

# Social Movements and Contentious Politics in Modern Europe

(POS 4931 & EUS3930, cross-listed)

**Masks are expected in the classroom.**

**Instructor:** Conor O'Dwyer

**Email:** PLEASE EMAIL ME WITHIN THE CANVAS SYSTEM!

**Time:** MWF 9:35-10:25am

**Location:** Pugh 120

**Office Hours:** W 1:30-2:30pm and F 2:00-3:00pm in Anderson 332; and via Zoom by appointment.

## 1. Course Description

This class is intended for intermediate and upper-level undergraduates in European Studies and the related social sciences and humanities. Its subject is the relation between social contention and politics. Using modern Europe as a source of comparative case studies, the course aims to:

- - provide a survey of the literature on social and protest movements,
  - introduce students to methods for studying these movements,
  - furnish tools for interpreting protest across different social and political contexts,
  - cover selected movement case studies drawn from Europe, and
  - provide the opportunity for students to do an independent research project on social movements, and present that research as both a paper and an oral presentation.

Specifically, we will address the following questions: Under what conditions do social movements form? How and when do they exploit opportunities to mobilize? What internal resources do they draw on in order to overcome obstacles to mobilization? What are the

implications of how a social movement frames its cause? What is the role of internationalization on social movement development?

These questions are central to disciplines across the social sciences – political science, sociology, anthropology, and history – and this class aims to draw intermediate to advanced undergraduate students from across those disciplines for a class focused on the European and East European context.

## **2. Textbook**

There is one required book, which is available for purchase at the university textbook store:

- - David A. Snow & Sarah A. Soule. (2010) *A Primer on Social Movements*. New York: W.W. Norton & Co.

The rest of the readings will be available on Canvas; click under the Files tab.

I expect you to have completed the relevant assigned readings prior to class and to be ready to discuss them. As you will notice below, the readings are grouped by week. In each class period, I will keep you posted on which readings I will expect you to have completed for the next period. The reading schedule below is subject to change depending on the pace of progress and unforeseen scheduling changes. Please refer to the online syllabus for the latest version.

## **3. Attendance and Policy on Make-Up Assignments**

Class attendance is essential to success in this course; however, it does not constitute an independent element of your final grade. Repeated absences will unquestionably affect your performance on exams since they will be based on class lectures and section discussions in addition to readings. Repeated absences will also adversely impact the participation component of your final grade. I choose not keep track of attendance to encourage you not to come to class if you experience COVID-like symptoms; if you do feel such symptoms, get tested immediately!

With regard to assignments, in-class exercises and tests, however, it will only be possible to make them up if the absence is excused. The terms for make-up assignments, including late penalties, are at the instructor's discretion. In the case of exams, a make-up is possible only with notification to the instructor prior to the exam and official medical documentation as to why the student was physically unable to take the exam. Make-ups for exam absences falling outside of these criteria will be scheduled at the instructor's discretion. They may take different form (essays) and may be assessed a late penalty.

According to the Office of the University Registrar, “acceptable reasons for absence from class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips,

field trips, and professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused.”

#### 4. Assignments and Grading

- **Participation in class discussion and activities/assignments (20% of grade):** Student participation is a very important component of this course. I assume full and active engagement with the readings, lectures, and discussions in the class. In-class assignments will be turned in via Canvas and counted toward the participation grade. In the interests of fairness and given the size of the course, there will be no extra credit assignments. Oral participation will be assessed based on the instructor's assessment of how engaged each student was in class discussion and activities over the course of the semester. In terms of grading participation on individual assignments, there will be three possible categories: highly engaged (100%), moderately engaged (75%), insufficiently engaged (50%), and unengaged/incomplete assignment (0%).
  - - NOTE: Because the in-class quizzes and activities/assignments (see below) will require using Canvas, students will need to bring a laptop or other device capable of logging in to Canvas.
- **2 in-class tests** (20% of grade each).
- **Research Paper** (20% of grade): The intent of the paper is to allow students to apply the class's theoretical perspectives comparatively to specific empirical cases drawn from Europe. Student will develop their research topic, selection of cases, theoretical perspectives, and empirical research in stages over the course of the semester through assignments and exercises outlined below and in consultation with the instructor. The paper is expected to be 10-12 pages in length. Independent research will be necessary in order to understand the details and context of the case chosen.
- **Presentation of the Research Project** (10% of grade): In the sessions before submitting the Research Paper, students will present their research to the rest of the class (Weeks 11-13).
- **Building-Block Assignments for the Paper** (10% of grade): Over the course of the semester, the following assignments will provide opportunities to develop and get feedback on the final research paper. Each of these assignments will be graded on "effort," with the following three categories for assessing this effort: "solid and satisfactory effort" (100% for that particular assignment), "insufficient effort" (70% for the assignment), and "not completed" (0% for the assignment). The assignments are as follows:
  - **Proposal for the Research Paper** (20% of the total for this category)
  - **Annotated bibliography** (20% of the total for this category)
  - **Literature review** (20% of the total for this category)
  - **Theoretical expectations and research strategy** (20% of the total for this category)

- **Peer feedback on final presentations** (20% of the total for this category)

## 5. Students with Disabilities

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). [Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center \(Links to an external site.\)](#). It is the student's responsibility to contact the DRC at the beginning of the semester and to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.

## 6. Grading Scale

	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69	E	Below
60								
A	93-100	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66	
A-	90-92	B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62	

# Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

## Week 1 (Jan 5-7): Introduction to social movements

- What are social movements? How have they been studied?

### *Reading:*

- Snow and Soule, Chapter 1

## Week 2 (Jan 10-14): Grievances and Frames

- What motivates social movements?
- Using the library's resources for research

### *Readings:*

- Snow and Soule, Chapter 2

### **Week 3 (Jan 19-21): Opportunities, Resources, and Ecological Factors: The Role of Context**

- What conditions lead social movements to emerge?
- Due Jan 21 in class: Proposal for the research paper

#### ***Readings:***

- Snow and Soule, Chapter 3

### **Week 4 (Jan 31 - Feb 4): Participation**

- Who participates and why?

#### ***Readings:***

- Snow and Soule, Chapter 4
- Rachel L. Einwohner. "Identity work and collective action in a repressive context: Jewish resistance on the "Aryan side" of the Warsaw Ghetto." *Social Problems* 53.1 (2006): 38-56.

### **Week 5 (Feb 7-11):**

- Due Feb 7 in class annotated bibliography for final project
- Review Session (Feb 9)
- TEST #1 (Feb 11)

### **Week 6 (Feb 14-18): Social movement dynamics: organization, tactics, and diffusion**

- How do movements operate?

#### ***Readings:***

- Snow and Soule, Chapter 5
- Doug McAdam. "Tactical innovation and the pace of insurgency." *American Sociological Review* (1983): 735-754.

## **Week 7 (Feb 21-25): Social movements' impact / Social media & the internet**

### **Readings:**

- Snow and Soule, Chapter 6
- W. Lance Bennett, Alexandra Segerberg, & Yunkang Yang. "The Strength of Peripheral Networks: Negotiating Attention and Meaning in Complex Media Ecologies" *Journal of Communication* Vol 68, No 4, pp. 659-684, 2018. [CANVAS]

## **Week 8 (Feb 28 - March 4): Democratization in Eastern Europe through a social movement lens**

### **Readings:**

- - Due Feb 28 in class: literature review for final project
  - Anthony Oberschall, "Opportunities and Framing in the Eastern European Revolts of 1989," in Doug McAdam, John McCarthy, Mayer Zald (eds.), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings* (Cambridge UP, 1996): pp. 93-121. [CANVAS]
  - Timur Kuran. (1991) "Now Out of Never: The Element of Surprise in the East European Revolution of 1989." *World Politics* 44(1): 7-48.
  - Special issue on the Maidan Protests in Ukraine in the *Journal of Democracy* (2014) v.25 n.3:
    - [Editors' introduction](#), pp. 17-18.
    - [Olga Onuch, "Who Were the Protesters?"](#) pp. 44-51.

## **SPRING BREAK (March 7-11)**

## **Week 9 (March 14-18): Movement-Countermovement Dynamics: Populism and LGBT movements in Europe**

### **Readings:**

- Cas Mudde and Cristobal Rovira Kaltwasser. 2013. "Populism." In *Oxford Handbook of Political Ideologies*. (Oxford UP), pp. 493-510.

- Mario Diani. 1996. "Linking Mobilization Frames and Political Opportunities: Insights from Regional Populism in Italy," *American Sociological Review* 61: 1053-69. [CANVAS]
- Conor O'Dwyer. (2018) "The Benefits of Backlash: EU Accession and the Organization of LGBT Activism in Postcommunist Poland and the Czech Republic." *East European Politics and Societies* 32(4): 892-923. [CANVAS]
- Phillip M. Ayoub. 2014. "With Arms Wide Shut: Threat Perception, Norm Reception, and Mobilized Resistance to LGBT Rights," *Journal of Human Rights*, 13:3, 337-362. [CANVAS]

#### **Week 10 (March 21-25): Test**

- Due March 21 in class: theoretical expectations and research strategy for final project
- Review session (March 23)
- TEST #2 (March 25)

#### **Week 11 (March 28 - April 1): Research Presentations continued...**

- Final Presentations #1 (March 28)
- Final Presentations #2 (March 30)
- Final Presentations #3 (April 1)

#### **Week 12 (April 4-8): Research Presentations continued...**

- Final Presentations #4 (April 4)
- Final Presentations #5 (April 6)
- Final Presentations #6 (April 7)

#### **Week 13 (April 11-15): Research Presentations / Paper Workday & Consultations**

- Final Presentations #7 (April 11)
- Final Presentations #8 (April 13)
- Final paper workday and/or consultations

#### **Week 14 (April 18-20): Selected topics in contemporary social movements / Conclusion**

- Selected topics #1: TBD
- Final paper due in class (April 20)

## **Appendices**

### **Masks**

The College of Liberal Arts and Sciences emphasizes that, in light of CDC recommendations, face coverings, though not required, are expected in all UF facilities, including your classrooms. Regardless of vaccination status, mask usage is a responsible and vital way of preventing transmission of COVID-19. Faculty may also ask for mask usage in their offices during one-on-one meetings (with a provision for remote office hour meetings as an alternative).

### **Vaccination**

If you have not been vaccinated, please consider starting the process immediately. In Gainesville, you can schedule a vaccination appointment at ONE.UF. Please keep in mind that being vaccinated for COVID-19 is the best way to protect yourself and others from the potentially life-threatening effects of the virus. Your action in this regard may help ensure the health and safety of yourself, your fellow CLAS students, and the faculty and staff with whom you interact.

### **Academic Honesty**

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. [Click here to read the Honor Code \(Links to an external site.\)](#). Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor or TAs in this class.

### **Online Course Evaluations**

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Click here for guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner. Students will be



notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via [ufl.bluera.com/ufl/](http://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/). ([Links to an external site.](#))[Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students here \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

### **Technical Support for E-Learning and Canvas**

*E-learning technical support:* Contact the [UF Computing Help Desk \(Links to an external site.\)](#) at 352-392-4357 or via e-mail at [helpdesk@ufl.edu](mailto:helpdesk@ufl.edu).

### **Resources for Health and Wellness**

*U Matter, We Care:* If you or someone you know is in distress, please contact [umatter@ufl.edu](mailto:umatter@ufl.edu), 352-392-1575, or visit [U Matter, We Care website \(Links to an external site.\)](#) to refer or report a concern and a team member will reach out to the student in distress.

*Counseling and Wellness Center:* [Visit the Counseling and Wellness Center website \(Links to an external site.\)](#) or call 352-392-1575 for information on crisis services as well as non-crisis services.