

POS 349: Contentious Politics¹



***Make sure to check Brightspace for the most up-to-date version of the syllabus**

Dates of course: August 30, 2021- December 10, 2021

Instructor: Charmaine N. Willis

Contact: charmaine.willis@maine.edu

Email hours: You will generally receive a reply from me within a few hours, but any e-mail correspondence after 7 pm may not receive a response until the next day.

Virtual (Zoom) office hours: Th: 11 am-12 pm and by appointment

Description: The study of contentious politics focuses on politics outside of the normal boundaries of institutionalized politics. From protests and social movements to rebellions and revolutions, contentious politics have often led to major shifts in domestic political orders. This course will examine some key questions in the study of contentious politics such as: why do people join protests? Under what conditions do social movements emerge? When are social revolutions successful? Why do groups choose to engage in political violence in some instances and non-violent action in others? We will explore answers to these questions using contentious politics theories as well as historical and contemporary cases both in the US and abroad.

¹ This course is influenced by and benefits from syllabi and materials from Victor Asal, Nakissa Jahanbani, Keith Preble, Keon Weigold, and Meredith Weiss.

Prerequisites: POS 241: Introduction to Comparative Politics or approval of instructor

Learning Objectives

This course endeavors not only to help students learn about contentious politics, but also skills critical to success in college. To that end, the learning objectives for this course include:

- Grasp key concepts and theories in the study of contentious politics and comparative politics more broadly
- Apply these key concepts and theories to real world cases.
- Distill key ideas from academic articles and discuss them with others.
- Construct and execute an original research project over the course of the semester.
- Communicate one's research to others.

Course Policies

Students Accessibility Services Statement

If you have a disability for which you may be requesting an accommodation, please contact Student Accessibility Services, 121 East Annex, 581.2319, as early as possible in the term. Students who have already been approved for accommodations by SAS and have a current accommodation letter should meet with me privately as soon as possible.

Sexual Discrimination Reporting

The University of Maine is committed to making campus a safe place for students. Because of this commitment, if you tell a teacher about an experience of **sexual assault, sexual harassment, stalking, relationship abuse (dating violence and domestic violence), sexual misconduct or any form of gender discrimination** involving members of the campus, **your teacher is required to report** this information to Title IX Student Services or the Office of Equal Opportunity.

If you want to talk in confidence to someone about an experience of sexual discrimination, please contact these resources:

For *confidential resources on campus*: **Counseling Center: 207-581-1392** or **Cutler Health Center: at 207-581-4000**.

For *confidential resources off campus*: **Rape Response Services: 1-800-871-7741** or **Partners for Peace: 1-800-863-9909**.

Other resources: The resources listed below can offer support but may have to report the incident to others who can help:

For *support services on campus*: **Title IX Student Services: 207-581-1406, Office of Community Standards: 207-581-1409, University of Maine Police: 207-581-4040 or 911**. Or [see the OSVP website for a complete list of services](#).

Religious Holidays

The University of Maine recognizes that when students are observing significant religious holidays, some may be unable to attend classes or labs, study, take tests, or work on other assignments. If they provide adequate notice (at least one week and longer if at all possible), these students are allowed to make up course requirements as long as this effort does not create an unreasonable burden upon the instructor, department or University. At the discretion of the instructor, such coursework could be due before or after the examination or assignment. No adverse or prejudicial effects shall result to a student's grade for the examination, study, or course requirement on the day of religious observance. The student shall not be marked absent from the class due to observing a significant religious holiday. In the case of an internship or clinical, students should refer to the applicable policy in place by the employer or site.

Academic Honesty

Academic honesty is very important. It is dishonest to cheat on exams, to copy term papers, to submit papers written by another person, to fake experimental results, or to copy or reword parts of books or articles into your own papers without appropriately citing the source. Students committing or aiding in any of these violations may be given failing grades for an assignment or for an entire course, at the discretion of the instructor. In addition to any academic action taken by an instructor, these violations are also subject to action under the University of Maine Student Conduct Code. The maximum possible sanction under the student conduct code is dismissal from the University. Please see the University of Maine System's Academic Integrity Policy listed in the Board Policy Manual as Policy 314: <https://www.maine.edu/board-of-trustees/policy-manual/section-314/>

Course Schedule Disclaimer (Disruption Clause)

In the event of an extended disruption of normal classroom activities (due to COVID-19 or other long-term disruptions), the format for this course may be modified to enable its completion within its programmed time frame. In that event, you will be provided an addendum to the syllabus that will supersede this version.

Respect for Diversity

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, and culture. Your suggestions are encouraged and appreciated. Please let me know ways to improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups.²

² Respect for Diversity statement from <https://www.brown.edu/sheridan/teaching-learning-resources/inclusive-teaching/statements>

Course materials, grading, course structure, and assignments

- **Texts:** All texts for this course can be found on Brightspace.
 - One of our primary course materials is *Contentious Politics* by Tilly and Tarrow. It is **not** required for purchase but below is the bibliographic information for those interested in purchasing:
 - Tilly, Charles, and Sidney Tarrow. *Contentious Politics*. 2nd edition. New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2015.

- **Rubric:**
 - 930- 1000 points: A
 - 900- 920 points: A-
 - 870- 890 points: B+
 - 830- 860 points: B
 - 800- 820 points: B-
 - 770- 790 points: C+
 - 730- 760 points: C
 - 700- 720 points: C-
 - 670- 690 points: D+
 - 630- 660 points: D
 - 600- 620 points: D-
 - 590 points and below: F

- **Late Penalties and Missed Assignments:** It is imperative that you do not fall behind on assignments. Assignments should be submitted by 11:59 pm the day that they are due via Brightspace. After that, 10% will be deducted from the maximum possible score for each day that the assignment is late (including weekends). Missed assignments will receive '0' points.
 - That said, life happens. **One of the most important skills to develop in college is communication, including with your faculty.** To that end, if you foresee needing extra time on an assignment or have any other difficulties that affect your performance in the course, I encourage you to email me (the sooner, the better).

- **Grade Appeals:** Students who feel that their assignments have been graded incorrectly should follow a three-step procedure. First, the student carefully reads the assignment and identifies the precise problem(s) with the grading. Second, the student sends a written appeal via email explaining why their answer was appropriate to the instructor; you must wait **24 hours** after receiving your grade to submit an appeal. Third, the instructor will regrade the assignment, taking the appeal into account. Note that the instructor may assign a higher or lower grade following such an appeal.

- **Structure:** the course will be conducted asynchronously through Brightspace.
 - Please be sure that you can access Brightspace, and that all emails and announcements that I send through Brightspace are getting to an inbox that you check regularly.
 - Technical support: tel: 207.581.2506; email: help@maine.edu
 - <https://umaine.edu/it/umaine-brightspace-101-for-students/>



- **Assignments:** this course will be reading and writing intensive. All writing assignments should be in a 12-pt standard font (ex. Times New Roman, Calibri, Garamond) with normal (1") margins. Writing assignments should have proper citations as necessary using a recognized citation style (MLA, APA, Chicago). All assignments are submitted through Brightspace unless otherwise noted. You are expected to complete all the reading assignments by their due dates and be prepared to discuss those readings with your classmates and with myself.

The primary course learning activities will be reading the required readings for each week, actively participating in discussions about those readings, quizzes, an op-ed, and a semester-long research project:

- **Introduction (50 points for completion):** During Week 1, I ask everyone to give us an introduction about themselves so that we can get to know each other a little before diving into the study of contentious politics. More information about this assignment will be provided on Brightspace under Discussions, Week 1- Introduction. Due by **September 5 at 11:59 pm.**
- **Quizzes on Lecture Videos (20 points each; 200 points total):** for most weeks there will be a quiz associated with the video lectures. There are 14 quizzes in total, **only your top ten quiz scores will count towards your quiz grade.**
- **Discussion Board Participation (25 points for each week except Weeks 1, 2, and 12; 300 points total):** At the beginning of each week, I will post a question about the topic and the readings in the discussion thread for that week. The purpose of the discussion board is for us to begin a conversation about the topics discussed in the readings. You will be divided into smaller discussion groups using discussion boards on Brightspace to discuss these questions. You are expected to participate by posting **at least two posts** to your group's discussion board. **The initial post should be at least 200 words and must be made by Friday at 11:59 pm of that week; the other post should be in response to a group member's posts and approximately 100 words.**

Most of the initial post should be your own words and ideas, but make sure to cite (informally) where you refer to the readings. For example, "Tilly and Tarrow said that social movements..." Initial posts should focus *primarily* on the week's readings.

I am more interested in thoughtful responses that demonstrate that you have done the reading than "correct" answers to the questions I pose. You must post an answer to this

question **and** a substantive response to a classmate's post (i.e. **not** simply "I agree", "I disagree", "yes", "no", etc.). Ways to respond to a classmate's post may include (but are not limited to) asking a follow-up question or bringing in a real-world example to support your agreement or disagreement with their post. I will respond to a few students' posts every week at random; if I don't respond to your post in a given week, it does *not* mean that your post was not good.

Points will be lost in the following ways: (1) failure to participate in the week's discussion; (2) making posts that plagiarizes others' ideas or (3) by failing to maintain the civility and decorum expected of in academic discussion. Points will not be lost for making statements, comments, or critiques that the instructor disagrees with or for disagreeing with posts or responses that the instructor has made. Rather, you are encouraged to be willing to engage in an active academic discourse with your fellow students and the instructor.

- ***Op-Ed and Pitch (50 points for submission of pitch, 100 points for op-ed; 150 points total):*** an important skill in political science is making an argument with supporting evidence. To that end, you are asked to write an op-ed ("**o**pposite the **e**ditorial page") on any topic related to contentious politics of your choosing. This assignment is broken into two parts. By the end of Week 4, you will submit a 2-3 sentence "pitch" describing the topic you will write about; you will receive 50 points for submitting the pitch by **September 26 at 11:59 pm**. The final op-ed should be 700-800 words long (about 3 pages, double spaced) and submitted **October 31 by 11:59 pm**. More information about this assignment will be available on Brightspace during Week 1.
- ***Know a Social Movement (50 points for submission of pitch, 100 points for script, 100 points for video, 50 points for peer reviews (2 reviews for 25 points each); 300 points total):*** the major research project for this course will be to research a social movement of your choosing and to present information about the movement (using a set of criteria that I will provide) in a recorded video lecture. **You cannot write about the same movement for both the op-ed and this assignment.** More information about this assignment will be available on Brightspace by the end of Week 4. This assignment consists of four components:
 - By the end of Week 10 you will submit a 2-3 sentence "pitch" describing the topic you will write about; you will receive 50 points for submitting the pitch by **November 7 at 11:59 pm**.
 - At the *beginning* of Week 14 (**November 29 at 11:59 pm**) you will submit a draft of the script for your video; the draft will receive a grade out of 100 points.
 - By the end of the Week 15 (**December 12 at 11:59 pm**) you will submit your video lecture of your social movement; it will receive a grade out of 100 points.
 - By the end of the day on **December 17 at 11:59 pm**, you will submit reviews of two (2) peers' videos using a template that I provide.

Work, work, work, work, work, work (tentative schedule):

| <i>Week</i> | <i>Topic</i> | <i>Readings and Assignments</i> |
|--|---|---|
| Week 1: August 30 | Introductions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Introduction due by 11:59 pm September 5</i> • Hoover Green, "How to Read for Political Science" • Pacheco-Vega: "Finding the most relevant information in a paper when reading" • Pacheco-Vega: "Writing synthetic notes of journal articles and book chapters" |
| Week 2: September 6 | Introduction to Contentious Politics and Social Movements | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 1 • Tilly and Tarrow (2015): "Making Claims" • Tilly and Tarrow (2015): "Social Movements" • Della Porta (2020): "Building Bridges: Social Movements and Civil Society in Times of Crisis" |
| Week 3: September 13 <i>Last day to drop classes for refund</i> | Making Sense of Contentious Politics | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 2 • Discussion Posts • Lim (2016): "Thinking Theoretically in Comparative Politics" • Tilly and Tarrow (2015): "How to Analyze Contention" • Gurr (2011): "Why Men Rebel Redux: How Valid are its Arguments 40 years On?" |
| Week 4: September 20 | Rationality and Collective Action | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 3 • Discussion Posts • <i>Op-ed pitch due by 11:59 pm September 26</i> • Olson (1971): "A Theory of Groups and Organizations" • Chong (1991): "Selective Incentives and Reputational Concerns" |
| Week 5: September 27 | Resource Mobilization and Networks | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 4 • Discussion Posts • McCarthy and Zald (1977): "Resource Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory" • Eltantawy and Wiest (2011): "Social Media During the Egyptian Revolution: Reconsidering Resource Mobilization Theory" • Larson et al. (2019): "Social Networks and Protest Participation: Evidence from 130 Million Twitter Users" |
| Week 6: October 4 | Political Opportunity Structures | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 5 • Discussion Posts |

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| | <i>Guest lecturer: Dr. Keith Preble, University at Albany</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Opp (2009): “Political Opportunity Structures, Protest, and Social Movements” • Yeo (2011): “Anti-Base Movements and the Security Consensus” • Jacobson (2014): “Addiopizzo: The Grassroots Campaign Making Life Hell for the Sicilian Mafia” |
| Week 7: October 11 <i>Fall Break: October 11-12</i> | Structure and Regime Type | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 6 • Discussion Posts • Tilly and Tarrow (2015): “Democracy, Undemocracy, and Change” • Tilly and Tarrow (2015): “Contention in Hybrid Regimes” • Fu (2017): “Disguised Collective Action in China” |
| Week 8: October 18 | Framing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 7 • Discussion Posts • Zald (1996): “Culture, Ideology, and Strategic Framing” • Snow et al. (2019): “The Framing Perspective on Social Movements: Its Conceptual Roots and Architecture” • Ayoub and Chetaille (2020): “Movement and countermovement interaction and instrumental framing in a multi-level world” |
| Week 9: October 25 | Collective Identity | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 8 • Discussion Posts • <i>Op-ed due by 11:59 pm October 31</i> • Opp (2009): “Collective Identity and Social Movement Activity” • Flesher Fominaya (2010): “Collective Identity in Social Movements” • Yagenovia and Garcia (2009): “Indigenous People’s Struggles Against Transnational Mining Companies in Guatemala: The Sipakapa People vs GoldCorp Mining Company” |
| Week 10: November 1 | Transnationalism | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 9 • Discussion Posts • <i>Know a Social Movement pitch due by 11:59 pm November 7</i> • Tilly and Tarrow (2015): “Transnational Contention” • Keck and Sikkink (1998): “Transnational Advocacy Networks in International and Regional Politics” |

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| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varagur (2020): “Black Lives Matter in Indonesia, Too” |
| Week 11: November 8 <i>Veterans Day:</i> <i>November 11</i> | Evaluating Movement Success <i>Guest lecturer: Dr. Kimberly Turner, Harvard University</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 10 • Discussion Posts • Giugni (1981): “Was it Worth the Effort? The Outcomes and Consequences of Social Movements” • Gamson (1990): “The Meaning of Success” |
| Week 12: November 15 | Tactics <i>Guest lecturer: Dr. Injeong Hwang, Sunkyunkwan University</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 11 • Discussion Posts • Alimi (2016): “Repertoires of Contention” • Stephan and Chenoweth (2008): “Why Civil Resistance Works” • Hwang and Willis (2020): “Protest by candlelight: A comparative analysis of candlelight vigils in South Korea” |
| Week 13: November 22 <i>Thanksgiving Break:</i> <i>November 24-28</i> | The Protest-Repression Dynamic | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 12 • Carey (2006): “The Dynamic Relationship Between Protest and Repression” • Davenport (2007): “State Repression and Political Order” |
| Week 14: November 29 | Revolution | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 13 • Discussion Posts • <i>Know a Social Movement script due by 11:59 pm November 29</i> • Skocpol (1979): “Introduction” • Kuran (1991): “Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989” |
| Week 15: December 6 <i>Last day of classes:</i> <i>December 10</i> | Rebellion <i>Guest lecturer: Dr. Caleb Lucas, Institute for Public Policy and Social Research at Michigan State University</i> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Quiz 14 • Discussion Posts • <i>Know a Social Movement video due by 11:59 pm December 12</i> • Tilly and Tarrow (2015): “Lethal Conflicts” • Lichbach (1995): “The Approach Adopted” • Heydeman and Yazigi (2021): “Syrian uprising 10-year anniversary: A political economy perspective” |

Peer reviews due by 11:59 pm on Friday, December 17