



Political Science 3318F (570)
SPECIAL TOPICS IN POLITICAL SCIENCE
Fall/ Winter 2025-2026

Instructor: T. Tieku
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Course Information

Calendar Description:

Topics set by the Department.

Prerequisite(s): Enrolment in 3rd or 4th year in either Political Science, Politics and International Relations, or Social Justice and Peace Studies, or Permission of the Department.

Extra Information: 2 seminar hours.

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: POLISCI

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol 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.



**POLITICAL SCIENCE 3318F
(570)**

**SPECIAL TOPICS IN
POLITICAL SCIENCE**

**ENDING VIOLENCE IN THE
WORLD**

Fall/Winter 2025-2026

Instructor: Professor Thomas Kwasi Tiekou

Email: ttieku@uwo.ca

Mode of instruction: In-person

*Office hours information can be found on OWL
Brightspace*

Course Description

The course draws insights from physical, structural, and symbolic episodes of violence from around the world to explore the best ways to end the global culture of violence. It is divided into two parts. Part One provides an opportunity to examine the nature and causes of violence as well as tools used to prevent, manage, resolve, and build sustainable peace. Part Two focuses on collaborative learning, workshopping, and active learning activities. Students will assume the role of peace activists attending a World Peace Council (WPC) summit. Each student must join one of five Working Groups, which will prepare reports with recommendations for state delegations attending the WPC summit to adopt as their official policy. Students are asked to join one of the following Working Groups (WG):

- **WG 1:** Group 1 will prepare a report based on continental European case(s) documenting the **causes** of classic interstate violence, such as the Russia-Ukraine war, and propose strategies to end them.
- **WG 2:** Group 2 will prepare a report based on continental Asian case(s) exploring ways to **prevent** identity-based violence, such as genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and hate crimes.
- **WG 3:** Group 3 will prepare a report based on case(s) in the Americas that draws attention to effective measures to **resolve** symbolic and structural violence such as microaggression, racism, and redlining of minority neighborhoods.
- **WG 4:** Group 4 will prepare a report on Middle East case(s) discussing the most effective approaches to **manage** the so-called intractable violence such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.
- **WG 5:** Group 5 will prepare a report on African case(s) examining the best ways to **reconstruct** postwar societies and build sustainable peace.

Learning outcomes:

This course will help students:

- Gain substantive knowledge and a deeper understanding of concepts in the field of peace studies.
- Identify and discuss key theoretical debates, methodological concerns, and conceptual issues in peace studies.
- Understand the various ways that peace studies toolkits can help and/or hinder the movement to end violence in the world.
- Identify key features of violence and explain their causes.
- Identify and critically analyze actors contributing to violence in the world and their motivations.
- Apply peace studies analysis to various instances of violence in the world.
- Demonstrate advanced understanding of peace activism.
- Conduct collaborative research and present a well-argued report.

Course Evaluation and Due Dates:

Assignments	Value	Date Due	Place	Length
Participation and Professionalism	25%	Ongoing	Classroom	N/A
Zero Draft Report	30%	October 8, 2025	Brightspace	3500-4000 words
Presentation of Zero Draft Report	15%	Ongoing	Classroom	N/A
Final Report	30%	November 26, 2025	Brightspace	3800-4200 words

The penalty for late submission of written assignment is 5% for each day after due date.

All course reading materials are available through King's and Western libraries at no cost to students.

Participation and Professionalism (25%)

Class participation accounts for twenty-five percent (25%) of the total course grade. Evaluation of class participation will be based on attendance, role play, and contributions to the WPC summit. Attendance will be taken during each session, and grading will be based on the quality, not the quantity, of your contributions. Active participation in class meetings and activities is a key component of this course. It is your opportunity to share your ideas, engage in group discussions, learn the art of careful listening and effective communication in large group settings. Generally, the penalty for unexcused absences is 2% per day off the final grade. You will receive a grade of zero for participation after four unexcused absences. If there are extenuating circumstances that make it difficult for you to attend class, please talk with me so that we can make alternative arrangements.

Since there is such a high percentage of the grade devoted to participation, and there is no final examination, your attendance, active engagement in discussions and preparation for each session are essential to your success in this course. To this end, please pay attention to the guidelines below.

1. You must read weekly assigned material(s) carefully.
2. Use weekly questions as a guide when reading course materials.
3. You should strive to engage with the materials as objectively as possible.

4. You should make the necessary efforts to create an atmosphere of respect for your colleague's ideas and thoughts.
5. You must try to be a good collaborator and an open-minded learner.
6. Some of the discussions and materials we will read may be challenging for you or your colleagues. Please keep this in mind when making contributions.
7. You are encouraged to help make the course a model peace forum where difficult ideas are exchanged in a collegial manner.
8. There is no "politically correct" line in this class, and you should expect a variety of implicit and explicit value assumptions throughout our discussions.
9. Showing respect and interest for your colleague's arguments and points of view; and engaging others in an informed dialogue will be greatly rewarded.
10. Class domination by means of volume, tone or sarcasm and belittling of ideas and thoughts of others are not welcome in this course.

Collaborative Research Project

In this course, we will be conducting collaborative and problem-driven research. Students will work in working groups of five for the research project which has the following components:

- Zero Draft report
- Presentation of draft to WPC
- Final report that incorporates feedback from the WPC

Draft Report (30%)

You and your team are required to research and compile an informative and fully-developed report about causes of wars, or conflict prevention, or conflict management, or conflict resolution, or post-war reconstruction. This report must:

- Be approximately 3,500-4,000 words, excluding the bibliography.
- Include an executive summary that clearly articulates the type of the violence and provides two actionable recommendations for adoption by the WPC summit.
- Provide context with a succinct summary of the background to and history of the violence.
- Describe in detail the nature of the conflict, indicating whether it is physical, or structural, or symbolic, and whether it is interstate or intrastate violence.
- Analyze the causes of the violence, identifying its root and immediate causes. It should indicate whether it is driven by grievances or greed-related factors, or structural conditions.
- Present at least three solutions for preventing, managing, resolving, or creating sustainable positive peace.
- Be supported by at least 10 of the best academic and think tank materials on the topic.

Presentation of Zero Draft Report to WPC (15%)

Your team must assume that they are peace activists presenting a report to delegations of state parties to a peace summit. The team would have 40 minutes to convince the skeptical representatives to accept the recommendations of the report:

1. Overview of the topic: why the delegations should care about the issue your group is presenting?
2. Main message(s) (take away messages).
3. Outline for the rest of the presentation. The group should feel free to use various formats including Canva, PowerPoints, Google Slides for the presentation.

4. Supporting argument(s).
5. Case(s) to back the arguments.
6. Conclusion (summary of main message(s) and recommendations)

Final Report (30%)

The final report must show clearly the improvements made to the Zero Draft Report based on feedback from the WPC. This final report must:

- Be approximately 3,800-4,200 words, excluding the bibliography.
- Include an executive summary that clearly articulates the nature of the problem and provides three actionable recommendations for adoption by the WPC summit.
- Provide context with a succinct summary of the background of the conflict.
- Describe the nature of the conflict, indicating whether it is physical, structural, or symbolic, and whether it is interstate or intrastate violence.
- Analyze the causes of the conflict, identifying both root and immediate causes, and indicate the key drivers in terms of grievances, greed-related factors, and structural violence conditions.
- Present at least three solutions for preventing, managing, resolving, or creating sustainable positive peace.
- Provide between 5 and 10 actionable recommendations for adoption by the WPC summit.
- Be supported by at least 10 of the best academic and think tank materials on the topic.

Schedule

Week 1: Sep. 10 - Course Introduction

- 3318F Syllabus (please read the syllabus carefully. If possible, read it a couple of times)

Week 2: Sep. 17: The Origins of the Culture of Violence

- Questions to be discussed: Why do humans fight? Is violence part of human nature or socially constructed?
- Video: Season 1: Episode 2 of Squid Game
- Strachan, Hew. "The Causes Of War—And Their Consequences." In *How Wars End*, pp. 11-27. Routledge, 2022.
- McCarthy-Jones, Simon. "From Tarantino to Squid Game: Why do so many people enjoy violence." *The Conversation* 28 (October 27, 2021).
- Taylor, Steve. "Why do human beings keep fighting wars." *The Guardian* 5 (2014).
- Bushman, Brad and Dan Romer "How does a child become a shooter? Research suggests easy access to guns and exposure to screen violence increase the risk" *The Conversation* (January 12, 2023).
- Lind, Stephanie "Why violence in video games isn't really a problem," *The Conversation* (March 1, 2018).
- Lachman, Richard. "Why do we keep having debates about video-game violence?" *The Conversation*. (August 8, 2019).
- Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin. "Ethnicity, insurgency, and civil war." *American political science review* 97, no. 1 (2003): 75-90.

Week 3: Sep. 25: Analysis of the Culture of Violence

- Questions to be discussed: Why do wars start? What sustains them? What makes them difficult to stop?
- Video: Season 1: Episode 1 of Bodyguard
- Cashman, Greg, and Leonard C. Robinson. *An introduction to the causes of war: Patterns of interstate conflict from World War I to Iraq*. Rowman & Littlefield, 2021. Ch. 1.
- Izzeldin Abuelaish, "Why hatred should be considered a contagious disease." May 26, 2021.
- Jahangir, B. Junaid. "How economics can shed light on the motivations of extremist groups like Hamas." (January 18, 2024).
- Rhodes, Gloria, and Muhammad Akram. "Conflict analysis, learning from practice." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 40, no. 3 (2023): 333-355.
- Väyrynen, Tarja, Swati Parashar, Elise Féron, and Catia Cecilia Confortini, eds. *Routledge handbook of feminist peace research*. London: Routledge, 2021. Ch. 1.

Week 4: Oct. 1 – Peace Research

- Questions to be discussed: What are the most effective ways to study peace? Should episodes of violence be the focus of research, or would it be more beneficial for researchers to study zones of positive peace? Is it ethical for researchers to interview people experiencing violence or dealing with its aftermath?
- Video: Season 2: Episode 2 of Designated Survivor
- Richmond, Oliver P., ed. *The Oxford handbook of peacebuilding, statebuilding, and peace formation*. Oxford University Press, 2021. Chs. 10-11.
- Väyrynen, Tarja, Swati Parashar, Elise Féron, and Catia Cecilia Confortini, eds. *Routledge handbook of feminist peace research*. London: Routledge, 2021. Ch. 3.
- Rashid, Ismail, and Amy Niang. *Researching Peacebuilding in Africa*. Routledge, 2020. Ch.2.
- Enyon, Rebecca, Jenny Fry, and Ralph Shroeder, "The Ethics of Online Field Research," in *The SAGE Handbook of Online Research Methods*, ed. Nigel G. Fielding, Raymond M. Lee, and Grant Blank (London: SAGE, 2017)

Week 5: Oct. 8 - Creating Lasting Peace

- Questions to be discussed: Should wars be abolished? Would that make the world more peaceful or more dangerous? Is the elimination of symbolic and structural violence possible?
- Video: Season 2: Episode 3 of Designated Survivor
- Langley, Winston. *Abolishing War*. Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2024. Chaps. 1-2.
- Richmond, Oliver P., ed. *The oxford handbook of peacebuilding, statebuilding, and peace formation*. Oxford University Press, 2021. Ch. 5.
- Howlett, Charles F., Christian Philip Peterson, Deborah D. Buffton, and David L. Hostetter, eds. *The Oxford Handbook of Peace History*. Oxford University Press, 2023. Ch. 35.
- Tiekou, Thomas Kwasi, Amanda Coffie, Mary Boatemaa Setrana, and Akin Taiwo. *The Politics of Peacebuilding in Africa*. Routledge, 2021. Ch.1.
- Kawser Ahmed. "Communities can combat racism, hate and extremism with education." (January 5, 2020).

Week 6: Oct. 15 – WPC summit presentation 1

Week 7: Oct. 22- WPC summit presentation 2

Week 8: Oct. 29 - WPC summit presentation 3

Week 9: Nov. 5 - *NO CLASS: Reading Week*****

Week 10: Nov. 12 - WPC summit presentation 4

Week 11: Nov. 19 - WPC summit presentation 5

Week 12: Nov. 26 – Debriefing Session: What we learn from the WPC

summit and summit outcome

Week 13: Dec. 3 – Review of course

FINE PRINT

Please note the rules below as registration in the course constitutes your acceptance of them.

This course is scheduled to be delivered face-to-face. However, a space has been created for it to be delivered virtually if necessary. You are expected to be available either remotely or in class during class times. In the event the class is moved online, the classroom will be available to you, and you may access the course at the scheduled time from this classroom. A recorded version of the class and assignments may be posted on OWL Brightspace when necessary.

Written Assignment: All written assignments must have 1-inch margins and be in 12-point Times New Roman font. They should be double-spaced and numbered. Citations must follow the latest edition of the Chicago Manual of Style, which can be accessed online at [The Chicago Manual of Style](#). You may use either footnotes, endnotes, or in-text citations, but do not combine these methods. Assignments should be thoroughly proofread for spelling, typographical, grammatical, and syntactical errors. Submit your assignment to the 'Assignments' folder on OWL Brightspace by the due date, as late submissions will not be accepted. Do not attempt to submit your assignment through other means, such as under an office door or via email; only assignments submitted through OWL Brightspace will be accepted. Ensure you make a copy of your assignment and keep your research notes before submitting.

Accommodation: You must seek academic accommodation from the Academic Dean's Office (ADO) for all course work worth more than 10% of the final grade. Accommodation for work worth less than 10% of the total course grade will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis. To have any chance of being granted an extension for an assignment, you will be required to show proof that you are unable to complete the work due to serious extenuating circumstances such as illness or injury. If there are any medical or personal issues interfering with your academic work, please contact the Academic Counseling Office as soon as possible. These issues may be documented, and possible arrangements to assist you can be discussed at the time rather than on a retroactive basis. Medical documentation may be required for accommodation. Please note that the latest University policy on accommodation is in effect, and you are required to check with the ADO for further information or any changes to the policy.

Due Dates: Every effort has been made to schedule assignment due dates to avoid conflicts with religious observances. If any assignment due date conflicts with an important event in your life, it is your responsibility to inform me within the first two weeks of the semester and make the necessary arrangements with me or the ADO.

Attendance, and Etiquette: Regular attendance and active participation in class discussions are essential. I expect vigorous discussions, lively debates, and serious disagreements, when necessary, but please do so with decorum and professionalism. Some of the topics we will discuss are sensitive and controversial. You are encouraged to refrain from personal attacks and personality-driven discussions.

Intellectual property: Recording of class without my explicit consent is grounds for academic discipline. The course content is considered by the University to be my intellectual property. It should not be distributed, shared in any public domain, or given to anyone not in the class without my prior written consent.

Electronic Devices: Please ensure that you have only the electronic devices that you will need to participate in the class and respect scrupulously the University's policies on the use of electronic devices.

Academic Honesty: You are reminded that academic integrity is fundamental to learning and scholarship. Academic dishonesty is a serious offense, and the offender can be expelled from the University. You should consult with me or any one of the many guides available at the University if you are at all uncertain about what constitutes academic dishonesty, or what acceptable forms of citation and referencing are. Potential offences may include, but are not limited to using someone else's ideas or words without appropriate acknowledgement, copying material word-for-word from a source (including lectures and study group notes) and not placing the words within quotation

marks, submitting your own work in more than one course without the permission of the instructor, making up sources or facts, including references to sources that you did not use, having someone rewrite or add material to your work while “editing,” lending your work to your colleague who submits it as his/her own, using or possessing any unauthorized aid during examination, misrepresenting your identity, and submitting an altered test for re-grading.

Policy on Artificial Intelligence: Within this course, the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools such as Chat GPT is not permitted for written work submitted for evaluation. Unauthorized use of AI will be subject to academic discipline.

Turnitin: All assignments submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of this course may be submitted to Turnitin for textual similarity review and for the detection of plagiarism. This program is a commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University. 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>.

Course Requirements: Please follow the instructions outlined for each assignment in the course. Independent work is required unless otherwise indicated. Failure to adhere to the assignment instructions or complete all course requirements may result in a failing grade

Contacts: I will be pleased to see you during regular office hours. I am also happy to answer your questions about the course via [email](#). Please consult the course syllabus before sending questions to me by [email](#). Include the course number in the subject line. I will try to respond to your message within 48 business hours (Monday to Friday, 9 am to 5 pm EST). I do not check work emails on weekends, statutory holidays, or after regular business hours.

KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE
GENERAL COURSE POLICIES
2025-2026

1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences

Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf.

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under Special Examinations).

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

2. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:
<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University

College: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-supportservices/personal-counselling/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:
https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/

Academic Support Services at King's University College:
<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

GBSV Support:

King's is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at:
<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing Care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email or by calling 519-661-3568.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safecampus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

See also https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with you instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammarchecking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

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; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality Reports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

5. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

6. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

7. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. 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.