

POL108Y Global Networks 2008-2009

Monday 12-2, Convocation Hall
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Munk Centre for International Studies
University of Toronto

Exclusion: POL100Y, POL102Y1, POL103Y1

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Course Description

Pol108 Global Networks is an introduction to global politics, with a special focus on the emergence of networks as a new formation on the world political landscape. After reviewing major features and concepts of global politics, the course then analyzes the structure and function of global networks, ranging from transnational corporations to networks of terror and criminals, and global civil society networks. Throughout the course, we examine how networks challenge some of the traditional ways we think about international relations, including the nature of state sovereignty, global governance, citizenship, accountability and legitimacy. In 2008-2009, we pay particular attention to the global south.

All information about Pol108, including lecture schedule, required readings, assignments, tutorial assignments and course news, can be found on the course website at <http://www.pol108.net/>.

It is essential that all students enrolled in Pol108 familiarize themselves with the website and visit it continuously throughout the term. Although the basic parameters of the course have been set, including lecture topics, course text, and assignments, the required and recommended weekly readings may change as current events dictate. The first time you visit the site, please register as a user, make sure to click on to receive email notifications of announcements and changes to the website, and spend some time exploring its features.

Course Readings

All required weekly readings are available online on the course website. Some of these readings can only be accessed after you have familiarized yourself with the UofT electronic journals website. It is important that you do this BEFORE the weeks' readings and it is strongly recommended that you spend the first week downloading and printing out all of the required readings for the course.

There are also three books that are required reading for the course, which you have to read in order to complete the major assignment for this course. Copies of these books have been placed on order at the Toronto Women's Bookstore, which is located at 73 Harbord Street (Harbord and Spadina). The books are also widely available at libraries, bookstores and for purchase online.

Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror and Heroism in Colonial Africa* (Houghton Mifflin: 1998)

John Le Carré, *The Mission Song* (Hodder and Stoughton: 2006).

James Orbinski, *An Imperfect Offering: Humanitarian Action in the Twenty-First Century* (Doubleday Canada: 2008).

Assignments and Grading

Summary:

- 1) Midterm exam (15%): In-class December 1st. Location TBA.
- 2) Essay (30%): Due February 23rd at the BEGINNING of the lecture (First lecture after reading week)
- 3) Tutorials (20%)
 - a. 10%: Participation
 - b. 10%: Tutorial presentations (one presentation each term)
- 4) Final exam (35%): Date TBA.

Detailed Description of Assignments

1) Midterm exam (10%)

In-class December 1st. Location TBA.

2) Essay and Critical Annotated Bibliography (35%)

There is only one major assignment in this course, which comprises a significant portion of your final grade. The assignment is due on February 23rd, which is the first lecture after Reading Week. **DO NOT START WORKING ON THIS ASSIGNMENT THE WEEK BEFORE IT IS DUE.** In order to do well on this assignment, you will have to begin working on the paper well before the deadline. In other words, start reading the three assigned books NOW!

The assignment has two parts: an analytical paper and an annotated bibliography.

PART ONE:

The analytical paper draws on the three books that have been assigned as mandatory reading in the course: *King Leopold's Ghost*, *The Mission Song*, and *An Imperfect Offering*. These books have been carefully selected, because they reflect important themes in global politics that we examine in this course. These themes include, but are not limited to: humanitarianism, human rights, human rights networks and activism, conflict, colonialism/post-colonialism, global corporations, markets, states, "dark" networks, religion and politics, war crimes, crimes against humanity, non-governmental organizations, peacekeeping, civil and ethnic conflict, and international institutions.

In the first part of the assignment, you will 1) identify a theme for investigation that appears in the three books, 2) develop an interesting analytical question about that theme, 3) explain why your research question is important; 4) trace how your research question connects to the scholarly literature, and 5) explain how you would do research on your question if you had time, the funding, and access to the places and people that are important to your story.

These are some questions that you should consider in this part of the assignment:

- What political issue, problem or question is presented in the three books? Why or how is this a current problem in contemporary global politics?
- How does each of the three books contribute to the analysis of your theme? Do they contradict each other? How do they overlap? What can you learn about global politics from these books?
- What do you still want to know that these books don't tell you? What research question grows out of this theme?
- Do scholarly sources corroborate or contradict what you have read in the three books? How? In what ways?

- How do different modes of inquiry (i.e. novels versus history versus political science) contribute different kinds of knowledge? How do they compliment or contradict each other?
- Some books appear to be more subjective than others. Is this true? Does this make a difference in how you conduct your research? If so, how? If not, why not? To what degree is it possible to be objective?
- How do you build a research project that investigates your theme?
- What kinds of analytical questions can you ask about your theme? How do you propose to answer these questions?

Your paper should be fifteen, double-spaced pages with one-inch margins, using 12-point Times New Roman font.

PART TWO:

The second part of this assignment is a critical annotated bibliography. An annotated bibliography is a series of brief but critical summaries of what has been written on your theme. You will need a minimum of 10 entries, each of which focuses on a book, a book chapter, or a peer-reviewed journal article on the debates and issues of your theme (excluding the three books that have been assigned in the course). The quality of your sources is important when selecting your material. You will be assessed on the quality of your choices. Your sources must be acceptable academic sources (i.e., No Wikipedia). A **MAXIMUM** of **THREE** sources may be internet-only sources. Your TA will discuss with you what sources are acceptable for this assignment. For each entry, you should consider these questions:

- What are the strengths/limitations of this source?
- How is this source similar to or different from other sources?
- How and what does this source contribute to your research?
- What are the strengths/weaknesses of the arguments in this source?

3) Tutorials (20%)

Tutorial Schedule: Tutorials sign-up will take place in the lecture on September 29th, so it is crucial that you attend this lecture. Tutorials will begin the following week (the week of October 5th) and will run every week until the end of the first term. During the second term, the first tutorial will take place during the first week of the semester, the week of January 5th, where you will receive your marked midterm and sign-up for your second term research presentation. There will be **NO TUTORIALS** for the remainder of January. Tutorials will resume the week of February 2nd, and will take place weekly until the end of term.

The tutorials are designed to allow you to debate important issues, ask questions, and discuss the theories and concepts of the course. Your TA will also play an important role in helping you to design your papers, giving feedback on your tests and assignments, and

answering questions about difficult concepts. In addition, tutorials are a place where you can interact with your fellow students and learn from each other. The tutorial is worth 20% of your final grade in the course. This constitutes a substantial portion of your final grade, which means that “showing up” will not be sufficient for you to achieve a good grade in this course. The 20% will be broken down as follows:

- 10% participation and attendance
- 5% **Reading memo and presentation** in the First Semester

At the beginning of the first term, each student will sign up to write a reading memo and do a reading memo presentation during the first semester. Your reading memo should be one page single-spaced. The purpose of this memo is to make analytical connections between the “real world” and the readings in the course. You should find a news article that describes a current issue or event that is relevant to the reading assignment. Your memo should not just be a summary of the issue or event but rather it should draw explicitly on the course reading in order to provide an analysis of what you have read. For instance, you could discuss how the news item either supports or contradicts the reading, or you could show how the reading only partly explains your news item. Your memo should also pose at least 2 further questions about the topic that are not answered in your analysis. You should attach your news article to your memo when you hand it in. At the beginning of each tutorial, the students who have written reading memos will be required to make a 5-minute presentation to the class based on their memo. These memos and your presentations will be used to launch the discussion for the day’s tutorial. Your presentation should be short and informal, and should pose questions to get class discussions started.

- 5% **Research presentation** in the Second Semester

At the beginning of the second semester, each student will be required to sign up to present their research to their tutorial group. Your presentation should be short and informal – between 5 to 10 minutes long. Since these presentations take place throughout the term, we expect that each student will be at different stages in their research. However, you will be expected to introduce the theme of your research, present your research question, and briefly discuss your research. You should also reflect on how your research relates to the content of the course. This will provide you with an opportunity to receive feedback about your paper from your peers. You are required to hand in a one-page, single-spaced research memo to your TA on the day of your presentation.

4) Final Exam (35%)

Date TBA

NOTE: Students are strongly advised to keep rough and draft work and hard copies of their essays and assignments before handing in to the Department. These should be kept until the marked assignments have been returned.

Plagiarism is a serious academic offence and will be dealt with accordingly. For further clarification and information, please see the University of Toronto's policy on Plagiarism at <http://www.utoronto.ca/writing/plagsep.html>.

Policy Regarding Late Papers and Extensions

The essay/critical annotated bibliography is due at the BEGINNING of the lecture on February 23rd. Any paper received after the first 20 minutes of the lecture will be considered late, and will have 2% deducted from its final grade. The penalty for late papers is 2% per day, excluding weekends.

Late reading memos and research presentations memos will NOT be accepted by your TA.

Extensions must be requested as much in advance as possible, and are only granted under exceptional circumstances. You must provide official documentation (e.g. official medical certificate, death certificate, letter from your registrar, letter from Accessibility Services) justifying the extension. If you wish to request an extension, email the Head TA directly (pol108headta@gmail.com).

Lecture and Reading Schedule

The lecture and readings schedule are posted on the course website, at www.pol108.net.

TVO Events at the Munk Centre

Throughout the academic year, TVO's "The Agenda" will take place in the Campbell Conference room at the Munk Centre for International Studies. This is a unique opportunity for students to hear speakers debate about current political and social issues. TVO reserves a limited number of spaces for POL108 students to attend as members of a live studio audience. Students have the opportunity to engage with the speakers during the show, by asking questions and participating in the show. This is also an opportunity for students to receive extra bonus marks in the course. For each show that a student attends, they will receive 1% bonus on their final mark. Since space is limited, there will be a registration announcement in the week prior to the show, and students MUST register with the head TA in order to attend the event and receive credit.