

# Political Science 4403G Course Outline

## 1. Course Information

### Course Information

*War on Terror*, POLS 4403G; undergraduate winter term; in-person on Monday, 2:30-4:20PM in Social Science Centre room 7210.

### Prerequisites

Political Science 2237E or Political Science 2537F/G.

Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

## 2. Instructor Information

Instructor	Email	Office	Phone	Office Hours
Dr. Nandita, Biswas Mellamphy	nbiswas[at]uwo.ca or mohuya[at]protonmail.com (either one is fine and both are unnecessary since I check both).	Social Science Bldg., Room 7316	519-661-2111 Ext. 81161	Mon 1:30-2:20PM, or schedule appointment.

## 3. Course Syllabus, Schedule, Delivery Mode

### Course Description:

What happens when war and militarization extend out of the space of the battlefield and become integrated into the civilian space of everyday life? Just as we have witnessed the global integration of information, communication, and trade which are no longer confined by territorial boundaries, so too can 'war' be seen as no longer confined to its classic theatre of operation, the battlefield. Today, in combination with the technological and informational revolutions characteristic of the 21st century, the governance of terror in the name of security has effectively led to the tactical and indefinite extension of war into all spheres of life.

The War on Terror, which began as a specifically American military doctrine, became a global-scale war on terrorism that has set the stage for global counter-terrorist mass- and micro-

surveillance systems in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. This course explores the War on Terror, the political theory of fear, and the consequences of global counter-terrorism surveillance systems on the erosion of civil liberties.

The course material draws from a growing international field of scholarship that researches the problematization of politics, security and war from the perspectives of critical security studies, political theory, surveillance studies, and communication studies.

Please note that this is a heavily theoretical course that draws on empirical materials. For those who would like some background reading on International Relations theories, please consult: *Critical Approaches to International Security* by K.M. Fierke and/or *International Relations Theory: A Critical Introduction* by Cynthia Weber (these books have **not** been ordered at the Bookstore).

Weekly Course Topics include:

- Critical approaches to War on Terror
- Security and Insecurity
- War on Terror Narratives and the Politics of Fear
- Gendered Narratives of War on Terror
- States of exception and Asymmetric warfare
- Predation and Drone Warfare
- Social Media and Hybrid Warfare
- Biometrics and Surveillance
- Legislation, Policy, and Dissent
- Digital Warfare

### **Learning Outcomes:**

By the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Demonstrate knowledge of diverse theories and methodological approaches in political science and recognize the ethical dimensions and problems of methodologies.
- Demonstrate an awareness of how power, culture and history condition/influence knowledge formation and be able to situate knowledge historically and contextually.
- Demonstrate understanding of the controversial nature of politics and recognize the limits of your own political knowledge, in light of exposure to information, concepts, theories and experience.
- Demonstrate well developed, independent information literacy and research skills and be able to identify goals for their own professional development and further learning.
- Work effectively with others, demonstrating the skills of giving constructive and critical feedback to peers, responding to feedback, and using active listening.

## Delivery:

This course has been designed to give you a holistic educational experience that combines various instructional methods:

- in-person/in-class active learning (i.e., discussions, debates, and structured in-class exercises),
- knowledge transmission (i.e., mini in-class lectures, reading academic works, multi-media viewing/listening)
- student communication activities (i.e., reflective writing, and oral presentations)

This is an in-person course with 3 mandatory components:

**1-Weekly in-class component: Attendance and participation at in-person seminar** on Monday from 2:30pm-4:20pm. Attendance will be taken in class and no alternate assignments can be substituted for this component because the whole point is to have the opportunity for active in-class learning, discussions and debates. Class attendance and participation are important for meeting the class objectives.

If you cannot make it to class (e.g. due to an emergency), make sure you have the contact information of a couple of '**note-buddies**' in the class with whom you can trade notes when necessary. Next time you are in class, just introduce yourself to the person sitting next to you and exchange email addresses so that you have a class contact. Remember, **notes will NOT be provided by the instructor**, so it is your responsibility to get notes from your note-buddy if you miss class. The fundamental rule in this classroom is mutual respect for everyone, especially your colleagues. Please be mindful not to share your note buddy's information with anyone without permission from that person.

## Think Labs

Each class will begin with a 10 minute mini-lecture by me, followed by what I call a 'Think Lab' which is a structured and guided round-table session that participants can prepare for in advance. For the first round, we will go around the table analyzing the weekly assigned readings picking out important points, themes, arguments and debates. Each round-table participant will get 2 minutes (timed) to identify key points and terms, as well as summarize their takeaways from the assigned readings. Participants are expected to take good notes while the first round. At the end of the first round, participants will be given 10 minutes to synthesize their notes from the first round table, after which we will have another roundtable session in which each participant will get 1 min (timed) to respond to points made by their peers from the last round table. Finally, the last 30 minutes will be devoted to writing an individual in-class essay based on a question posed by the instructor. Students should bring their laptops to class so that they can type their essay using the course OWL website.

**2- Weekly out-of-class component:** During the week, you will be expected to go to the course website to access the weekly assigned readings schedule and content. Be sure to take good notes because they will help inform your in-class participation and discussion. You can prepare ahead for the weekly Think lab roundtables.

**3- Scheduled Assignments:** In addition, there are two scheduled assignments that are to be submitted through the course OWL website's 'Assignments' link (no print copies required):

- *Research Project: Create a Literature Review*= 30%; pick ONE of the course weekly themes and create a typed literature review that includes the assigned readings for that week and a minimum of 7 other relevant and established scholarly sources. Due no later than Feb. 28, 2025. For more information how to create a literature review, go the course website's Assignment link.
- *Comparative Critical Book Review (of 3 course texts)*= 30% Due March 31, 2025. For more information, go the course website's Assignment link.

### Schedule of Weekly Topics

Week 1/Jan 6	911 and the War on Terror: Introduction to course participants, outline, themes, and mechanics
Week 2/Jan 13	The Challenges of Conceptualizing the 'Global War on Terror': Critical Theories and Approaches
Week 3/Jan 20	The War on Terror and (In)Security: The United States and Canada
Week 4/Jan 27	War on Terror Narratives: War on Terror and the Politics of Fear
Week 5/Feb 3	Gendered Narratives of War on Terror
Week 6/Feb 10	Who is Friend and Who is Enemy? From Symmetrical to Asymmetrical War
Week 7/Feb 17	Reading Week; no class.
Week 8/Feb 24	Predation and Drone Warfare
Week 9/Mar 3	Social Media and Hybrid Warfare
Week 10/Mar 10	Surveillance and Biometrics
Week 11/Mar 17	Gender, Race and Biometric Surveillance
Week 12/Mar 24	Liberty and/or Security? Legislating Anti-Terrorism and Criminalizing Dissent
Week 13/Apr 1	Digital War and Course Wrap-up

### Relevant Key Sessional Dates for this course

- Winter session resumes January 6, 2025.
- Last day to drop: January 14, 2025; Courses dropped by this date will not appear on a transcript; no fee penalty. Courses dropped after this date will appear on a transcript with a grade of 'WDN' withdrawn, without academic penalty
- Spring Reading Week: February 15-23, 2025; no class or in-class essay.
- Last class for this course: March 31, 2025.

### **Contingency plan for an in-person class pivoting to 100% online learning**

In the event of a COVID-19 resurgence during the course that necessitates the course delivery moving away from face-to-face interaction, affected course content will be delivered entirely online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will **not** change. Any remaining assessments will also be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

## **4. Course Materials**

### **Course Materials, Required Textbooks, Brightspace website**

False Security: The Radicalization of Canadian Anti-Terrorism by Craig Forcese and Kent Roach, Irwin Law Inc.

America's War on Terror: The State of the 9/11 Exception from Bush to Obama by Jason Ralph, Oxford University Press.

Taking Liberties: The War on Terror and the Erosion of American Democracy by Susan N. Herman, Oxford University Press.

The Bookstore will order the newest available edition, but older editions are acceptable. Other articles may be assigned to accompany your reading of the primary texts. All articles not found in the course textbooks are available on the course website (OWL).

All course material will be posted to OWL: <http://owl.uwo.ca>. Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<http://owl.uwo.ca>) on a regular basis for news and updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the OWL Help page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

### **Technical Requirements**

A functional computer with a wireless internet connection are required to bring to class and to complete the online component of some of the assignments. If you have concerns about this requirements, please contact the instructor immediately to discuss.

## **5. Methods of Evaluation**

- Seminar (Think Lab) Participation= 10 classes x 2% ea=20% (based on making one 2m. oral presentation on takeaways from the readings and one 1m of peer feedback).

- In-class essay = weeks 2-6 will be graded as Pass/Fail (this is so you can develop the necessary skills without fear of penalty); weeks 8-12 will be graded and each one will be worth a total of 4 points; best 5 out of 6 will count towards the final grade; total 20 %.

Note: Before the reading week, the in-class essays will be Pass/Fail. This will give you opportunities to practice writing without being officially graded. After the reading week, the in-class essays will be graded and worth 4% each (will take best 5 out of 6). So, this means that you have several weeks to practice writing and get feedback about how to improve your writing before your in-class essays are graded on a points basis.

- Literature Review= 30%; pick ONE of the course weekly themes and create a typed literature review that include the assigned readings for that week and a minimum of 7 other relevant and established scholarly sources that you must find outside the class materials. Due Feb. 21, 2025 but late essays will be accepted without penalty up until Feb 28, 2025 at 9 AM (EST). After this period, no further accommodation (except for emergencies) will be given to anyone without a penalty of 2%/day (including weekends and holidays). *Please note that because the submission deadline for this assessment already includes flexibility in the form of a 7 day grace period, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for assignments which are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility.* Students seeking academic consideration for either the literature review or the book review will be required to provide formal supporting documentation. Students who are granted academic consideration for this assessment will be provided with the opportunity to make up this work as determined by the course instructor in accordance with university policies. The instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for these missed elements.
- Comparative Critical Book Review (of 3 course texts)= 30% due March 31, 2025 but late essays will be accepted without penalty up until April 4, 2025 at 9 AM (EST). After this period, no further accommodation (except for emergencies) will be given to anyone without a penalty of 2%/day (including weekends and holidays). *Please note that because the submission deadline for this assessment already includes flexibility in the form of a 5 day grace period, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for assignments which are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility.*

You cannot opt out of any of the assignments to pass the course; all are necessary to fulfill the course requirements. To pass the course, you must attend and participate in-person in at least 9 think labs, and submit a minimum number of: 9 in-class essays, 1 literature review, and 1 comparative book review. Satisfying these requirements will demonstrate the minimal level of engagement to complete the course. You will not be penalized for failing to meet a requirement due to circumstances beyond your control.

### **Absences & Academic Consideration**

[https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/academic\\_consideration.html](https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/academic_consideration.html)

We all know that short-term absences can occur because all students must contend with ailments, varying demands, and the pressures of everyday life. Missing an occasional class/lecture/quiz will not have a significant impact on your academics as a whole, and for the most part, you are able to catch up without incident. Part of being a student means learning to cope with and manage these ailments, demands, and pressures – all of which are reasonably expected to surface during the school year.

What will **not** qualify for academic consideration:

[https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/exams/index.html#No\\_AC](https://counselling.ssc.uwo.ca/procedures/exams/index.html#No_AC)

- Sleeping in
- Misreading the timetable
- Flight arrangements
- Moving

Professors are not required to set a special examination and requests of this nature will be denied. Students are expected to schedule their personal business such as changing residence, vacations and flights so that these activities do not conflict with the exam schedule.

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

University policy on academic considerations are described [here](#). This policy requires that all requests for academic considerations must be accompanied by a self-attestation. Further information about academic considerations, and information about submitting this self-attestation with your academic consideration request may be found [here](#).

Please note that any academic considerations granted in this course will be determined by the instructor, in consultation with the academic advisors in your Faculty of Registration, in accordance with information presented in this course outline.

### **Assessments worth less than 10% of the overall course grade**

There are no alternate assignments for missed classes (unless you have documentation proving that you had an unforeseen and unavoidable emergency/accident preventing you from attending the class in which case, the instructor may decide upon an alternate assignment; you must contact the instructor and provide your documentation as soon as possible).

### **Assessments worth 10% or more of the overall course grade:**

For work totalling 10% or more of the final course grade, you must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to the Academic Counselling Office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as possible. For further information, please consult the University's medical illness policy at

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

The Student Medical Certificate is available at

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

Note: missed work can only be excused through one of the mechanisms above. Being asked not to attend an in-person course requirement due to potential COVID-19 symptoms is not sufficient on its own. You should check the Western website to see what directives for COVID are to be followed. Western University has been and will continue to follow directives established by the Middlesex-London Health Unit. That directive will state whether students should or should not come to campus/class and any other requirements (e.g., masks are mandatory). Please check on your own and do not email the instructor, the Department Undergraduate Advisor/Coordinator or the Faculty of Social Science Academic Counselling Office.

## **7. Accommodation and Accessibility**

### **Religious Accommodation**

When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request accommodation for their absence in writing at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the course instructor and/or the Academic Counselling office of their Faculty of Registration. Please consult University's list of recognized religious holidays (updated annually) at

<https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>.

### **Accommodation Policies**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found at:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic Accommodation\\_disabilities.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Accommodation_disabilities.pdf).

## **8. Academic Policies**

The website for Registrarial Services is <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>.

In accordance with policy,

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies\\_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf),

the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at their official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

### **Policy on Using AI Tools in this Course**



Using AI tools can be useful for some disciplines. But for this course, AI tools can be more harmful and unreliable than useful for research. For instance, tools like chatGPT often fail to cite correctly, adequately, or reliably. For these reasons, The use of generative AI tools (such as ChatGPT, DALL-E, etc.) **are not permitted** in this class; therefore, any use of AI tools for work in this class may be considered a violation of the University of Western Ontario's Academic Misconduct which may constitute a Scholastic Offence. The use of unauthorized AI tools can result in: a failure to receive full grades, the need to resubmit the assignment, need to orally present the assignment in office hours, or a failure to complete the requirements of the course.

### **Academic Integrity**

Academic integrity is essential to the pursuit of learning and scholarship in a university. The University treats cases of cheating and plagiarism very seriously (even when these are unintended because you should know when you are doing it).

Potential offences include, but are not limited to:

On tests and exams:

- Using or possessing unauthorized aids
- Communicating with someone else during an exam or test
- Misrepresenting your identity when you knew or ought to have known you were doing it.

In academic work:

- Falsifying institutional documents or grades
- Falsifying or altering any documentation required by the University, including (but not limited to) doctor's notes when you knew or ought to have known you were doing so.

All suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be investigated. If students have questions or concerns about what constitutes appropriate academic behaviour or appropriate research and citation methods, they are expected to seek out additional information on academic integrity from their instructors or from other institutional resources.

**Scholastic offences** are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf).

All required essays are subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

## **9. Support Services**

### **Academic Counselling**

Please visit the Social Science Academic Counselling webpage for information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters: [Academic Counselling - Western University \(uwo.ca\)](http://academiccounselling.uwo.ca/)

### **Accessible Education**

For issues of accessibility contact Accessible Education at  
[http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/index.html](http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html)

If you have any questions regarding academic accommodations, contact  
([http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/academic\\_accommodation.html](http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/academic_accommodation.html))

### **Health and Safety**

**Students** who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at

[https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html).

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

### **Learning Success Centre**

Learning-skills counsellors at the Learning Development and Success Centre (<https://learning.uwo.ca>) are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

### **University Student Council**

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.

*I hope you enjoy the course and wish you every success in completing it!*