Social Movements (Graduate Seminar)
Spring 2015
Professor Conor O'Dwyer
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I. Meeting Times & Office Hours:
Meeting Time: Wednesday, Periods 8-10, Matherly 151
Office Hours: M 10:45am – 11:35am, W 12:50 – 1:40 pm, and by appointment in Anderson Hall 311

II. Course Description:
This class is intended for graduate students in political science and the related social sciences. Its subject is the relation between social contention and politics. The course aims to:
(1) provide a survey of the literature on social and protest movements,
(2) introduce students to methods for studying these movements, and
(3) furnish tools for interpreting protest across different social and political contexts.
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? Relatedly, can transnational institutions such as the European Union effectively promote social movements whose goals they support?

III. Class Requirements and Assignments
• **Research paper** -- 8,000 words on a topic of the student's choosing in consultation with me. Students will provide a 2-3 page prospectus by **February 11th**. Further expectations for the paper and the prospectus will be presented in class (50% of grade, submit one hard copy and one electronic copy to turnitin.com by **April 22nd**),

• **In-class presentation** of your research paper in the last three weeks of the semester -- approximately 20 minutes plus discussion (20% of grade),
  • The goal here is to gain experience in how to condense and prepare written research for a live audience, such as you might find at a professional conference or in a job talk. This will also be an opportunity to gather feedback on your research from the rest of the class.

• **Leading discussion** -- Each student will be expected to present one week's readings over the course of the semester. This will consist of summarizing and critiquing that reading's research question, argument, empirical evidence, and methodology. Each presenter will also be asked to choose and present an additional reading (journal article or book chapter) from his or her geographic or thematic subfield that complements the theme of that week. The presenter will be asked to consider the broader theoretical connections and insights that can be drawn from postcommunist politics in light of the chosen reading. In order to give the rest of the seminar the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the chosen reading, we will schedule the list of presentations in the first class. The online syllabus will be updated to reflect the chosen readings. (I will ask the presenters to send me their reading choice at least a week before their presentation, so I can update the syllabus) This presentation will serve as a jumping-off point for the class discussion. A list of the presentation schedule can be found here. (20% of grade)

• **Attendance and participation** in the class discussion. (10% of grade) -- Attendance and participation in class discussion is a very important component of this course. Because this is a seminar, I assume full and active engagement in the discussion and completion of the assigned readings before class.
IV. Books for Purchase:
There are two required books:

• Doug McAdam, John McCarthy, Mayer Zald [McMcZ] (eds.), Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings (Cambridge UP, 1996).

The rest of the readings will be available on-line through the university library's journal article database. In some cases, they will be available through E-RESERVES at the university library (http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/ -- click on the link labeled "Course Reserves"), or as handouts. I expect you to have completed the relevant assigned readings prior to class and to be ready to discuss them.

V. Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

Week 1 (January 7): Introduction and Course Requirements

Readings:

Week 2 (January 14): Classical Theories of Collective Action / A test case: Ukraine’s Maidan Protests

Readings:
• Eric Hoffer. The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements (Harper and Row, 1951), pp. 3-44. (available here)
• Special Issue of the Journal of Democracy on the Maidan Protests in Ukraine. (available here)
  • Editors’ introduction, pp. 17-18
  • Lucan Way, “Civil Society and Democratization,” pp. 35-42.

Week 3 (January 21): The Political Process Model: Origins, Aspirations, Shortcomings

Readings:
Week 4 (January 28): Political Opportunity Structure I / Policing Protest

Readings:
- Sidney Tarrow, “States and Opportunities: The Political Structuring of Social Movements,” in McMcZ, pp. 41-61.

Week 5 (February 4): An Aside on the Role of Emotion

- Documentary Film: How to Survive a Plague (2012)
- Class time to work on prospectus for research paper.

Readings:

Week 6 (February 11): Political Opportunity Structure II

Prospectus for research paper due in class.

Readings:

Week 7 (February 18): Resource Mobilization I: Repertoires of collective action

Readings:

Week 8 (February 25): Resource Mobilization II: Postcommunist activism as an illustrative case
Readings:


Further Reading:

SPRING BREAK (March 2-6)

Week 9 (March 11): Framing I

Readings:

Week 10 (March 18): Framing II

Readings:
- Conor O'Dwyer, Manuscript on gay-rights movements in EE. [HANDOUT]

Further Reading:
Week 11 (March 25): Transnational Activism

Readings:

Week 12 (April 1): Research Presentations I

Week 13 (April 8): Research Presentations II

Week 14 (April 15): Research Presentations III

Week 15 (April 22): Conclusion: Thoughts on Social Movements' Impact

Final Papers due in class. Submit one hard copy and one electronic copy.

Readings: