THE POLITICS OF IDENTITY

Course Description

The course examines various features of the politics of identity and different theoretical approaches to understanding identity politics with reference to experiences in different world regions. It explores the politics of nationalism and its engagements with race, ethnicity, gender and religion; the formation and recognition of cultural difference; mobilization and conflict along identity boundaries; and the efforts of republics to engage with ascriptive inequalities with long histories. The course is primarily meant for graduate students in the political science department, but is also open to interested graduate students in other departments in the social sciences and humanities.

Readings

The following books are available for purchase at the bookstore:


Some readings, marked with an (M), are available on mycourses. A reader is available for purchase at the bookstore. It contains the required readings that are neither from the above books nor on mycourses. All required readings are also on reserve at Redpath. The list of material for the course available at the library can be accessed at http://catalogue.mcgill.ca/F/?func=find-b&find_code=wcn&request=poli+643&local_base=u-course_reserves. The readings on mycourses can also be accessed at this site.
Course Requirements

Students are required to write a note (three to four pages long, double spaced and typewritten) on a substantial amount of the required readings for any week of their choice; participate actively in class discussion; make two class presentations - one on some of the required readings for a week of their choice, and another regarding their term papers; and write a 20 to 25 page research paper. Students should choose the readings about which they plan to make class presentations early in the term. The paper should discuss one or more important cases of identity politics based on some empirical research using library resources and perhaps internet resources, and in light of major relevant theoretical approaches. The paper topic may be chosen in consultation with the instructor. The paper will be due on December 1.

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 (see http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity 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 des procédures disciplinaires (pour de plus amples renseignements, veuillez consulter le site http://www.mcgill.ca/integrity).

In accord with McGill University’s Charter of Students’ Rights, students in this course have the right to submit in English or in French any written work that is to be graded. 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 note.

If you have a disability please contact the instructor to arrange a time to discuss your situation. It would be helpful if you contact the Office for Students with Disabilities at 514-398-6009 before you do this.

Grading

The grades will be determined in the following way:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Note on the reading</td>
<td>20 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Presentations &amp; Class Participation</td>
<td>20 %</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper</td>
<td>60 %</td>
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Aside from being worth 20% of the marks, class participation will influence the grades in cases where students are on the borderline between two letter grades.

Sept 8: Introduction to the Course
A. Nationalism

I Certain Major Theories of Nationalism


II Nation’s Engagements with Race, Gender, Religion and Other Fragments


B. Pluralism and Its Recognition

I Identities, Traditions


Crawford Young, “Ethnicity and the Colonial and Post-Colonial State in Africa” in Paul R. Brass, ed., *Ethnic Groups and the State*, p. 59-93


II The Recognition of Cultural Specificity


C. Identities, Mobilization and Conflict


Horowitz, Ethnic Groups in Conflict, p. 443-471, 563-600

D. Republics and Ascriptive Inequalities


Nov 3: Marc Galanter, Competing Equalities: Law and the Backward Classes in India (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 7-17


Marc Galanter, Competing Equalities: Law and the Backward Classes in India (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1984), p. 41-117, 547-567


**Paper Presentations: November 10, 17, 24**

**Papers Due: Dec 1**