POLISCI 390/SOC 334: Social Protest and Change

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1808 Chicago Avenue, room 103
Office Hours: MW 5:00-6:00 PM, 5:00-6:00 PM
Sign up: https://www.wejoinin.com/robert.braun
RING DOOR BELL!!

Spring 2018
Technological Institute M164
MW 3:30-4:50 PM

Course description

In this course we will examine an important driver of cultural and political transformation: social movements. As the Arab Spring, Russian Revolution and Civil Rights movement reveal ordinary people have been able to shape institutions through extraordinary mobilization. This course will try to shed light on the root causes of mobilization by reviewing both theory and research on social movements. Understanding movements requires both an understanding of abstract theories and detailed knowledge of specific instances of collective action. During lecture you will be introduced to social movement theories. Readings apply these theories to specific cases such as the civil rights movement, the Iranian Revolution, the revolutions of 1989, immigrant mobilization in Europe and the pro-abortion movement in the US. Students will explore an additional case on their own.

After discussing classical theories of mobilization which emphasize cleavages, grievances and collective breakdown, this class will study movements from the ground up. It starts with the question why individuals decide to join movements, highlighting the importance of individual networks, norms and emotions. It then studies the role of organizational resources and networks in mobilization and ends with factors located in the broader political and cultural context. As you will soon find out all of these factors are intertwined.

Students will improve their analytical skills by drawing connections between
social science theory, historical monographs, journalistic accounts and quantitative analysis. Upon completing the course, students will not only be acquainted with the main types of explanations offered for social movements, but they will also be able to evaluate the evidence supporting the various explanations.

**Required Text**

The following book is available for purchase at the Norris bookstore:


Other texts are available on CANVAS, ONLINE or via the library website as EBOOKS or EJOURNALS.

**Requirements**

The formal requirements and grade calculation are as follows:

- One in-class examination: 35% of grade.
- 4 Assignments: 15% of grade.
- Presentation: 20% of grade.
- Paper: 30% grade.

**Midterm**

The midterm will be composed of identification questions, short answer questions and an essay question. The midterm will be held in class (Technological Institute M164) on **5/14**.

**Presentation**

You will give a short presentation about **ONE** social revolution or overtime spike in popular protest. In your presentation you will:

1. Give a overview of this episode of contention. Introduce us to its key actors, goals and broader context.
2. Explain why you think this episode can be conceptualized as a social movement.
3. Use the at least 3 theories introduced in class and evaluate whether they are useful for explaining the emergence of this movement. Provide evidence for your argument(s).
Use slides, maps and pictures to illustrate your work. Also provide your audience with all relevant citations. TIME YOUR PRESENTATION.

You can choose the episode yourself but it should not be covered in lecture. You are not allowed to work on the civil rights movement or the woman’s movement in the United States. Examples of cases you could choose are:

- The Arab Spring.
- Anti-immigrant protests in Germany.
- The Russian Revolution.
- The rise of the KKK.
- The French Revolution.
- Many others (consult us before you make a final choice).

For your presentation you will have to collect and read additional literature on your own. You have to read at least 5 academic sources. Your TA and Professor can be consulted for help. As a first step you might want to look at the following reference works for inspiration. Slides have to be send to your TA an hour before your presentation.

- Sidney Tarrow. Power in movement: Social movements, collective action and mass politics in the modern state, 1994

Academic books can be recognized by the fact that they are published by academic presses (e.g. Cambridge University Press). Non-exhaustive lists of academic generalist journals, most of which publish high quality research on protest, can be found below:
• History: AVAILABLE ONLINE HERE.
• Sociology: AVAILABLE ONLINE HERE.
• Political science: AVAILABLE ONLINE HERE.
• Anthropology: AVAILABLE ONLINE HERE.
• Psychology: AVAILABLE ONLINE HERE.
• Economics: AVAILABLE ONLINE HERE.

In addition, there are two journals dedicated to the study of social movements—*Mobilization* and *Social Movement Studies*—that you might want to consult. Pamela Oliver’s website provides an wonderful resource as well.

To guarantee sufficient variation in case selection, we will circulate a case selection sheet on **4/11** and reserve the right to assign you a different case. On **5/2** you will have a one-on-one meeting with your professor in 1808 Chicago Avenue, room 103. During that meeting you have to provide me with a rough outline of your presentation an paper. A sign-up sheet for the meetings will be made available on **4/25**. Presentations take place the last week of class. We will randomly assign time slots. If you are presenting on **5/23** your last assignment is due on the **5/30**. If you are presenting on a different date your last assignment is due **5/23**.

**Paper**

Your final paper builds on your presentation. You will write a 15 page paper (Times New Roman, 12pt, double-spaced, 1 inch margins all around) in which you explain the rise of the same movement you picked for your presentation. However, there are 3 additional requirements:

1. You need to consult 5 instead of 3 academic sources.
2. Discuss 5 instead of 3 theories.
3. Draw out similarities between your case and cases discussed in class or explain why you think your case in incomparable. One of the cases has to be the Iranian revolution. The paper is due the first Tuesday of finals week (**6/12**).

**Assignments**

To facilitate the writing an presentation process, you will submit 4 short assignments. Together these assignments will form the building blocks of your paper and presentation:

1. A bibliography with 5 academic sources (<1 page), **DUE 4/18**.

4/3 Introduction: Why and What?


4/4 Classics: Cleavages and Breakdown


4/9 Classics: Grievances


4/11 Collective Action Problems

- Case selection due.


4/16 Cascades and Conventions


4/18 Networks

• Submit reference list.

• M Gladwell. Why the revolution will not be tweeted. *the New Yorker*, 2010. EJOURNAL


4/23 Organizations: Resources and Recruitment

Choose 1 A and 1 B reading.


4/25 Organizations: Framing

• Submit case description.


4/30 Political Opportunities and the State


5/2 One-on-one meetings about paper

• Meet in 1808 Chicago Avenue.

5/7 Media and Dynamics

• Submit paper outline.


**5/9 Exit, Voice and Loyalty**


**5/14 Mid-term**

• Prepare for ID, short answer and essay questions.

**5/16 Iranian Revolution 1**


**5/21 Iranian Revolution 2**


**5/23 Presentations**

• Submit comparison sheet group A.

• Schedule t.b.a.

**5/28 Commemoration Day**

• No class!
5/30 Presentations

- Submit comparison sheet group A.
- Schedule t.b.a.

6/4 Presentations

- Schedule t.b.a.