Transitional Justice 2001F/
Political Science 2203F
Problems in Transitional Justice and Post-Conflict Reconstruction

Fall Term 2021
Instructor: Dr. Samar El-Masri
Office Hours: By appointment
Email: selmasr2@uwo.ca

I-Course Delivery

This course is designated as “blended,” which means that while the lectures will be posted online, we will have time allocated to do a weekly in-person tutorial. Thus, each week, and before you attend the tutorial, you are required to do the readings and listen to the posted PowerPoint lectures on OWL. The issues that we will discuss are intimately tied to this material.

II-Course Description

This course introduces students to interdisciplinary studies of transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction. Students will examine key concepts and explore theoretical problems in confronting and seeking solutions to the aftermath of large-scale events of social violence.

III-How to think about this course

This course may be a valuable addition to your academic year for three reasons: First, it is a crucial building block for your studies in transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction, as it outlines the major themes and approaches in the field as well as discusses the major issues and debates that are presently examined in the literature. Second, it provides you with ample opportunity to develop your critical thinking in ways that relate to areas that are specifically of interest to you. Finally, it exposes you not only to different debates and approaches that you may not be aware of, but also to different disciplines. One of the special things about this course is that it attracts students from various disciplines and that may have a completely different perspective on issues. Discussing questions in our one-hour tutorials may help enrich your experience in this course.
IV-Objectives

This course is not only designed to outline and assess the major theories and perspectives in the field, but also develop your critical thinking skills, and your understanding of how power, culture and history impact our understanding of particular issues and events. By the end of the course students should be able to:

1. Discuss different approaches to transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction
2. Describe the key components of the field
3. Evaluate the effectiveness of a transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction response
4. Discuss a current transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction issue in historical context
5. Analyze a current policy and political issues in transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction

V-Required Texts

Because the field of transitional justice and post-conflict reconstruction is new, and because it involves different areas and disciplines, there will be no one textbook that is required for this course. Instead, the reading list will involve academic articles, book chapters, and technical reports, that you will find in the “Course Readings” on this course OWL’s page. You are responsible for accessing them yourself.

VI-Grade Distribution

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Midterm Exam (due October 27)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Essay (Nov 23)</td>
<td>40%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final Exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
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VIII-Explaining the Components of the Course:

1-Participation

- We will conduct a weekly in-person tutorial. The tutorial, which will run for one hour, is designed to help students interact with one another, think about various questions, and try to find solutions with the help of their classmates. The importance of context will be emphasized as we move from one case study to the next. Your attendance is required, and your mark will be based on your contribution in the class.
- If for any reason, you feel that you were not able to participate as you would like, or you could have made a different point, then you are more than welcome to send
me a one/two double-spaced page paper about that, which will then be corrected and counted towards your participation mark.

- As some of the issues that we deal with in this class are extremely disturbing, I encourage students who may have any concerns about a specific topic to discuss them with me before the subject comes up. I will also understand if some students choose to step out of the class as a result. While they will NOT be academically penalized, they will be responsible for any material missed.
- All our interactions should be guided by respect. Uncivil, disrespectful, abusive or any inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated.
- If you have any concerns or questions, please do not hesitate to contact me in-person (before or after class), or virtually through an email, or an arranged zoom call.

2-Midterm Exam

Students will write a test that will be based on material covered from the first day of class up until the end of week seven on peacebuilding.

3-Final Exam

During the December exam period, students will write a two-hour exam based on the material covered from the first day of class to the last day of class.

4-Essay

You will be required to write one essay between 2250-2500 words (excluding bibliography), double-spaced, and in Times New Roman 12 pt font. The topic of the paper may be selected from the list of topics provided below. Students must submit their essay to OWL. You need to know few things about this component of the course:

a-Late Penalty: The completed paper must be submitted on November 24 (London Ontario time). A late penalty of 10% per day will be applied to papers submitted at any point after that date.

b-Turnitin: Essays must be submitted to Turnitin.com, using the link on OWL. All required papers may be 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).
c- Citation Style: Citations must be formatted using Chicago-style footnotes, not in-text citations. Students are advised to consult a writer’s handbook when composing their essays in order to see how to format things like bibliography and footnotes. One excellent handbook is A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations by Kate L. Turabian. A useful link may be found at the following url: http://www.wisc.edu/writing/Handbook/DocChicago.html

d- Spelling and Grammatical Errors: Grammatical, spelling, and other errors are not acceptable. You are responsible for your own work, and, as such, you must be careful to proofread your work before turning it in.

e- Bibliography: You must attach a Bibliography to your essay. Your bibliography must include a minimum of four academic sources (consult a librarian for clarification on what counts as an academic source (e.g., newspapers, magazines, and encyclopedias do not count). Failure to include at least four academic sources will result in a grade of “F”. The highest grades in this course typically go to students that consult a large number of high-quality source materials. Consulting more than six sources is highly recommended.

f- Academic Dishonesty: Many different types of actions may be considered academically dishonest. These might include, although not exhaustively, the following: cheating, submission of work not authored by you, double submission, fabrication, plagiarism. Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence at www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf. You are advised to familiarize yourself with the guidelines set out in the Academic Handbook, Rights and Responsibilities, Scholastic Discipline - Undergrad.

Students are also advised to utilize the Library’s tools on plagiarism: http://www.lib.uwo.ca/tutorials/plagiarism/index.html

g- Other Resources: There are many resources at Western designed to assist you in your learning. You are strongly advised to utilize these services. The Student Development Centre offers many services, including Effective Writing Programs and Learning Skills Services. The Student Development Centre is located in UCC Suite 210; they can be reached by telephone at (519)661-2147, by email at exams@sdc.uwo.ca, or on the web at http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/. You should also become familiar with the services offered by the University Library System. The D.B. Weldon Library may be contacted by telephone at (519)661-3162 or by email at dbwref@lib.uwo.ca, or on the web at http://www.lib.uwo.ca/weldon/#

h- Non-medical and Medical accommodation: Western University requires documentation from the medical community for students who require academic accommodation due to medical illness—even accommodation for medical illness of work worth less than 10% of the total course grade. Students are required to have their
physician or health care provider fill out the Student Medical Certificate. Medical certificates will only be considered for students seriously affected by illness, who cannot reasonably be expected to meet his/her academic responsibilities. Medical certificates may NOT be issued for minor illness like colds, non-acute vomiting or diarrhea, menstrual cramps, insomnia, or for past illnesses.

If the requested accommodation is related to a death in the family, please see your Academic Counsellor directly. If a student misses a midterm or final exam for non-medical reasons, accommodation must be sought and obtained from Academic Counselling, or else the student will receive a grade of zero. Late essays will be subject to a penalty of 10% per day unless accommodation is granted by Academic Counselling.

If documentation is required for either medical or non-medical academic accommodation, then such documentation must be submitted by the student directly to the appropriate Faculty Dean’s office and NOT to the instructor. It will be the Dean’s office that will determine if accommodation is warranted.

For further information, please see the Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness at https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/index.cfm.

VII-IMPORTANT AND USEFUL INFORMATION:

1- Important Notice re: Prerequisites/Antirequisites: 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. (Office of the Dean, Faculty of Social Science)

2-Completion of All Requirements: According to the Dean’s office, Students who fail to complete all evaluation components of the course, without supporting medical documentation or justifiable and documented extenuating circumstances will be disqualified from appealing the course’s final grade.

3-Examinations’ limitations: A student is entitled to be examined in courses in which registration is maintained, subject to the following limitations:
- A student may be debarred from writing the final examination for failure to maintain satisfactory academic standing throughout the year.
- On the recommendation of the Department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.

4-Students with Disabilities: Any student with a disability is advised to contact the Coordinator for Services for Students with Disabilities in order to ensure that the appropriate arrangements are made to accommodate that student. The Centre for Student Development is located in UCC Suite 210; they can be reached by telephone at
5-Mental/Emotional Distress: Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

VIII-COURSE OUTLINE BY TOPIC:

September 8  Introduction  

Required Readings:
(In this class we will do an overview of the course. There are no assigned readings.)

September 15  Understanding Peace

Required Readings:


September 22  Transitions and Democracy

Required Readings:


September 29  Addressing Colonial Harms

*Required Readings:*


October 06  The Role of the United Nations

*Required Readings:*

Roger MacGinty and Andrew Williams, “Chapter 5: Post-conflict reconstruction and development,” in *Conflict and Development* (London: Routledge, 2009), 122-152.


*Recommended readings to review the basics about the UN:*


October 13  Humanitarian Intervention

*Required Readings:*

October 20  Peacebuilding

*Required Readings:*


October 27:  Transitional Justice Mechanism: Trials

*Required Readings:*


(MIDTERM DUE)

November 03  No class today

November 10  Transitional Justice Mechanism: Truth-Telling

*Required Readings:*

Priscilla Hayner, “Chapter Two: Confronting Past Crimes: Transitional Justice and the Phenomenon of Truth Commissions,”

November 17  Transitional Justice Mechanism: Reparations

Required Readings:


November 24  Civil Society

Required Readings:


(ESSAY DUE)

December 01  Gender

Required Readings:


## ESSAY GRADING GUIDE

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<th>Argument</th>
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<td>Organization of the Essay</td>
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