

POLI 421 – Transnational Politics (3 credits)
Fall 2025

Instructor: Dr. Mark Paradis

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Office Hours: Mondays from 13:15-14:15 in H-1213

Class Time: Wednesdays from 17:45-20:15

Class Location: FB S109 SGW

This seminar examines the activities of non-state actors, including NGOs, social movements, corporations, and individuals, and their roles in creating global society, building international institutions, and shaping foreign policy. While many theories have been proposed to address aspects of transnational politics, this course is not organized around them. Instead, we will embrace analytical eclecticism as we explore important actors and issues in the study of transnational politics. After an introduction to transnational politics and the spread of norms, we will explore the role of transnational actors, including international organizations (IGOs and NGOs), regional organizations, international civil society, multinational corporations, transnational terrorists, and transnational organized crime. We will also explore multiple transnational issues, including technology and civil society, environmental politics, corporate responsibility, private transnational regulation, and transnational violence.

COURSE FORMAT

The course will be held in-person. Since this course is a seminar, attendance is required.

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY

For emails with the instructor, every effort will be made to respond within 24 hours on weekdays. On weekends, the delay may be longer. For emails, you are expected to:

1. Include the course number and purpose of the email in the email subject.
2. Do not send follow-up emails within 24 hours or on weekends. If you do, both the original and follow-up emails will be ignored.
3. If your email is asking about facts found directly in the syllabus, it will be ignored (for example, asking about the date of the midterm). The syllabus is made available to all students, and it is disrespectful to expect the instructor to look up something when you are unwilling to do so.
4. Do not send messages through Moodle. I almost never check Moodle messages.

COURSE READINGS

All course readings will be posted on Moodle for download. Since this is a summer class, I've tried to keep the reading load manageable. I have also tried to select a mixture of classic pieces and cutting edge new research. For most topics, I have included a list of required readings and optional readings. For the optional readings, students will only be responsible for the portion of the readings covered in lectures.

REQUIREMENTS

Participation: 15%

This class is a seminar. Other than the first day of class, there will be no lectures. Therefore, attendance and participation are extremely important. Each week, students should come to class having read the assigned readings and prepared to discuss the topic of the week.

Weekly Questions: 10%

Each week, students will submit three (3) discussion questions based on the readings. These questions must be submitted on Moodle by 10pm the night before the class. Ideally, questions won't focus on a single reading, but will build links between multiple readings (although, questions on single readings may be acceptable). Each student must submit questions for 8 of the 11 classes.

Discussion Leadership: 10%

In order to help structure the discussion each week, 1-2 students will be responsible for leading the discussion. When leading discussions, students should take extra care in doing the readings. The weekly questions are available in order to help you structure the discussion. You may use none, some, or all of the questions to structure a coherent discussion.

Response Papers: 25%

Twice during the semester, students will submit a 5-7 page (double-spaced) critical response paper to the readings for the chosen week. The first response is worth 10%. The second response paper is worth 15%.

- Papers should *briefly* summarize the readings and then discuss areas of weakness, or opportunity for growth in the literature.
- For the summary portion of the response paper, students should summarize the key points of every reading for the week. Each summary should be approximately half a page (i.e. if there are 5 readings, the summary section should not exceed 2.5 pages).
- For the critique portion of the response papers, students should focus on 1-2 readings and analyze weaknesses and/or areas for future research in those papers. The entire critique section should ideally include 2-3 arguments. Critiques should focus on the logic of the author(s)' argument, not the argument/paper you wish they wrote.
- Response papers are due the week after the topic is discussed in class. You may not submit a response paper for the weeks you are discussion leader.

Research Paper: 40%

Students will write a 20-page research paper on a topic of their choice. Papers can either be a) empirical papers or b) a critical review of the literature on a particular topic. Empirical papers require the selection of a research puzzle, the identification of a theory that could explain this puzzle (not an entire paradigm), and provide evidence that tests the proposed theory. Critical review papers *do not* simply summarize the literature on the topic. Instead, it critically analyzes the literature and suggests a typology, areas of possible synthesis, critical weaknesses, or avenues for future research. Papers must be double-spaced with normal margins. References lists and appendices do not count towards the page limit. Papers are due on November 19 by the start of class.

LATE POLICY

Papers must be submitted by the end of class on August 16. Papers that are not turned in on time will be penalized 5% per day. Late papers will not receive any comments and will not be accepted more than a week late. If you are having any problems in handling the course load, please speak to me ASAP. There are more solutions available if you approach me early.

RE-GRADES

If you believe that your grade on an assignment does not reflect the quality of your work, it is your right to request a re-grade. However, you must follow these steps:

1. You must wait 7 days before requesting a re-grade.
2. You must submit a written statement detailing why you believe your grade should be changed. You should point to specific areas of your exam/paper that you believe were graded unfairly AND explain why.
3. I will then re-grade your ENTIRE assignment. I reserve the right to RAISE or LOWER your grade.
4. After the re-grade, if you still believe that your grade is unfair, you must then follow the Department's procedures for re-grades.

CHANGES TO THE SYLLABUS

I reserve the right to amend the schedule of meetings and assignments listed in this syllabus as might become necessary based on events throughout the semester. Any changes to the syllabus will be announced and students will receive an amended syllabus in writing. Copies of the most up to date syllabus can be found on the course website on Moodle.

SCHEDULE

September 3 – Introduction to the Course

Risse, Thomas. 2010. "Transnational Actors and World Politics." In *Corporate Ethics and Corporate Governance*, edited by Walter Ch. Zimmerli, Klaus Richter, and Markus Holzinger, 251-286. New York: Springer.

September 10 – Introduction to Transnational Politics

Nye, Joseph S. and Robert O. Keohane. 1971. "Transnational Relations and World Politics: An Introduction." *International Organization* 25 (3): 329-349.

Tarrow, Sidney. 2001. "Transnational Politics: Contention and Institutions in International Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science* 4: 1-20.

Bexell, Magdalena, Jonas Tallberg, and Anders Uhlin. 2010. "Democracy in Global Governance: The Promises and Pitfalls of Transnational Actors." *Global Governance* 16 (1): 81-101.

Büthe, Tim. 2010. "Global Private Politics: A Research Agenda." *Business and Politics* 12 (3): 1-24.

Sikkink, Kathryn. 1998. "Transnational Politics, International Relations Theory, and Human Rights." *PS: Political Science and Politics* 31 (3): 516-523.

September 17 – Transnational Norms

Finnemore, Martha and Kathryn Sikkink. 1998. "International Norms Dynamics and Political Change." *International Organization* 52 (4): 867-917.

Checkel, Jeffrey T. 2001. "Why Comply? Social Learning and European Identity Change." *International Organization* 55 (3): 553-588.

Risse, Thomas. 2000. "'Let's Argue!': Communicative Action in World Politics." *International Organization* 54 (1): 1-39.

Acharya, Amitav. 2004. "How Ideas Spread: Whose Norms Matter? Norm Localization and Institutional Change in Asian Regionalism." *International Organization* 58 (2): 239-275.

Zwingel, Susanne. 2012. "How do norms travel? Theorizing international women's rights in transnational perspective." *International Studies Quarterly* 56 (1): 115-129.

September 24 – International Organizations

Cronin, Bruce. 2002. "The Two Faces of the United Nations: The Tension between Intergovernmentalism and Transnationalism." *Global Governance* 8 (1): 53-71.

Barnett, Michael N. and Martha Finnemore. 1999. "The Politics, Power, and Pathologies of International Organizations." *International Organization* 53 (4): 699-732.

Abbott, Kenneth W. and Duncan Snidal. 2010. "International Regulation without International Government: Improving IO Performance through Orchestration." *Review of International Organizations* 5 (3): 315-44.

Tallberg, Jonas, Thomas Sommerer, Theresa Squatrito, and Christer Jonsson. 2014. "Explaining the Transnational Design of International Organizations." *International Organization* 68: 741-774.

Chapman, Terrence L. 2009. "Audience Beliefs and International Organization Legitimacy." *International Organization* 63 (4): 733-764.

October 1 – Regional Organizations

Checkel, Jeffrey T. 2005. "International Institutions and Socialization in Europe: Introduction and Framework." *International Organization* 59 (4): 801-826.

Deutschmann, Emanuel, Jan Delhey, Monika Verbalyte, and Auke Aplowski. 2018. "The Power of Contact: Europe as a Network of Transnational Attachment." *European Journal of Political Research* 57 (4): 963-988.

Vines, Alex. 2013. "A Decade of African Peace and Security Architecture." *International Affairs* 89 (1): 89-109.

Haacke, Jurgen and Paul D. Williams. 2008. "Regional Arrangements, Securitization, and Transnational Challenges: The African Union and the Association of Southeast Asian Nations Compared." *Security Studies* 17 (4): 775-809.

Briceño-Ruiz, José and Andrea Ribeiro Hoffmann. 2015. "Post-Hegemonic Regionalism, UNASUR, and the Reconfiguration of Regional Cooperation in South America." *Canadian Journal of Latina American and Caribbean Studies* 40 (1): 48-62.

October 8 – Transnational Civil Society (Theory)

Lipschutz, Ronnie. 1992. "Reconstructing World Politics: The Emergence of Global Civil Society." *Millennium – Journal of International Studies* 21(3): 389-420.

Keck, Margaret E. and Kathryn Sikkink. 1999. "Transnational Advocacy Networks in International and Regional Politics." *International Social Science Journal* 51 (159): 89-101.

Batliwala, Srilatha. 2002. "Grassroots Movements as Transnational Actors: Implications for Global Civil Society." *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations* 13(4): 393-409.

Cross, Mai'a K. Davis. 2013. "Rethinking Epistemic Communities Twenty Years Later." *Review of International Studies* 39 (1): 137-160.

Kaba, Marcel. 2021. "NGO Accountability: A Conceptual Review across the Engaged Disciplines." *International Studies Review* 23: 958-996.

October 15 – No Class (Reading Week)

October 22 – Transnational Civil Society (Practice); Paper Workshop

Price, Richard. 1998. "Reversing the Gun Sights: Transnational Civil Society Targets Land Mines." *International Organization*. 52 (3): 613-644.

Kirchhof, Astrid Mignon and Jan-Henrik Meyer. 2014. "Global Protest against Nuclear Power: Transfer and Transnational Exchange in the 1970s and 1980s." *Historical Social Research* 39 (1): 165-190.

Bair, Jennifer and Florence Palpacuer. 2012. "From Varieties of Capitalism to Varieties of Activism: The Antisweatshop Movement in Comparative Perspective." *Social Problems* 59 (4): 522-43.

Steger, Manfred B. and Erin K. Wilson. 2012. "Anti-Globalization or Alter-Globalization? Mapping the Political Ideology of the Global Justice Movement." *International Studies Quarterly* 56 (3): 439-454.

October 29 – Technology and Transnational Civil Society

Diamond, Larry. 2010. "Liberation Technology." *Journal of Democracy* 21 (3): 69-83.

Bode, Leticia. 2016. "Political News in the News Feed: Learning Politics from Social Media." *Mass Communication and Society* 19 (1): 24-48.

Gunitsky, Seva. 2015. "Corrupting the Cyber-Commons: Social Media as a Tool of Autocratic Stability." *Perspectives on Politics* 13 (1): 42-54.

Rød, Espen Geelmuyden and Nils B. Weidmann. 2015. "Empowering Activists or Autocrats? The Internet in Authoritarian Regimes." *Journal of Peace Research* 52 (3): 338-351.

Tallberg, Jonas, Eva Erman, Markus Furendal, Johannes Geith, Mark Klamberg, and Magnus Lundgren. 2023. "The Global Governance of Artificial Intelligence: Next steps for empirical and normative research." *International Studies Review* 25 (3): viad040

November 5 – No Class (instructor at workshop)

November 12 – Violent Non-State Actors

Salehyan, Idean. 2008. "No Shelter Here: Rebel Sanctuaries and International Conflict." *Journal of Politics* 70 (1): 54-66.

Chenoweth, Erica. 2013. "Terrorism and Democracy." *Annual Review of Political Science* 16: 355-378.

Asal, Victor, Brian Nussbaum, and D. William Harrington. 2007. "Terrorism as Transnational Advocacy: An Organizational and Tactical Examination." *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 30 (1): 15-39.

Andreas, Peter. 2011. "Illicit Globalization: Myths, Misconceptions, and Historical Lessons." *Political Research Quarterly* 126 (3): 403-425.

Atran, Scott. 2021. "Psychology of Transnational Terrorism and Extreme Political Conflict." *Annual Review of Psychology* 72: 6.1-6.31.

November 19 – Multinational Corporations (PAPER DUE)

Spar, Debora L. and Lane T. La Mure. 2003. "The Power of Activism: Assessing the Impact of NGOs on Global Business." *California Management Review* 45 (3): 78-101.

Fridell, Maria, Ian Hudson, and Mark Hudson. 2008. "With Friends Like These: The Corporate Response to Fair Trade Coffee." *Review of Radical Political Economics* 40 (8): 8-34.

Bloomfield, Michael J. 2014. "Shame Campaigns and Environmental Justice: Corporate Shaming as Activist Strategy." *Environmental Politics* 23 (2): 263-281.

Schaferhoff, Marco, Sabine Campe, and Christopher Kaan. 2009. "Transnational Public-Private Partnerships in International Relations: Making Sense of Concepts, Research Frameworks, and Results." *International Studies Review* 11 (3): 451-474.

Berliner, Daniel and Aseem Prakash. 2015. "'Bluewashing' the Firm? Voluntary Regulations, Program Design, and Member Compliance with the United Nations Global Compact." *Policy Studies Journal* 43 (1): 115-138.

November 26 – Environmental Politics

Hale, Thomas. 2020. "Transnational Actors and Transnational Governance in Global Environmental Politics." *Annual Review of Political Science* 23: 203-220.

Andonova, Liliana B., Thomas N. Hale, and Charles B. Roger. 2017. "National Policy and Transnational Governance of Climate Change: Substitutes or Complements?" *International Studies Quarterly* 61: 253-268.

Gordon, David J. 2013. "Between Local Innovation and Global Impact: Cities, Networks, and the Governance of Climate Change." *Canadian Foreign Policy Journal* 19 (3): 288-307.

van der Ven, Hamish. 2014. "Socializing the C-Suite: Why Some Bix-Box Retailers are 'Greener' than Others." *Business and Politics* 16 (1): 31-63.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

Content belonging to instructors shared in online courses, including, but not limited to, online lectures, course notes, and video recordings of classes remain the intellectual property of the faculty member. It may not be distributed, published or broadcast, in whole or in part, without the express permission of the faculty member. Students are also forbidden to use their own means of recording any elements of an online class or lecture without express permission of the instructor. Any unauthorized sharing of course content may constitute a breach of the Academic Code of Conduct and/or the Code of Rights and Responsibilities. As specified in the Policy on Intellectual Property, the University does not claim any ownership of or interest in any student IP. All university members retain copyright over their work.

PLAGIARISM

Department of Political Science Statement on Plagiarism

The Department of Political Science has zero tolerance for plagiarism.

1. What is plagiarism? The University defines plagiarism as “the presentation of the work of another person, in whatever form, as one’s own or without proper acknowledgement” (Concordia Undergraduate Calendar 2020-2021, section 17.10.3 (<https://www.concordia.ca/academics/undergraduate/calendar/current/17-10.html>)). Plagiarism is an academic offence governed by the Code of Conduct (Academic). To find out more about how to avoid plagiarism, see the Concordia University Student Success Centre at: <https://www.concordia.ca/students/success.html>
2. What are the consequences of being caught? Students caught plagiarizing are subject to the following sanctions: (a) a written reprimand; (b) a piece of work be re-submitted; (c) an examination be taken anew; (d) a grade reduction or grade of zero for the piece of work in question; (e) a grade reduction or failing grade for the course; (f) a failing grade and ineligibility for a supplemental examination or any other evaluative exercise for the course; (g) the obligation to take and pass courses of up to twenty-four (24) credits in addition to the total number of credits required for the student’s program; (h) suspension for a period not to exceed six (6) academic terms. Suspensions shall entail the withdrawal of all University privileges, including the right to enter and be on University premises; (i) expulsion from the University. Expulsion entails the permanent termination of all University privileges. In the case of a student who has already graduated, the only two available sanctions are (i) a notation on the student’s academic record that he or she has been found guilty of academic misconduct; or (ii) a recommendation to Senate for the revocation of the degree obtained. (Undergraduate Calendar, p. 58). Complete regulations can be found in section 17.10.3 of the Undergraduate Calendar.
3. See also The Political Science Department's "Resources on Avoiding Plagiarism" at: <https://www.concordia.ca/artsci/polisci/student-life/students.html#plagiarism> and the full (and updated) Academic Code of Conduct here: <http://www.concordia.ca/content/dam/common/docs/policies/official-policies/Academic-Code-Conduct-2015.pdf>.

EXTRAORDINARY CIRCUMSTANCES

For undergraduate courses & courses that are cross-listed with graduate courses:

In the event of extraordinary circumstances and pursuant to the [Academic regulations - Concordia University](#) - Concordia University, the University may modify the delivery, content, structure, forum, location and/or evaluation scheme. In the event of such extraordinary circumstances, students will be informed of the changes.

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Concordia University is working to create inclusive learning environments. Please notify me if there are aspects of the instruction or design of this course that result in disability-related barriers to your participation. You are also encouraged to contact the Access Centre for Students with Disabilities (ACSD) as soon as possible so that this office can assist with the necessary accommodations.

SEXUAL HARASSMENT

As a professor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment for my students and for the campus as a whole. If you have experienced sexual harassment, sexual violence or discrimination, Concordia's Sexual Assault Resource Centre provides information available resources: <https://www.concordia.ca/students/sexual-assault.html>.