

**POLITICAL THEORY AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**  
**Political Science 362**  
**Fall 2023 Syllabus**  
**(Website version)**

**Please check MyCourses for the official course syllabus**

Course Professor: Catherine Lu

**Course description**

This course introduces students to the field of international political theory (IPT), an area of political theory that focuses on the nature, structure, and history of the international system and on the transnational and global conditions of possibility for freedom, equality, community, and justice. Questions to be addressed include the following: What is the significance of colonialism, neo-colonialism, and empire for the development of contemporary world order? What are the implications of describing the international order as anarchic or rule-governed? What is the moral significance of the state? Are there universal human rights? What is self-determination, whose self-determination matters morally, and what are the implications for international order? Are there duties of global justice? Is there moral progress at the global or civilizational scale? What are the prospects for lasting peace? Does global justice require the development of global democratic institutions or a world state? What role has racial domination and hierarchy played in the constitution of the contemporary world system? What is the role of international law in making war and peace, world domination and global justice?

**Course prerequisite**

**Completion of Introduction to Political Theory (POLI 231 or 232 or equivalent) is required**, or explicit permission from the Course Professor. An introductory course in International Relations (POLI 244) is also highly recommended.

**Course Materials**

The following texts are available for purchase at Paragraphe Bookstore, 2220 McGill College Ave.:

- Duncan Bell ed., *Empire, Race, and Global Justice* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 2019).
- Immanuel Kant, *Political Writings* (Cambridge University Press)
- Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* (New York : Monthly Review Press, 2000).

Some other required course materials listed below will be accessible on MyCourses, while others are accessible through the McGill Library system. It is the responsibility of students to obtain the required readings for the course, which may require students to look up the relevant articles or book chapters online through the McGill Library system.

**Required assignments**

- Midterm (80 minutes), October 17 – IN-PERSON in-class. Further instructions will be provided.
- Paper (2000 words), due November 14 – further instructions will be provided.
- Final exam (3 hours) – scheduled in the final exam period, IN-PERSON. Further instructions will be provided.
- Conferences (Mandatory attendance 5 out of 9): attendance IN-PERSON and participation component

## Grade distribution

Midterm exam	25%
Conferences (attendance 5% and participation 10%)	15%
Paper	10%
Final exam	50%

Conference attendance and participation are mandatory

*You must receive a passing grade on the Conferences, Midterm exam, and Final exam, in order to receive a grade higher than D in this course.*

In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control, the content and/or evaluation scheme in this course is subject to change.

## Assignments

**Please ensure that you have done the readings at the beginning of each week.**

**Midterm (25%) and Final Exam (50%) – Further instruction will be provided.**

**Paper Assignment (10%) - Paper topics and further instructions will be posted on MyCourses. Please note that only the Course Professor can approve paper topics and deadline extensions.**

In accord with McGill University's [Charter of Students' Rights](#), students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French written work that is to be graded. This does not apply to courses in which acquiring proficiency in a language is one of the objectives.

Conformément à [la Charte des droits de l'étudiant](#) de l'Université McGill, chaque étudiant a le droit de soumettre en français ou en anglais tout travail écrit devant être noté, sauf dans le cas des cours dont l'un des objets est la maîtrise d'une langue.

**Conferences are mandatory.** You must register for a conference on Minerva. You **MUST** attend at least 5 out of 9 conference sessions. There are no make-ups, so if you miss one, then you've missed it.

- If you attend at least 5 conferences but say nothing, then your Conference grade will be a C.
- If you attend at least 5 conferences and make some good, though infrequent, contributions, showing that you have done the assigned readings, and raising some critical questions about them, then your Conference grade will be a B.
- If you attend at least 5 conferences, and regularly raise critical questions or challenges to a thesis presented in the readings and lectures, and engage in interpretive analysis of a text, then your Conference grade will be an A.
- If you attend at least 5 conferences, but you either repeatedly dominate discussion in an unhelpful manner or repeatedly lead the discussion off on a tangent, then your Conference grade will be a D or F.

## Other University and Course Policies

**MyCourses** - Students are responsible for checking class announcements made via this course's MyCourses page, and for any course content made available via MyCourses.

### **Policy on technology use during in-person lectures and conferences**

This is a manual note-taking lecture course. The use or display of any mobile computing or communications devices (including computers, recording devices, phones, iPads, or iPods) is strictly banned during class, except with the explicit permission of the instructor in exceptional cases.

Exceptions: Explicit permission for the use of a computer may be granted by the professor in particular circumstances for students for whom its use is justified to facilitate in-class note-taking or learning. You must receive explicit permission from the professor in such a case.

**No audio or video recording of any kind is permitted in class without the explicit permission of the Instructor.**

### **Academic Integrity**

McGill University values academic integrity. Therefore, all students must understand the meaning and consequences of cheating, plagiarism and other academic offences under the [Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures](#)” (Approved by Senate on 29 January 2003) (See [McGill’s guide to academic honesty](#) for more information).

L'université McGill attache une haute importance à l'honnêteté académique. Il incombe par conséquent à tous les étudiants de comprendre ce que l'on entend par tricherie, plagiat et autres infractions académiques, ainsi que les conséquences que peuvent avoir de telles actions, selon [le Code de conduite de l'étudiant et procédures disciplinaires](#) » (Énoncé approuvé par le Sénat le 29 janvier 2003) (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le [guide pour l'honnêteté académique de McGill](#).)

### **Policy on course material**

Copyright: © Instructor-generated course materials (e.g., powerpoint displays, handouts, notes, summaries, exam questions) are protected by law and may not be copied or distributed in any form or in any medium without explicit permission of the instructor. Note that copyright infringements can be subject to follow-up by the University under the Code of Student Conduct and Disciplinary Procedures.

### **Communication with the Professor and Teaching Assistant(s)**

The Teaching Assistant will lead the conferences, and do most of the grading of your assignments. You may speak to your TA or to the course professor during their office hours about any substantive questions you may have about the course material. Email is not an appropriate way to ask substantive questions.

### **Office for Students with Disabilities**

As the instructor of this course, I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you experience barriers to learning in this course, do not hesitate to discuss them with me and/or the [Office for Students with Disabilities](#). *Please remember that the OSD has no authority* to approve changes to course policies or assignment due dates or exam dates, to devise alternative assignments or waive course requirements. If you are unable to complete any course assignments or requirements for any reason, it is your responsibility to inform the Course Professor (and not just OSD or your TA) of your situation as soon as possible.

## Course Lecture, Reading, and Conference Schedule

**Please note that lectures and conferences are expected to be in-person. They will NOT be recorded.**

August 31 (1.5 hrs): Course Introduction

Sept 5, 7: International Anarchy (3 hrs lecture total)

- Thomas Hobbes, *The Leviathan*, Part I: Chapters 13-18, 21, 22, 29. Internet source: <http://socserv.mcmaster.ca/econ/ugcm/3ll3/hobbes/Leviathan.pdf>
- Charles R. Beitz, “International Relations as a State of Nature” in *Political Theory and International Relations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1979/1999), pp.12-66. McGill Libraries online.

Sept 12, 14: Civilizational and Racial Hierarchies (3 hrs lecture total)

- Francisco de Vitoria, Selections from *De Indis (On the American Indians)* and *De jure belli (On the Law of War)*, in *The Ethics of War: Classic and Contemporary Readings*, G. Reichberg, H. Syse and E. Begby eds. (Blackwell 2006), pp. 288-332. [MyCourses]
- Anna Julia Cooper, (Frances Richard Keller trans.) *Slavery and the French and Haitian Revolutionists* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, [1925]), pp. 101-115. [MyCourses]

Sept 19, 21: Kant on Cosmopolitan History, Progress, and Perpetual peace (2 hrs lecture, Conference 1 hour) - CONFERENCE 1

- Immanuel Kant, *Political Writings*
  - “Idea for a Universal History from a Cosmopolitan Perspective”
  - “An Answer to the Question: What is Enlightenment?”
  - “On the Common Saying: ‘This May be True in Theory, but It Does Not Apply in Practice’”
  - “Toward Perpetual Peace: A Philosophical Sketch”
  - “The Metaphysics of Morals, Doctrine of Right”

Sept 26: Colonial Alienation and Injustice (Lecture 1.5 hours, Conference 1 hour) - CONFERENCE 2

- Aimé Césaire, *Discourse on Colonialism* [book] (New York : Monthly Review Press, 2000).
- Lea Ypi, “What’s Wrong with Colonialism,” *Philosophy & Public Affairs*, 41 (2013): 158–191. McGill libraries online.

*Sept 28: Class cancelled*

Oct 3, 5: Self-determination and Decolonization (2 hrs lecture, Conference 1 hour) CONFERENCE 3

- Charles Mills, ‘Race and global justice,’ in *Empire, Race and Global Justice*, Duncan Bell ed. (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, pp. 94-119.
- Adom Getachew, *Worldmaking after Empire: The Rise and Fall of Self-Determination*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2019, Chapters 1 and 2. McGill libraries online.
- Iris Marion Young, ‘Two concepts of self-determination.’ In S. May, T. Modood, & J. Squires (Eds.), *Ethnicity, Nationalism, and Minority Rights*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004, pp. 176-196 or Chapter 8. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511489235.009. McGill libraries online.
- Catherine Lu, Chapter 11, in *Empire, Race and Global Justice*

October 10: Fall break – no classes – No conferences this week

Oct 12: Global Justice (Lectures 1.5 hours)

- John Rawls, *The Law of Peoples* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), pp. 3-38, 59-78. McGill libraries online.  
<https://mcgill.on.worldcat.org/oclc/680216258>
- Katrina Forrester, Chapter 1, in *Empire, Race and Global Justice*.
- Margaret Kohn, Chapter 7, in *Empire, Race and Global Justice*.

Oct 17: **Course Mid-term** (80 minutes) – in-class IN PERSON (No conferences this week)

Oct 19: Class cancelled

Oct 24, 26: Human rights (2 hrs lecture, Conference 1 hour, Video 1 hr) – CONFERENCE 4

- Charles R. Beitz, “Human Rights as a Common Concern,” *American Political Science Review* 95, 2 (June 2001), pp. 269-282. McGill Libraries online.
- Bonny Ibhawoh, *Human Rights in Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017), Chapter 1, pp. 1-29. McGill Libraries online.
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948): <http://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/>
- Samuel Moyn, Chapter 2, in *Empire, Race and Global Justice*.
- Video lecture (watch on your own outside of class): Samuel Moyn: [The Last Utopia: Human Rights in History](#) (2009)

Oct 31, Nov 2: War (2 hours lecture, Conference 1 hour) – CONFERENCE 5

- John Stuart Mill, ‘A few words on non-intervention,’ in *The Collected Works of John Stuart Mill, Volume XXI - Essays on Equality, Law, and Education*, ed. John M. Robson, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1984). Internet source: [https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/255#lf0223-21\\_head\\_042](https://oll.libertyfund.org/titles/255#lf0223-21_head_042)
- Tarak Barkawi, Tarak. “War and Decolonization in Ukraine.” *New Perspectives*, vol. 30, no. 4, 2022, pp. 317–322., <https://doi.org/10.1177/2336825X221132935>. McGill libraries online.
- Boyd van Dijk, ‘Internationalizing Civil and Colonial Wars,’ *Preparing for War: The Making of the 1949 Geneva Conventions* (Oxford, 2022), <https://doi.org/10.1093/oso/9780198868071.003.0004>. McGill libraries online.
- Kim Hutchings, Chapter 9, in *Empire, Race and Global Justice*.

**Paper due: November 14**

Nov 7, 9: Poverty and Global Justice (2 hrs lecture, Conference 1 hour) – CONFERENCE 6

- Monique Deveaux, *Poverty, Solidarity, and Poor-Led Social Movements* (New York, 2021; online edn, Oxford Academic, 21 Oct. 2021), Chapters 2 and 4. McGill Libraries online.
- Margaret Kohn, “Postcolonialism and Global Justice,” *Journal of Global Ethics* 9, 2 (2013): 187-200. McGill Libraries online.
- United Nations Sustainable Development Goals Progress Report 2023, pp. 1-29: <https://unstats.un.org/sdgs/report/2023/The-Sustainable-Development-Goals-Report-2023.pdf>

Nov 14, 16: Settler Colonialism and Indigenous Peoples (2 hrs lecture, Conference 1 hour) –  
CONFERENCE 7

- Glen Sean Coulthard, *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (University of Minnesota Press, 2014), Conclusion, pp 151-179. McGill Libraries online.
- Robert Nichols, Chapter 10, in *Empire Race and Global Justice*.
- *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. Online:  
[http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS\\_en.pdf](http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/documents/DRIPS_en.pdf)

Nov 21, 23: World State Formation and Domination – (2 hrs lecture, Conference 1 hour)  
CONFERENCE 8 (last conference)

- Alexander Wendt, “Why a World State is Inevitable,” *European Journal of International Relations* 9, 4 (2003): 491-542. McGill Libraries online.
- B.S. Chimni, “International Institutions Today: An Imperial Global State in the Making,” *European Journal of International Law* 14, 1 (2004): 1-37. McGill Libraries online.
- Inés Valdez, Chapter 5, in *Empire, Race and Global Justice*

Nov 28: Climate Justice (Lecture 1.5 hours) – NO CONFERENCE

- Bradley C. Parks and J. Timmons Roberts, ‘[Climate Change, Social Theory and Justice](#),’ *Theory, Culture & Society* 2010, 27:2-3, 134-166.
- Henry Shue, ‘Human Rights, Climate Change, and the Trillionth Ton,’ and ‘Climate Hope: Implementing the Exit Strategy’ in *Climate Justice: Vulnerability and Protection* (Oxford 2014), Chapters 16 and 17.

Nov 30: Follows a Monday schedule, no class

Dec 5: Course Review (1.5 hours)

**Final Exam: In-person in official exam period**