

**POLI 643**  
**Winter 2024**  
**Friday 2:35 – 5:25 p.m.**  
**Leacock 541**

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## **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 ascriptive inequalities with long histories. The course is primarily meant for graduate students in the political science department; but interested graduate students in other departments in the social sciences and humanities may also take it.

### **Readings**

The following books are available for purchase at the bookstore:

- Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 2006)
- Anthony W. Marx, *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa, the United States, and Brazil* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998)
- Narendra Subramanian, *Nation and Family: Personal Law, Cultural Pluralism, and Gendered Citizenship in India* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014)
- Kanchan Chandra, ed. *Constructivist Theories of Ethnic Politics* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012)
- Melissa Nobles, *Shades of Citizenship: Race and the Census in Modern Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000)

These books are also available as e-books through the McGill library and links to them are provided on MyCourses. Electronic copies of most other readings are also available through MyCourses. Links to the others are also provided on MyCourses, through the McGill library catalogue. All the readings can thus be done online or using downloaded readings if you wish.

## **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, due the Friday after these readings are discussed in class; participate actively in class discussion; make two presentations - one on some of the required readings for a week of their choice, and another regarding their term papers; respond to another student's presentation on some readings; and write a 20- to 25-page research paper. All written assignments should be submitted in word format, doubled-spaced, on 12-point Times Roman font with 1" margins. Two students will share the presentations on the readings on most weeks when readings are discussed. The presentations on the readings should each be about 20 minutes long, and the responses to another student's presentation should be 10 to 12 minutes long. (Presentations that cover one reading will be made at one stretch followed by a response and discussion. Those that concern two or more readings that are not closely conceptually connected may be best done in two parts, each of which will be followed by a response and discussion.) I will comment on the readings and each presentation and response for 7 to 10 minutes. Then, we will have an open discussion of those readings for 30 to 40 minutes. After a ten-minute break, we will have a similar presentation, response, and discussion of the second set of readings for the week. Students should choose the readings about which they plan to make class presentations and the presentation to which they will respond early in the term.

The paper should discuss one or more important cases of identity politics based on empirical research using library resources and perhaps internet resources, and in the light of major relevant theoretical approaches. The paper topic should be chosen in consultation with the instructor. A paper proposal 3 pages long accompanied by a one-page bibliography should be submitted on MyCourses by February 18, 5 p.m. It should indicate your research topic and research question(s), provide a brief critical review of the relevant literatures, and outline your planned analysis. During the classes from March 1 to April 12, presenters should outline their ideas for their research papers in twenty to twenty-five minutes each. The presentations should indicate the paper topic, provide a critical analysis of the relevant literature (both on the specific topic and the broader themes), outline the main relevant empirical trends, and sketch a tentative line of argumentation. The later in the term the presentation is made the more complete the ideas would be expected to be. There will be two or three paper presentations per class through these weeks. The other students and I will raise questions and offer constructive criticisms and suggestions, and the presenter will have the opportunity to respond to the questions and comments. We will allocate 20 to 25 minutes for the discussion of each paper presentation; and take a 5-minute break after the discussion of each paper. The papers presented before the last class should be sent to me through MyCourses by 5 p.m., Friday, April 12, the day of the last class. The papers presented at the last class may be sent a week later by 5 p.m., Friday, April 19.

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 noté.

I endeavor to provide an inclusive learning environment. However, if you have a disability or experience barriers to learning and anticipate problems related to the format or requirements of the course, please contact me to discuss your situation and ensure your full participation in the course. It would be helpful if you also contact the **Office for Students with Disabilities** at 514-398-6009. If you have difficulty affording food or if you lack a safe and stable living space, I encourage you to contact the **Dean of Students** who can connect you with support services. If you feel comfortable doing so, please let me know as well so we can discuss how I can best support your learning. Please try to reach out for support when you need it; many **resources** are available on-campus, off-campus and online.

### **Grading**

The grades will be determined in the following way:

Note on the reading	15%
Presentation on Readings	10%
Response to another student's presentation	5%
Other Class Participation	10%
Paper Proposal	5%
Paper Presentation	10%
Paper	45%

Aside from being worth 35% of the marks, class participation (Presentation on Readings, Response to another student's presentation, Other Class Participation, and Paper Presentation) will influence the grades in cases where students are on the borderline between two letter grades. "Other class participation" refers to all contributions other than your own presentations and responses to another student's presentation: i.e., contributions to the discussion of the readings and of other students' presentations and responses.

### **Considerations Relevant to all Courses**

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### **Circumstances through this term**

As the pandemic is not over and a new variant appears to have arrived, you are welcome to take due care of your health and that of your fellow-students by wearing procedural masks when entering and leaving the class and when seated in the classroom. I ask for everyone's collaboration to ensure effective learning under whatever constraints we may face due to the pandemic. As the seminars focus on discussion, they will not be recorded. You are expected to attend all classes in person if this is at all possible. In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control especially related to the ongoing pandemic, the course format, content and/or evaluation scheme may be changed. In the event of extraordinary circumstances beyond the University's control especially related to the ongoing pandemic, the format, content and/or evaluation scheme in this course may be changed.

### **Netiquette**

The University recognizes the importance of maintaining teaching spaces that are respectful and inclusive for all involved.

## **Text-Matching**

Please note that to support academic integrity, your assignments may be submitted to text-matching software within MyCourses.

## **Course Evaluations**

Course evaluations are one of the ways that McGill works to maintain and improve the quality of courses and the student's learning experience. You will be notified by e-mail when the evaluations are available. Please note that a minimum number of responses must be received for results to be available to students.

## **Indigenous Land Statement**

McGill University is on land which has long served as a site of meeting and exchange amongst Indigenous peoples, including the Haudenosaunee and Anishinabeg nations. We acknowledge and thank the diverse Indigenous people whose footsteps have marked this territory on which peoples of the world now gather.

L'Université McGill est sur un emplacement qui a longtemps servi de lieu de rencontre et d'échange entre les peuples autochtones, y compris les nations Haudenosaunee et Anishinabeg. Nous reconnaissons et remercions les divers peuples autochtones dont les pas ont marqué ce territoire sur lequel les peuples du monde entier se réunissent maintenant.

## **Readings**

The readings combine analysis and empirical description and vary in their level of conceptual complexity and style. The readings for each week between January 12 and February 23 range between 210 pages (January 12) and 290 pages (February 16 and 23). No readings are assigned for the six other weeks when I will introduce you to the course (on January 5) or students will make presentations about their papers, and we will discuss the ideas outlined (from March 1 to April 12). On weeks when there are less readings such as the weeks of January 5, 12, and 25, you may choose to do some of the readings to be discussed in later weeks.

Jan 5: Introduction to the Course

### **A. Nationalism**

#### **I Certain Major Theories of Nationalism**

Jan 12: Harry Mylonas and Maya Tudor, 2021. "Nationalism: What We Know and what We Still need to Know." *Annual Review of Political Science*, 24, p. 109-124.

Ernest Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1983), p. 1-7, 19-52

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York: Verso, 2006), p. 1-140.

Anthony D. Smith, "The Ethnic Sources of Nationalism" in Michael E. Brown, ed., *Ethnic Conflict and International Security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), p. 27-41

## **II Nation's Engagements with Race, Gender, Religion and Other Fragments**

Jan 19: Anthony W. Marx, *Making Race and Nation: A Comparison of South Africa, the United States, and Brazil* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 1-64, 77-79, 81-83, 120-157, 178-193, 217-249, 264-278

Deniz Kandiyoti, "Identity and Its Discontents: Women and the Nation", *Millennium: Journal of International Studies*, 20.3 (1991), p. 429-443

Partha Chatterjee, *The Nation and Its Fragments: Colonial and Postcolonial Histories* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), p. 3-34, 200-239

Maya Tudor and Dan Slater, "Nationalist Parties and Inclusive Ideologies in India and Indonesia" in Nancy G. Bermeo and Deborah J. Yashar, *Parties, Movements and Democracy in the Developing World* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2016), p. 28-60

Jonathan Fox, "The Secular-Religious Competition Perspective in Comparative Perspective", *Politics and Religion*, 12.3 (Sept 2019), p. 524-534

## **B. Pluralism and Its Recognition**

### **I Identities, Traditions**

Jan 26: Terence Ranger, "The Invention of Tradition in Colonial Africa" in Eric J. Hobsbawm & Terence Ranger, eds., *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1983), p. 211-262

Crawford Young, "Africanism, Nationalism, and Ethnicity: The Ambiguous Triple Helix of Identity" in *The Postcolonial State in Africa: Fifty Years of Independence, 1960-2010* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012), p. 291-333

Mahmood Mamdani, *Citizen and Subject: Contemporary Africa and the Legacy of Colonialism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996), p. 3-32

Rogers Brubaker, "Ethnicity, Race, and Nationalism", *Annual Review of Sociology* (2009), p. 29-42

Edward E. Telles, *Race in Another America: The Significance of Skin Color in Brazil* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2004), p. 1-23, 78-106.

Mounira M. Charrad, "Gender in the Middle East: Islam, state, agency." *Annual Review of Sociology* 37 (2011), p. 417-437.

Mounira M. Charrad, *States and Women's Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 2001), p. 1-13, 28-50.

## **II Ethnic Power Sharing and Multiculturalism**

Feb 2: Arend Lijphart, *Democracy in Plural Societies: A Comparative Exploration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1977), p. 1-3, 6-52

Arend Lijphart, 2018. "Consociationalism after half a century" in Michaelina Jakala et al. eds., *Consociationalism and power-sharing in Europe: Arend Lijphart's theory of political accommodation*. Palgrave MacMillan, p. xv-xvi, 1-9.

Donald L. Horowitz, "Ethnic Power Sharing: Three Big Problems," *Journal of Democracy* 25.2 (April 2014), p. 5-20

Will Kymlicka, *Multiculturalism: Success, Failure, and the Future*. Transatlantic Council on Migration, Migration Policy Institute, February 2012, p. 1-31.

Ayelet Shachar, "On Citizenship and Multicultural Vulnerability," *Political Theory* (2000), p. 64-89.

Narendra Subramanian, *Nation and Family: Personal Law, Cultural Pluralism, and Gendered Citizenship in India* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2014), p. 1-8, 18-90, 137-142, 262-296

Mala Htun and S. Laurel Weldon. "Religious Power, the State, Women's Rights, and Family Law," *Politics & Gender* 11.3 (2015), p. 451-477.

Narendra Subramanian, *Nation and Family: Personal Law, Cultural Pluralism, and Gendered Citizenship in India, with a New Introduction*, revised edition (London and New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis, 2022), p. xv-xxii.

## **C. Identities, Mobilization and Conflict**

Feb 9: Ashutosh Varshney, "Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflict" in Carles Boix & Susan C. Stokes, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of Comparative Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p. 274-294

Kanchan Chandra, ed., *Constructivist Theories of Ethnic Politics* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), Ch. 1 "Introduction" (selections), Ch. 2 "What is Ethnic Identity: A

Minimalist Definition”, Ch. 4 “How Ethnic Identities Change” (selections, p. 2-9, 18-26, 38-46, 51-96, 132-149, 152-165, 170-178 (in the pdf copies of the e-book chapters, these are: Ch. 1, p. 1-8, 17-25, 37-44, Ch. 2, Ch. 4, p. 1-18, 21-35, 39-48)

[**Note:** The chapters of Ferree, Petersen, and Wilkinson are available through the same link]

Karen Ferree, “How Fluid is Fluid? The Mutability of Ethnic Identities and Electoral Volatility in Africa” in Kanchan Chandra, ed., *Constructivist Theories of Ethnic Politics*, p. 312-340.

Roger Petersen, “Identity, Rationality, and Emotion in the Processes of State Disintegration and Reconstruction” in Kanchan Chandra, ed., *Constructivist Theories of Ethnic Politics*, p. 387-421.

Barry R. Posen, “The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict” in Michael E. Brown, ed., *Ethnic Conflict and International Security* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2018), p. 103-124.

Stuart Kaufman, "Symbolic Politics or Rational Choice: Testing Theories of Extreme Ethnic Violence," *International Security*, 30.4 (Spring 2006), p. 45-86.

Steven I. Wilkinson, “A Constructivist Model of Ethnic Riots” in Kanchan Chandra, ed., *Constructivist Theories of Ethnic Politics*, p. 359-386.

#### **D. Republics and Ascriptive Inequalities**

Feb 16: Kimberley S. Johnson, “The Color Line and the State: Race and American Political Development” in Richard Valelley et. al., eds., *The Oxford Handbook of American Political Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), p. 593-624

Gerald D. Berreman, “Caste in India and the United States”, *American Journal of Sociology*, 66.2 (1960), p. 120-127.

Rupa Viswanath, “Caste and Untouchability” in Brian A. Hatcher, ed., *Hinduism in the Modern World* (New York & London: Routledge: 2016), p. 257-274

Melissa Nobles, *Shades of Citizenship: Race and the Census in Modern Politics* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2000), p. 1-84, 179-184

Nicholas B. Dirks, *Castes of Mind: Colonialism and the Making of Modern India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2001), p. 3-18, 43-52, 79-80, 198-227

Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 1999), p. 117-180, 230-234

Richard M. Valelly, *The Two Reconstructions: The Struggle for Black Enfranchisement*. (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004), p. 1-22

**Feb 18: Paper Proposals due**



Feb 23: Richard M. Valelly, *The Two Reconstructions*, p. 199-223, 225-250.

Paul Frymer, *Uneasy Alliances: Race and Party Competition in America* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, 2010), p. 3-23, 87-119

Robert C. Lieberman, *Shifting the Color Line: Race and the American Welfare State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1998), p. 1-22

Kevin Gaines, "The End of the Second Reconstruction", *Modern American History*. 1.1 (March 2018), p. 113-119.

Christopher Sebastian Parker, "An American Paradox: Progress of Regress? BLM, Race, and Black Politics." *Perspectives on Politics*. 20(4), December 2022, p. 1167-9.

Michael T. Heaney, "Who are Black Lives Matter Activists? Niche Realization in a Multimovement Environment." *Perspectives on Politics*. 20(4), December 2022, p. 1362-1385.

Oliver Mendelsohn & Marika Vicziany, *The Untouchables: Subordination, Poverty and the State in Modern India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p. 118-175

Christophe Jaffrelot, "Caste and the Rise of Marginalized Groups" in Sumit Ganguly, Larry J. Diamond & Marc Plattner, eds. *The State of India's Democracy* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2007), p. 67-85.

Kanchan Chandra, "Elite Incorporation in Multi-Ethnic Societies", *Asian Survey*, XL: 5 (October 2000), p. 836-855

Narendra Subramanian, "From Bondage to Citizenship: Dalit and African American Mobilization in Two Deeply Unequal Regions", *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 62.4 (Oct 2020), p. 770–809.

### **Reading Break: March 4 - 8**

**March 1, March 15, March 22, March 29, April 5, April 12: Paper Presentations and Discussion**

**Papers Due: April 12 (for papers presented until April 5)  
April 19 (for papers presented on April 12)**