

## **SOC485H1F – Logics of Collective Action**

### **From Revolution to Infrapolitics**

**Fall 2024**

**Schedule:** Friday, 11:10 AM – 1:00 PM

**Location:** See ACORN

Instructor: Moutaa Amine El Waer

Email: [moutaaamine.elwaer@utoronto.ca](mailto:moutaaamine.elwaer@utoronto.ca)

Office: Department of Sociology, 700 University Avenue, 17<sup>th</sup> Floor

Office hours: By appointment

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Please take the time to regularly consult the page of this course on Quercus, to be aware of the announcements, clarifications and potential updates on this syllabus. Beyond that, communication in-class and by other means will be delivered consistently to ensure that everyone has the needed information.

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### **Land Acknowledgement**

We acknowledge this sacred land on which the University of Toronto operates. It has been a site of human activity for 15,000 years. This land is the territory of the Huron Wendat and Petun First Nations, the Seneca, and most recently, the Mississaugas of the Credit River. The territory was the subject of the Dish With One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Iroquois Confederacy and Confederacy of the Ojibwe and allied nations to peaceably share and care for the resources around the Great Lakes. Today, the meeting place of Toronto is still the home to many Indigenous people from across Turtle Island and we are grateful to have the opportunity to work in the community, on this territory. [*Council of Aboriginal Initiatives, 2014*]

### **Course Description**

Collective action is a fundamental component of contemporary social and political dynamics. Whether formal or informal, it often serves as a powerful catalyst for social and political transformation. This course explores the diverse strategies employed by various social groups to advance their agendas, ideals, rights, and interests. While the primary focus is on social

movements, we will also examine the roles played other stakeholders such as political parties, trade unions, social media, marginalized communities, etc.

In this seminar, several editorial choices have been made that warrant explanation. First, the seminar does not attempt to cover all existing approaches in social movement studies, political science, and sociology regarding collective action. Instead, we have chosen to focus on recent, innovative approaches that are often underrepresented due to their non-dominant status and that draw on concepts from other disciplines. Second, given the diversity of collective actors, generalization is challenging, if not impossible. As a result, the selected readings emphasize partial analyses, focusing on specific aspects of collective action and placing significant emphasis on empirical analysis.

### **Prerequisites**

The prerequisites to take SOC485H1F, is completion of 1.0 SOC credits at the 300-level. Students without this requirement will be removed at any time discovered, and without notice.

### **Learning Objectives**

The primary goal of this course is to equip students with the theoretical and analytical tools necessary for a deeper understanding of how collective action functions. Students will be encouraged to critically examine the theoretical notions commonly used in social movement studies (such as interests, identities, commitment, trajectory, mobilization, democracy, and representation) and to assess their relevance for understanding collective mobilization phenomena. Collaborative work (discussions and debates during sessions) will help clarify academic vocabulary and foster connections between various concepts.

The seminar is structured around four specific objectives:

- **Understanding Complexity:** To grasp the complexity of the phenomena studied by considering collective action as an ongoing social construct rather than a fixed entity.
- **Acknowledging Diversity:** To consider the multiplicity of empirical situations in which collective action occurs.
- **Engaging with Reality:** To engage with the concrete realities of collective action by exploring how it is constructed through fieldwork exercises and informational capsules, complementing the abstract knowledge gained from readings.
- **Critical Analysis:** To develop skills in critically reading and discussing scientific texts, as well as making connections between multiple texts.

## **Assignments and Evaluation Criteria**

<b>Type</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>One Information Capsule</b>	Week of your choice	5%
<b>Quiz</b>	On of the 8 first classes	5%
<b>2 Reading Grids or Conceptual Maps</b>	2 weeks of your choice	20% (10% each)
<b>Topic Choice</b>	September 27	5%
<b>Annotated Bibliography</b>	October 11	10%
<b>Video Presentation</b>	October 18	10%
<b>Poster</b>	November 29	15%
<b>Final Paper</b>	December 2	30%

### **Assignments Related to Readings (Total: 30%)**

#### **Information Capsules (5%)**

To bridge theory and practice, students will present a 3-minute "information capsule" on a current topic. Each student must prepare one capsule during the session. The goal is to identify a global, national, or local news case that relates to the previous session and explain how it connects to the course material.

#### **Quiz (5%)**

During one of the 8 first sessions, a 5-question quiz will be administered to test your understanding of topics covered in class.

#### **Reading Grids (20%)**

Weekly readings are essential for preparing each session (refer to the detailed bibliography). We will facilitate discussions using tools like reading grids or conceptual maps. Students will submit their reading grid or conceptual map twice during the semester, each contributing 10% to the final grade.

Additional information on this assignment will be provided in the second week of the course.

### **READING TEXTS IS MANDATORY**

### **Assignments Related to the Fieldwork Exercise (Total: 70%)**

The assignments in this section follow a scaffolded approach, where each task builds upon the previous one to prepare you for the final submission.

In this seminar, you must choose one of the following practical assignments:

1. Conduct field research on a collective action; OR

2. Prepare a complete research project; OR
3. Plan a collective action you wish to undertake in the future.

The choice of topic will depend on your interests and the feasibility of the project. This fieldwork can be done individually or in pairs. If done in pairs, the required output will be 50% greater.

We will dedicate part of the third session to help you choose the option that best suits you and guide you in your decision.

**Topic Choice (5%) (Due: September 27)**

Submit a one-page document (1.5 spaced) outlining the topic you wish to explore in your fieldwork, supported by a well-reasoned argument.

Evaluation Criteria: Clarity of the topic description and the relevance of the argumentation justifying the choice.

**Annotated Bibliography (10%) (Due: October 11)**

Submit an annotated bibliography of five relevant scientific references that address your topic. Each annotation should be two paragraphs. The first paragraph will be a summary of the article. In the second paragraph explain why the article is relevant to your research topic. Although you will only submit 10 annotations, you are expected to have read far more extensively in the scholarly fields relevant to your project. Proper citation is required for all references.

Evaluation Criteria: Relevance of the chosen texts, quality of the analysis.

**Video Presentation (10%) (Due: October 18)**

Prepare a video presentation of no more than 10 minutes, clearly and concisely summarizing your topic. The presentation should be structured with a simple and easily understandable plan. Visual aids (such as PowerPoint) are encouraged to enhance your presentation.

This video serves as the first step in your fieldwork exercise. You may choose to:

1. Document a collective action and problematize its analysis (why is this case significant?), including a brief review of relevant scientific literature; OR
2. Present a collective action you plan to organize after the session, justify your choice, and outline the steps involved, along with a brief review of the relevant literature; OR
3. Prepare an outline for a more extensive research project, presenting the study object, problematizing it, and providing a brief review of the relevant literature.

Evaluation Criteria: Quality of the work (readings, bibliography, research process); structure and delivery of the presentation; relevance of the content. The video must be uploaded to Quercus.

**Research Symposium Presentation (15%) (Due: November 29)**

Present an almost-final version of your fieldwork in the form of a scientific poster. The goal is to communicate your research progress to the class in an engaging and accessible way, receiving feedback from peers and me to refine your final paper.

Evaluation Criteria: Quality of the poster and its presentation, including the ability to clearly explain the fieldwork content and communicate it effectively to a non-expert audience. Note that a small budget should be allocated for printing your poster.

**Final Paper (30%) (Due: December 2)**

The final assignment will be a paper based on your fieldwork, following one of the forms outlined below. The fieldwork can take one of three forms:

1. A traditional research project requiring field investigations (either "real" (e.g., analysis of a demonstration, observation of meetings, in-person interviews) or "virtual" (e.g., social media analysis, virtual interviews, virtual observations)). The paper should be 10 to 15 pages, 1.5 spaced, and must include: a problem statement; a literature review; a presentation of the research field(s); and an analysis and synthesis of the field materials incorporating theoretical elements from the course. Practical tools will be provided to assist you. The emphasis will be on the quality of the fieldwork and its presentation.
2. Preparing a comprehensive research project that you plan to carry out in the future. This paper should also be 10 to 15 pages, 1.5 spaced, and must include: a contextualization of your project, a substantial literature review, a problematization of the research object, a theoretical framework, a detailed methodology, and a properly cited bibliography. Emphasis will be on the quality of the written work.
3. Organizing and executing a collective action. The written report should include: a presentation of the objectives and the action itself; a literature review on similar actions, the projected results of the action; and an analysis of these results. Theoretical elements covered in class should be used at various stages. The paper should also be 10 to 15 pages, 1.5 spaced. Emphasis will be on the quality of the diagnosis and argumentation.

Evaluation Criteria: Adherence to the required format, substantive interest, and connections to the seminar. The final paper must be submitted on Quercus before the end of the session, in the appropriate assignment box.

## **Course Policies**

### **Deadlines**

The assignments are due online via Quercus by 23:59 (11:59 p.m. EST) for the stated date.

### **Missed tests and assignments**

Students who miss a paper deadline or a test will receive a mark of zero for that paper or test unless the reason is a circumstance beyond their control. **Within three days** of missing a paper deadline or test, students must send the instructor a request for consideration. Students must document their request with **one of the following**:

- Absence declaration via ACORN
- U of T Verification of Illness or Injury Form
- College Registrar's letter (e.g., in case of personal/family crisis or emergency)
- Letter of Academic Accommodation from Accessibility Services

Students who miss the test or are late in submitting an assignment for other reasons, such as family or other personal reasons, should request their College Registrar to email the instructor.

### **Accessibility**

If you require accommodations or have any accessibility concerns, please visit <http://studentlife.utoronto.ca/accessibility> as soon as possible. Please inform me of the situation as soon as possible so that I can arrange the necessary accommodations in time.

### **Email policy**

Your emails will receive an answer within two working days. My general advice is to keep email exchanges short and to the point. Keep exchanges that require more in-depth discussion (if you need help with course material) to office hours.

Use always your University of Toronto email and please, add the course code in the title.

### **Generative Artificial Intelligence**

Students are encouraged to make use of technology, including generative artificial intelligence tools, to contribute to their understanding of course materials. Students may use artificial intelligence tools, including generative AI, to enhance their learning or assist with assignments in this course, **except** for the **annotated bibliography** and the **final paper**. In all cases, please be aware that you are responsible for the work submitted.

If you decide to use artificial intelligence tools, know that you must properly cite it in the appendix. This documentation should include the appellations of the used tools, how you used them (ex. what questions you asked) and in what form they were incorporated in your work (ex. copying identical paragraphs or sentences, paraphrased paragraphs or sentences, etc.).

To cite properly content created by artificial intelligence, you can consult resources provided by the library of the University of Toronto (<https://guides.library.utoronto.ca/c.php?g=251103&p=5296636>) or those published by many other institutions, available online.

## **Course Schedule and Assignments**

**Class 1 – September 6 - Introduction**

**Week 2 – September 13 – How to Study Collective Actors? Methodological Issues**

Workshop: how to critically read a scientific paper

**Week 3 – September 20 – Explaining Collective Action Object**

Workshop: how to choose your field exercise

**Week 4 – September 27 – Beyond the Political Process Approach**

Workshop: what is an annotated bibliography

Assignment : Topic Choice

**Week 5 – October 4 – Revolutions and protests in Times of Crisis**

**Week 6 – October 11 – Continuity, Rupture, and Trajectories of Social Movements**

Assignment: Annotated Bibliography

**Week 7 – October 18 – Edge Cases: Resistance, Disguised, Individualized Collective Actions, Lifestyle**

Assignment: Video Presentation

**Week 8 – October 25 – Commitment to racist activism**

Workshop: method and reflexivity

**READING WEEK (October 28- November 1)**

**Week 9 – November 8 – Outcomes of collective action**

Guest Speaker (to be confirmed)

**Week 10 – November 15 – Bringing Capitalism Back into Social Movement Analysis**

**Week 11 – November 22 – Collective action in colonial settings**

**Week 12 – November 29 – Mini-Colloquium**

Assignment: Presentation of students' scientific posters

## **Bibliography**

### **Week 2 – September 13 – How to Study Collective Actors? Methodological Issues**

Geoffrey Pleyers. 2024. « For a global sociology of social movements. Beyond methodological globalism and extractivism», *Globalizations* 21 (1): 183-195.

Suzanne Staggenborg, 2022. « Studying a movement up close: grassroots environmentalism», *Mobilization*, vol.27, 2: 1-12.

Cécile Van de Velde. 2022. « The power of slogans: using protest writings in social movement research», *Social Movement Studies*, published online.

### **Week 3 – September 20 – Explaining Collective Action Object**

John D. Mc Carty and Mayer N. Zald. 1977. « Mobilization and Social Movements: A Partial Theory», *American Journal of Sociology* 82, 6: 1212-1241.

Doug McAdam et Sidney Tarrow. 2019. «The Political Context of Social Movements», in D. A. Snow et al (eds.), *The Wiley Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, Oxford, UK, Wiley, 2019, p.19-42.

Robert D. Benford, David A. Snow. 2000. « Framing Processes: An Overview and Assessment», *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26: 611-639.

### **Week 4 – September 27 – Beyond the Political Process Approach**

Steven M. Buechler. 2015. «New Social Movement Theory», *The Blackwell Encyclopedia of Sociology*, edited by George Ritzer, pp. 1-4.

Armstrong, Elizabeth and Mary Bernstein. 2008. « Culture, Power and Institutions; A Multi-Institutional Politics Approach to Social Movements», *Sociological Theory*, 26, 1: 74-99.

Marcos Ancelovici. 2021. «Conceptualizing the Context of Collective Action: Field, Arena, and Space», *Social Movement Studies*, 20 (2): 155-173.

### **Week 5 – October 4 – Revolutions and protests in Times of Crisis**

Goodwin, J. (2003). State-centered approaches to social revolutions: Strengths and limitations of a theoretical tradition. In *Theorizing Revolutions* (pp. 9-35). Routledge.

<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203206638>

Hanspeter Kriesi. 2020. «Overall Trends of Protest in the Great Recession», in *Contention in Times of Crisis. Recession and Political Protest in Thirty European Countries*, edited by Hanspeter Kriesi, Jasmine Lorenzini, Bruno Wüest, and Silja Hausermann, pp.77-103.



Yousfi, H., 2023. Organization and organizing in revolutionary times: The case of Tunisian General Labor Union. *Organization*, 30(4), pp.624-648.

### **Week 6 – October 11 – Continuity, Rupture, and Trajectories of Social Movements**

Suh, D. (2011). Institutionalizing Social Movements: The Dual Strategy of the Korean Women's Movement. *The Sociological Quarterly*, 52(3), 442–471.

<https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1533-8525.2011.01214.x>

Nicolás M. Somma and Rodrigo Medel. 2017. «Shifting Relationships Between Social Movements and Institutional Politics», in Sofia Donoso and Marisa von Bülow, eds., *Social Movements in Chile*, Palgrave-McMillan, pp. 29-61.

Pascale Dufour, Marion Leboucher, Alexie Labelle et Jean-Vincent Bergeron-Gaudin. 2024. «How Institutionalisation of a Movement Fosters Protest: The Case of Student Protests in France», *Journal of Cultural and Political Sociology*, 1–27.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/23254823.2024.2364672>.

### **Week 7 – October 18 – Edge Cases: Resistance, Disguised, Individualized Collective Actions, Lifestyle**

James C. Scott. 1990. « The Infrapolitics of Subordinate Groups», in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts*, Yale: Yale University Press, Chapter 7, pp. 183-201.

Fu, D. (2017). Disguised Collective Action in China. *Comparative Political Studies*, 50(4), 499-527. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0010414015626437>

Latte Abdallah, S. (2022). The Resistance Economy: A Holistic Engagement Against the Occupation in Palestine?. In: Barozet, E., Sainsaulieu, I., Cortesero, R., Mélo, D. (eds) *Where Has Social Justice Gone?*. Palgrave Macmillan, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93123-0\\_19](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-93123-0_19)

Todd Nicholas Fuist, Elizabeth Mogford and Abhijit Das. 2018. «Lifestyle Movements as Social Networks», *Sociological Perspectives*, 61 (6): 894-910.

### **Week 8 – October 25 – Commitment to racist activism**

Kathleen M. Blee. 2018. *Understanding Racist Activism: Theory, Methods and Research*. Taylor and Francis, pp.1-58 (Section I & II); 121-145 (Chapter 10); 146-160 (Chapter 11).

Malaena J. Taylor and Mary Bernstein. 2019. «Denial, Deflection, and Distraction: Neutralizing Charges of Racism by the Tea Party Movement», *Mobilization: An International Quarterly*, 24(20): 137-156.

## **READING WEEK (October 28- November 1)**

### **Week 9 – November 8 –Outcomes of collective action**

Amenta, E., Andrews, K.T. and Caren, N., 2018. The political institutions, processes, and outcomes movements seek to influence. *The Wiley Blackwell companion to social movements*, pp.447-465

Useem, B. and Goldstone, J.A., 2022. The paradox of victory: social movement fields, adverse outcomes, and social movement success. *Theory and Society*, 51(1), pp.31-60

Ayoub, P.M., Page, D. and Whitt, S., 2024. Theorizing Potential Downstream Cultural Consequences of LGBT+ Activism. *Social Forces*, 102(3), pp.1180-1199

### **Week 10 – November 15 – Bringing Capitalism Back into Social Movement Analysis**

Gabriel Hetland et Jeff Goodwin et. 2012. «The Strange Disappearance of Capitalism from Social Movement Studies», in *Marxism and Social Movements*, edited by Colin Barker, Laurence Cox, John Krinsky, and Alf Gunvald Nilsen, Boston: Brill, pp. 83-102.

Donatella della Porta. 2017. «Political Economy and Social Movement Studies: The Class-Basis of Anti-Austerity Protest», *Anthropological Theory*, 17(4): 453-473.

Loris Caruso et Lorenzo Cini. 2020. «Rethinking the Link Between Structure and Collective Action. Capitalism, Politics, and the Theory of Social Movements», *Critical Sociology*: 1-19.

### **Week 11 – November 22 –Collective action in colonial settings**

In-class Movie : Invasion, by Michael Toledano, Sam Vinal & Franklin López

Charles W. Anderson. (2017). State Formation from Below and the Great Revolt in Palestine. *Journal of Palestine Studies* 1 November 2017; 47 (1): 39–55. doi:

<https://doi.org/10.1525/jps.2017.47.1.39>

Alashqar, Y. (2018). The politics of social structures in the Palestinian case: From national resistance to depoliticization and liberalization. *Social Sciences*, 7(4), 69

Desai, C. (2021). Disrupting Settler-Colonial Capitalism: Indigenous Intifadas and Resurgent Solidarity from Turtle Island to Palestine. *Journal of Palestine Studies*, 50(2), 43–66.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/0377919X.2021.1909376>

Optional readings:

Deeb, L., & Winegar, J. (2024). Resistance to Repression and Back Again: The Movement for Palestinian Liberation in US Academia. *Middle East Critique*, 1–22.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/19436149.2024.2375669>

Jehad Abusalim; The Great March of Return: An Organizer's Perspective. *Journal of Palestine Studies* 1 August 2018; 47 (4): 90–100. doi: <https://doi.org/10.1525/jps.2018.47.4.90>

## **Week 12 – November 29 – Research Symposium**

Presentation of students' scientific posters