

INTS 304: Social movements and Community Activism

Course Policy Statement

Ian Sinnett

Office: Enterprise Hall 327

Email: isinnett@gmu.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11:00-12:00 or by appointment

Course Description

Power dynamics are present and persistent throughout the world. Power structures are often at odds with the communities over which they hold power, and these structures, and the systems therein are typically resistant to change. As individuals, we can sometimes feel powerless to create change and engage in conflict with these systems. However, people can and do work together to challenge them. These challenges take many forms, ranging from nonviolent methods like picketing and sit-ins, to more aggressive ones like rioting. These are important moments because, while the effectiveness of such movements can vary, they offer opportunities for individuals to create meaningful change within – and maybe beyond – their communities. This course will offer a thorough examination of these moments.

Throughout the semester, we will be working towards deeper understandings of social movements. We will work to discuss and address the questions of what constitutes a social movement, why do social movements form, who joins social movements and why, how are they organized, what strategies are used, and more. We will work towards answering these questions through the utilization of sociological theories and case studies of specific movements. Furthermore, you will come to a deep understanding of a specific, contemporary social movement of your choosing.

Course Objectives

INTS 304 provides an introduction to the sociological study of social movements and community activism. By the conclusion of the semester, students should be able to:

1. Explain key terms, ideas, and theories of social movements.
2. Articulate the basics of group roles, dynamics, and decision-making in order to function well in group settings.
3. Reflect on the nature of coalitions, communities, and systems.
4. Examine, in-depth, a current day social movement through research and writing
5. Articulate, both orally and in writing, the fundamentals of systems/structures of social movements using case studies and own research.
6. Integrate capacities for team learning through peer feedback and use of collaborative technologies.

Additionally, as a Social/Behavioral Sciences Mason Core class, students will be able to:

1. Explain how individuals, groups, or institutions are influenced by contextual factors;
2. Demonstrate awareness of changes in social and cultural constructs;
3. Use appropriate methods and resources to apply social and behavioral science concepts, terminology, principles, and theories in the analysis of significant human issues, past or present.

REQUIRED Textbooks

Jasper, James M. *Protest: A Cultural Introduction to Social Movements* Malden, MA: Polity Press, 2014.

ISBN: 978-0-7456-5516-1

Popovic, Srdja *Blueprint for Revolution* New York, NY: Spiegel & Grau, 2015

ISBN: 978-0-8129-9530-5

Additionally, a portion of readings will be posted on Blackboard for each class session, so make sure you are always checking the course content page in order to find these documents.

How To Submit Your Work

All assignments must be submitted onto Blackboard by 11:59pm on the due date. This includes essays, board posts, and similar assignments submitted for evaluation. All essays and written assignments must be uploaded as .doc or .docx files (I can't comment on .pdfs).

All essays must be typed using 12-point font and one-inch margins, double-spaced. You must consistently use the [APA writing and citation style](#).

I will not accept paper submissions via email (barring potential extenuating circumstances). Unless stated otherwise, all papers must be submitted electronically to the assignment page on Blackboard.

Late Work Policy

You are responsible for submitting all assignments on time. Assignments submitted late will be docked 10% per **calendar** day past the due date. This includes weekends and holidays.

If you anticipate not being able to submit an assignment on time (for personal matters, for instance), please let me know ahead of time.

Attendance Policy

Participation and engagement are a core element of this class. If you are not present during class time, you miss out on lectures, discussions, and other fundamental components of the class. Therefore, it is important that you do your best to come to every class meeting in a timely manner. Frequent absences and/or tardiness from class will negatively impact your participation/engagement grade.

If you are absent, I suggest contacting a peer, or coming to see me during office hours in order to find out what you missed.

Participation

As discussion is an important part of this course, your participation is not only mandatory, but also crucial to the success of the class. Active participation includes such things as arriving on time, having the required texts with you, completing the reading, taking notes, staying engaged with the class discussions, completing activities and homework assignments, actively listening, and discussing ideas respectfully within small and large groups. Full participation will also include a

demonstrated eagerness to learn and a willingness to think critically. Finally, full participation includes consistently treating your classmates and instructor with respect.

Grade Breakdown

Your grade will be determined by your performance on the major writing assignments, short reading quizzes, exams, in-class and homework activities and assignments, as well as class participation and attendance. The following table breaks down the main grade categories as well as their percentage weights.

Participation/Engagement:	15%
Quizzes:	10%
Book/Film Review:	10%
Exams:	20% (10% each)
Journal Entries:	10%
Small Research Assignments:	10%
Final Research Paper	25%

Your final grade will correspond to these following percentage ranges:

A+ 97-100	B+ 87-89	C+ 77-79	D 60-69
A 94-96	B 84-86	C 74-76	F <60
A- 90-93	B- 80-83	C- 70-73	

Classroom Policies and Expectations

Cell Phone and Electronics Use:

You will be expected to give your full attention to your classmates and to class discussion. Unfortunately, incessant instant messaging, texting, gaming, and social media checking, among other technological addictions, send signals that you are virtually elsewhere. For that reason, cell phones must be silenced and stored away before class starts. If you need to have your cell phone on to respond to a personal emergency, please tell me before class starts so that we can make arrangements.

In regards to laptops, I understand that they can be useful in the contemporary classroom for notetaking purposes and in order to refer to electronic readings. Therefore, I allow laptop use during class-time, but it is up to you to make sure you're not distracting yourself or others by using one. And I reserve the right to ban laptop use if I notice them being a distraction, either for an individual or the entire class.

Class Participation and Commitment:

Learning in this course is a shared responsibility and, as such, good participation is critical for all of our benefit. This includes effective listening, asking good questions, and building on the comments of others. A quality learning experience in this course rests upon a high degree of

interaction and exchange of ideas among the students and instructor. Students will work in small groups to discuss readings, prepare for guest lecturers, and to bring theory and practice alive. Each student is expected to participate fully in small group and large group discussions and activities.

Preparation:

Preparation for all classes includes assigned readings, assignments, and activities. Please bring the assigned readings with you to all classes (e.g. articles, books, etc.)

Attendance:

Attendance at all class meetings and on-time arrival. Consistent presence is critical for engaging with the learning objectives: your presence is essential for your own learning AND the learning of your classmates.

Reflection:

Thoughtful, critical reflection and engagement with materials. Some texts and ideas we will be working with might be dense and confusing. It is up to you to critically read and engage with these texts, and do your best to understand the core elements presented within them. Always feel free to ask me for further clarification of things that might be confusing.

Respect and Professionalism:

We are each other's teachers and, as such, it is expected that we treat each other with respect and professionalism at all times even though opinions may differ.

University Policies

Commitment to Diversity and Inclusion

The School of Integrative Studies is an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and strives to have faculty, staff, and students who reflect the diversity of our plural society. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, class, linguistic background, religion, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, national origin, first language, religion, age, and disability.

This class will strive to maintain a diverse, inclusive, safe, and respectful learning environment. Therefore, any demeaning, intolerant, and/or disruptive behavior will be deemed inappropriate and will be addressed.

Sexual Misconduct and Interpersonal Violence

George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination and a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and other acts of interpersonal violence in order to promote community well-being and student success. We encourage students who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support. [University Policy 1202: Sexual Harassment and Misconduct](#) speaks to the specifics of Mason's process, the resources, and the options available to students.

As a faculty member and designated “Responsible Employee,” I am required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s [Title IX Coordinator](#) per [university policy 1412](#). If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the [Student Support and Advocacy Center](#) (703-380-1434) or [Counseling and Psychological Services](#) (703-993-2380). You may also seek assistance from [Mason’s Title IX Coordinator](#) (703-993-8730; titleix@gmu.edu).

Honor Code and Academic Integrity

The integrity of the university community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

Religious or Cultural Observances

Some class times are in close proximity to religious or cultural observances. If a class date or assignment creates a conflict, please let me know in advance so we can make appropriate arrangements.

University Resources

- Office of disability services; SUB 1 #2500, ods@gmu.edu
If you believe that you have a learning or physical difference that may affect your academic work, please contact the GMU office of Disability Services. If you qualify for accommodation based on the documentation you provide, the ODS staff will give you a form detailing appropriate accommodations – You will then bring this form to me. In addition to providing me with the appropriate form, please take the initiative to discuss accommodations with me at the beginning of the semester and as needed throughout the term.
- Office of Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS); SUB 1 #3129
Provides individual and group counseling, workshops and outreach programs – experiences to enhance a student’s personal and academic experiences.
- University Writing Center; Robinson Hall B #213
Offers free, expert tutoring to writers at all levels who wish to improve their writing and build their confidence.
- GMU Learning Services; SUB 1 #3129
Provides study skills workshops, academic skills programs, and academic counseling.

INTS 304: Social Movements and Community Activism

Fall 2019 Course Schedule

(Subject to Change)

	Day	Schedule and Homework Due
Week 1	Tuesday, August 27	Course Introduction: Syllabus overview, introductions. Discussion: What is a social movement?
	Thursday, August 29	Topic: What is a Social Movement? Reading: <i>Protest: A Cultural Introduction to Social Movements</i> , “Preface” (ix – xiii), and “Introduction: Doing Protest” (1-14)
Week 2	Tuesday, September 3	• Reading: <i>Protest</i> , Chapter 1: What Are Social Movements, (15-38)
	Thursday, September 5	• Reading: <i>Protest</i> , Chapter 2: Meaning, (39-67)
Week 3	Tuesday, September 10	• Reading: <i>Protest</i> , Chapter 3: Infrastructure (68-89)
	Thursday, September 12	• Reading: <i>Protest</i> , Chapter 4, Recruiting (90-107) • Choose your social movement and post onto Blackboard with a brief explanation of the reason for your choice by 11:59 pm
Week 4	Tuesday, September 17	• Reading: <i>Protest</i> , Chapter 5, Sustaining and Chapter 6: Deciding (108-142)
	Thursday, September 19	• Reading: <i>Protest</i> , Chapter 7: Engaging Other Players (143-167) • Choose your film or book for the Film/Book Review Assignment and post your decision onto Blackboard by 11:59 pm

Week 5	Tuesday, September 24	Topic: Protest and Resistance Civil Disobedience <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard
	Thursday, September 26	Resistance and Peaceful Protest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard Film/Book Review Due by 11:59 pm – Submit via blackboard
Week 6	Tuesday, October 1	Violence and Violent Protest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard
	Thursday, October 3	Topic: Strategies Frames and Resonance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard Journal Entry #1 Due on Blackboard by 11:59pm
Week 7	Tuesday, October 8	Strategies and Tactics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard
	Thursday, October 10	Exam 1 – Come prepared with Blue or Green Book
Week 8	Tuesday, October 15	Fall Break – No class
	Thursday, October 17	Topic: Art and Culture Cultural Values <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard Annotated Webliography Due by 11:59 pm on Blackboard

Week 9	Tuesday, October 22	Art and Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard
	Thursday, October 24	Music and Protest <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard Journal Entry #2 Due by 11:59 pm
Week 10	Tuesday, October 29	Topic: Types of Movements Grass Roots (Horizontal Versus Vertical movements) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard
	Thursday, October 31	International and Transnational Activism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard
Week 11	Tuesday, November 5	Topic: Religion and Social Movements Religion and Social Movements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard Journal Entry #3 Due by 11:59 PM
	Thursday, November 7	The ERA Movement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard Guest Speaker
Week 12	Tuesday, November 12	Topic: Economy and Environment Economic Activism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard Annotated Bibliography Due by 11:59 pm

	Thursday, November 14	Environmental Activism <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard Journal Entry #4 Due by 11:59 pm
--	-----------------------------	--

Week 13	Tuesday, November 19	Topic: Revolution Revolution and Regime Change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard
	Thursday, November 21	Revolution and Regime Change <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Readings on Blackboard Journal Entry #5 Due by 11:59 pm
Week 14	Tuesday, November 26	Class Cancelled <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final Research Paper Rough Draft due by 11:59 pm
	Thursday, November 28	Thanksgiving Break: No Class
Week 15	Tuesday, December 3	Exam 2 Review
	Thursday, December 5	Exam 2 - Come prepared with Blue or Green Book

December 14 - Final Research Paper Due by 11:59 pm

