conducted in-person; however, we will post materials (e.g., readings, assignment instructions, announcements) on Avenue2Learn. We will also be using Echo360 to facilitate optional virtual learning.

Instructor: Danielle Martak

Instructor's Email: martakdp@mcmaster.ca

Instructor's Office Location: LRW 3038

Instructor's Office Hours: Thursday 10:30–11:20am

TA: Taif Zuhair

TA's Email: zuhairt@mcmaster.ca

TA's Office Location: Zoom; link on Avenue.

TA's Office Hours: By appointment.

Course Description

This course explores the history of critical thinking about the formation, evolution, revolution, and governance of ethical communities. The course is irrigated by a constellation of closely related questions:

- How is social and political life imagined differently by different thinkers...and why?
- What is justice, and what does it mean to strive to create a just society?
- What is the role that education, teaching, and learning play in sustaining an equitable society?
- In what ways is social and political life formed and deformed by violence and,

- relatedly, exclusion and domination?
- To what extent does social and political thought address the question of suffering?
 - In what ways is social and political thought an affirmation of the irrepressible interdependence of life on Earth?

Learning Objectives

This course seeks to:

- Provide you with a good working knowledge of a broad range of social and political thinkers and theories
- Strengthen your critical capacities, that is, your abilities to identify the prevailing rationality behind a judgment; to test the presuppositions of that rationality against what is known; and to situate the rationality's presuppositions as well as what is known within various contexts, histories, and power dynamics
- Strengthen your ability to use your critical capacities to think the nuances of different approaches to social and political life together, that is, to bring different understandings of how we may live together into conversation with each other
- Strengthen your ability to think generatively with existing theories of social and political life, that is, to apply your critical thinking skills to deepen, trouble, and complicate what is known
- Strengthen your ability to write an effective argumentative essay, that is, an essay that i) has a discernible and novel thesis; ii) makes a detailed case for that thesis; and iii) is written with elegance, economy, logic, and correct grammar

Required Materials

The required reading material will be available on the course page on Avenue.

Assessments

Term 1 Midterm (10%):	Scheduled for 21 October 11:30am (online)
Term 1 Essay (20%):	Due 25 November
Term 2 Midterm (10%):	Scheduled for 17 February 11:30am (online)
Term 2 Essay (25%):	Due 31 March
Final Exam (35%):	Date TBD

Memoranda detailing the format and expectations of the midterms and final and information on how to write an effective essay will be posted on Avenue at the beginning of the first term. Essays submitted after the due date will be subject to a 3% penalty per day.

Provisional Lecture Schedule

Sept	9	Introduction
	16	The Buddha, <i>Dīgha Nikyāya</i> [Aggañña Sutta, Cakkavatti-Sīhanāda Sutta]
	23	The Buddha, <i>Dīgha Nikyāya</i> [Mahāparinibbāna Sutta]
	30	Plato, <i>The Republic</i> [Books I, II, IV]
Oct	7	Plato, <i>The Republic</i> [Books V, VII]
	14	Midterm recess
	21	Midterm exam (online; no class before or after exam)
	28	Lao Tzu, “Tao Te Ching”
Nov	4	Haudenosaunee Confederacy, “Kayanerenkó:wa” (“The Great Law of Peace”)
	11	Haudenosaunee Confederacy, “Kayanerenkó:wa” (“The Great Law of Peace”)
	18	“Mande Charter” + Guy Martin, “The Political Ideology of Indigenous African Political Institutions from Antiquity to the Nineteenth Century”
	25	Philip Sidney, <i>Defense of Poetry</i> [Essay 1 Due]
Dec	2	John Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Civil Government</i> [selections]
Jan	13	Mary Wollstonecraft, <i>A Vindication of the Rights of Woman</i> [selections] + Sojourner Truth, “Ain’t I A Woman?”
	20	Immanuel Kant, <i>Toward Perpetual Peace</i> [selections]
	27	Karl Marx, <i>The Communist Manifesto</i> + <i>Capital</i> [selections]
Feb	3	Karl Marx, <i>The Communist Manifesto</i> + <i>Capital</i> [selections] + <i>Marx Reloaded</i> [documentary screening]
	10	Michel Foucault, “ <i>Society Must Be Defended</i> ” [selections]
	17	Midterm exam (online; no class before or after exam)
	24	Midterm recess
Mar	3	Primo Levi, <i>The Drowned and the Saved</i> [selections]
	10	Jacques Derrida, <i>Of Hospitality</i> [selections]
	17	Angela Davis, <i>Are Prisons Obsolete?</i>
	24	Angela Davis, <i>Are Prisons Obsolete?</i>
	31	Audra Simpson, <i>Mohawk Interruptus</i> [selections] [Essay 2 Due]
Apr	7	Anna Tsing, <i>The Mushroom at the End of the World</i> [selections]

*At certain points in the course it may make good sense to modify the schedule. We may change elements of the course and you will be notified accordingly (in class, on Avenue).

Important Notes About the Course

1. ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

You are expected to exhibit honesty and use ethical behaviour in all aspects of the learning process. Academic credentials you earn are rooted in principles of honesty and academic integrity. It is your responsibility to understand what constitutes academic dishonesty.

Academic dishonesty is to knowingly act or fail to act in a way that results or could result in unearned academic credit or advantage. This behaviour can result in serious consequences, e.g. the grade of zero on an assignment, loss of credit with a notation on the transcript (notation reads: "Grade of F assigned for academic dishonesty"), and/or suspension or expulsion from the university. For information on the various types of academic dishonesty please refer to the *Academic Integrity Policy*, located at <https://secretariat.mcmaster.ca/university-policies-procedures-guidelines/>.

The following illustrates only three forms of academic dishonesty:

- plagiarism, e.g. the submission of work that is not one's own or for which other credit has been obtained.
- improper collaboration in group work.
- copying or using unauthorized aids in tests and examinations.

2. AUTHENTICITY / PLAGIARISM DETECTION

Some courses may use a web-based service (Turnitin.com) to reveal authenticity and ownership of student submitted work. For courses using such software, students will be expected to submit their work electronically either directly to Turnitin.com or via an online learning platform (e.g. A2L, etc.) using plagiarism detection (a service supported by Turnitin.com) so it can be checked for academic dishonesty.

Students who do not wish their work to be submitted through the plagiarism detection software must inform the Instructor before the assignment is due. No penalty will be assigned to a student who does not submit work to the plagiarism detection software. All submitted work is subject to normal verification that standards of academic integrity have been upheld (e.g., online search, other software, etc.). For more details about McMaster's use of Turnitin.com please go to www.mcmaster.ca/academicintegrity.

3. COURSES WITH AN ONLINE ELEMENT

Some courses may use online elements (e.g. e-mail, Avenue to Learn (A2L), LearnLink, web pages, capa, Moodle, ThinkingCap, etc.). Students should be aware that, when they access the electronic components of a course using these elements, private information such as first and last names, user names for the McMaster e-mail accounts, and program affiliation may become apparent to all other students in the same course. The available information is dependent on the technology used. Continuation in a course that uses online elements will be deemed consent to this disclosure. If you have any questions or concerns about such disclosure please discuss this with the course instructor.

4. ONLINE PROCTORING

Some courses may use online proctoring software for tests and exams. This software may require students to turn on their video camera, present identification, monitor and record their computer activities, and/or lock/restrict their browser or other applications/software during tests or exams. This software may be required to be installed before the test/exam begins.

5. CONDUCT EXPECTATIONS

As a McMaster student, you have the right to experience, and the responsibility to demonstrate, respectful and dignified interactions within all of our living, learning and working communities. These expectations are described in the [Code of Student Rights & Responsibilities](#) (the “Code”). All students share the responsibility of maintaining a positive environment for the academic and personal growth of all McMaster community members, whether in person or online.

It is essential that students be mindful of their interactions online, as the Code remains in effect in virtual learning environments. The Code applies to any interactions that adversely affect, disrupt, or interfere with reasonable participation in University activities. Student disruptions or behaviours that interfere with university functions on online platforms (e.g. use of Avenue 2 Learn, WebEx or Zoom for delivery), will be taken very seriously and will be investigated. Outcomes may include restriction or removal of the involved students’ access to these platforms.

6. ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION OF STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who require academic accommodation must contact [Student Accessibility Services](#) (SAS) at 905-525-9140 ext. 28652 or sas@mcmaster.ca to make arrangements with a Program Coordinator. For further information, consult McMaster University’s [Academic Accommodation of Students with Disabilities](#) policy.

7. REQUESTS FOR RELIEF FOR MISSED ACADEMIC TERM WORK

In the event of an absence for medical or other reasons, students should review and follow the [Policy on Requests for Relief for Missed Academic Term Work](#).

8. ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS, INDIGENOUS OR SPIRITUAL OBSERVANCES (RISO)

Students requiring academic accommodation based on religious, indigenous or spiritual observances should follow the procedures set out in the [RISO](#) policy. Students should submit their request to their Faculty Office *normally within 10 working days* of the beginning of term in which they anticipate a need for accommodation or to the Registrar's Office prior to their examinations. Students should also contact their instructors as soon as possible to make alternative arrangements for classes, assignments, and tests.

9. COPYRIGHT AND RECORDING

Students are advised that lectures, demonstrations, performances, and any other course material provided by an instructor include copyright protected works. The Copyright Act and copyright law protect every original literary, dramatic, musical and

artistic work, including lectures by University instructors. The recording of lectures, tutorials, or other methods of instruction may occur during a course. Recording may be done either by the instructor for the purpose of authorized distribution or by a student for the purpose of personal study. Students should be aware that their voice and/or image may be recorded by others during the class. Please speak with the instructor if this is a concern for you.

10. EXTREME CIRCUMSTANCES

The University reserves the right to change the dates and deadlines for any or all courses in extreme circumstances (e.g., severe weather, labour disruptions, etc.). Changes will be communicated through regular McMaster communication channels, such as McMaster Daily News, A2L and/or McMaster email.

It is the responsibility of students to check their McMaster email regularly. McMaster University policy requires email communication between students, instructors and T.A's to be conducted using McMaster email accounts. This policy protects confidentiality and confirms the identity of the student. Please include a subject line with the course designation, "2A06." Please also allow 72 hours for response.

11. MCMASTER UNIVERSITY GRADING SCALE

Grade	Equivalent Grade Point	Equivalent Percentages
A+	12	90-100
A	11	85-89
A-	10	80-84
B+	9	77-79
B	8	73-76
B-	7	70-72
C+	6	67-69
C	5	63-66
C-	4	60-62
D+	3	57-59
D	2	53-56
D-	1	50-52
F	0	0-49 -- Failure

12. NOTES FOR ALL ARTS & SCIENCE COURSES

1. Some of the statements above refer to a "Faculty Office"; please note that the Arts & Science Program Office serves in this capacity.
2. It is the responsibility of students to check their McMaster email regularly.

Announcements will be made in class, via A2L, and/or via the course email distribution list.

3. For additional information regarding requests for accommodation, relief for missed term work (e.g. MSAF), deferred examinations, etc., students should read carefully the [Requests](#) and [Resources](#) pages on the Arts & Science Program website.