



Social Justice and Peace Studies 1025F (570) (571) (572) (573)
INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL JUSTICE AND PEACE STUDIES
Fall/ Winter 2025-2026

Instructor: K. Gain

Email: kgain4@uwo.ca

Course Information

Calendar Description:

An interdisciplinary introduction to theories and strategies for pursuing social justice and peace. The course confronts the ethical implications of the structure and ideology of globalization under capitalism, the military industrial complex, war, corporate power, inequality, poverty, labour conflict, indigenous rights, gender issues, diversity, and environmental degradation, among other issues.

Extra Information: 3 hours.

Course Weight: 0.50

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: SOCLJUST

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.

SOCLJUST1025F: Introduction to Social Justice and Peace Studies

King's University College

Instructor:	Dr. Klaire Gain
Mode of Instruction:	In-person
Office Hours:	Available at Request
Contact:	kgain4@uwo.ca (best contact)

Course Overview: This course introduces students to issues of social justice and peace. We investigate some of the most vital and pressing problems confronting the world today: why is there such poverty side-by-side enormous wealth? Why is inequality worsening in many countries around the world? What leads corporations to damage the environment? How do structures of patriarchy and racism perpetuate oppression? What is the relationship between capitalism and war? What does oppression and exploitation look like in the 21st century? And how are these issues interrelated? This course begins by describing the origins and development of global capitalism. After investigating some of the main sources of contemporary injustice, we explore the possibilities for resistance and the creation of more just alternatives. The course aims to increase students' sensitivities to the injustices that exist in Canada and abroad, as well as developing our abilities to think critically and see the world from different perspectives.

Course texts: All readings/resources available online via OWL at no additional cost

Learning Objectives and Outcomes: Throughout the course of SOCLJUST1025 students will:

- Explore key debates, discussion and perspective of social justice
- Recognize and challenge hierarchies of race, class, gender, sexuality and ability
- Develop an understanding of the connections between current issues of social justice and larger systems of power and oppression
- Engage with classic and contemporary texts/theorists regarding questions of social justice
- Identify, explain and critique various forms of systemic oppressions
- Formulate a personal framework for discussing and debating issues of social justice

Class Attendance and Participation:

I expect that students will have read and thoughtfully engaged with all weekly material. I also expect that we will collectively maintain a respectful classroom and constructive learning environment. This includes compassion and empathy, active listening to different perspectives and never engaging in hateful speech or behaviour. Please note that since we are discussing topics of power, oppression and social justice, you may find some material to be difficult to read/watch. Your emotional health is important and please do not hesitate to reach out if there is material that may be challenging for you to engage with.

Class Schedule & Readings:

Date	Topic	Readings
Week 1: Sept 5 th	Introduction to the course and each other	Heath Justice (2020): Demanding kinder classrooms doesn't make you a snowflake
Week 2: Sept 12 th	Colonial Origins of Capitalism	Zinn (1980): Columbus, the Indians and Human Progress King (2008): Indigenous cultures rivalled those of many other civilization
Week 3: Sept 19 th <i>Social Justice Autobiography Due</i> Tutorial	Colonialism Today	The Truth and Reconciliation Commission: A Knock on the Door (2015)
Week 4: Sept 26 th	The Ideology and Culture of Capitalism	Watch: History and Ideas of Capitalism (2015) Watch: Milton Friedman: The Essence of Capitalism (2012) Jury (N.D). Friedman: <i>Capitalism and Freedom</i> Book Review
Week 5: Oct 3 rd Tutorial	Contemporary Capitalism:	Monboit (2016): Neoliberalism- the ideology and root of all of our problems

	Neoliberalism and Social Democracy	Krugman (2019): Trump vs. the socialist menace Watch: What is Social Democracy? (2012) Watch: Welfare State and Social Democracy (2015).
Week 6: Oct 10 th	Socialist Critique of Capitalism	Ehrenreich (2001). Nickel and Dimed (pp. 37-52) Graeber (2000). Are you an anarchist? The answer may surprise you! Wright (2018): How to be an anti-capitalist for the 21 century
Week 7: Oct 17 th <i>Critical Analysis Due</i> Tutorial	Structural Oppression and Racism	Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015). Letter to my son Dowsett (2014). What riding my bike has taught me about white privilege
Week 8: Oct 24 th	Independent Writing Week <i>Dr. Gain is away at a conference. This is designated time to work on your final essay. Dr. Gain available for Zoom meetings at request</i>	Review: Purdue OWL APA Formatting: https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/apa_style/apa_formatting_and_style_guide/general_format.html
Week 9: October 31 st Tutorial	Structural Oppression and Patriarchy	Oakley (1991): Sex and Gender Kreps (1973): Radical Feminism bell hooks (1984): Feminism: A Movement to End Sexist Oppression

<p>Week 10: Nov 7th</p> <p>Fall Reading Week</p>	<p>No Class</p>	
<p>Week 11: Nov 14th</p> <p><i>Essay Assignment Due</i></p> <p>Tutorial</p>	<p>Ecological Justice: A Case Study of Extraction</p>	<p>Gordon & Webber (2016). Blood of Extraction: Introduction (pp.1-30)</p> <p>International Women and Mining Network (2010): Women from Mining Impacted Communities Speak Out (Choose 4 case studies to read)</p> <p>Gain, K. (2017). Fighting for their water and their Lives, communities take direct action against Barrick Gold in the Dominican Republic.</p>
<p>Week 12: Nov 21st</p>	<p>Global Migration</p> <p><i>Guest Performance: "Crossing Borders"</i></p>	<p>Milanovic (2012) - Global Inequality: From Class to Location, from Proletarians to Migrants</p> <p>Guardian Article (2014) – Ten Myths About Migration</p>
<p>Week 13: Nov 28th</p> <p>Tutorial</p>	<p>What's Next? Creating Just Societies</p>	<p>Feng (2017): "How Can You Make a 'Real' Difference?"</p> <p>David Schweickart: Economic Democracy</p>
<p>Week 14: December 5th</p>	<p>Exam Review Day</p>	<p>Optional In-Class Study Day</p>

Assignment Schedule:

Assignment	Description	Value
Engagement Ongoing	Attendance and Participation	15%
Reflexive Paper: Social Justice Autobiography September 19th	Critically reflect on your own experiences connected to social justice and peace 3-4 pages (1000~ words)	15%
Critical Analysis October 17th	Critical analysis of an article and TV show 800-1000~ words (400-500~ words each)	15%
Essay Assignment November 14th	1200-1500 words An essay response to one of the proposed questions (posted on OWL)	25% (20% paper, 5% rough work)
Final Exam TBD	In class, final exam during exam period	30%

Assignment Details:

All assignments are to be completed in APA format

Participation- Ongoing (15%)

You will be required to read for each class. Plan to read critically rather than just for content. You are expected to have read all assigned materials prior to each class period and to be prepared to participate in discussions. While this is not a seminar course, we will be engaging in small group discussions most classes. Participation grades are based on regular attendance, reading each week's assignment, asking insightful questions, contributing to discussion in a positive way and being a respectful listener. No single portion (attendance, discussion, questions, etc.) determines your overall participation grade.

Reflexive Paper: Social Justice Autobiography (15%): September 19th

This “social justice autobiography” will provide an opportunity to reflect upon your own life and experiences surrounding your development of an understanding of topics related social justice. Things to consider could include (but are not limited to): How has your relationship and understanding of social justice changed throughout your lifetime? What situations or experiences (personal, community, national or global) have influenced your awareness of social justice? Are there specific people or figures who impacted your understanding of these issues? How does your own positionality (social location) impact your understanding or relationship with social justice? You will not be evaluated based on your current knowledge and understanding of issues related to social justice, but rather your ability to introspectively evaluate your experiences and what led you to wanting to join SOCLJUST1025F. Your reflection should be 3-4 pages (1000~) words, double spaced, excluding title page) and does not require external sources.

Critical Analysis (15%) October 17th

This assignment asks you to find an example of one newspaper article and one episode of a TV show to critique. You will do the same exercise for both. You will provide a very short summary (several sentences only) of the material. Your task is to describe how the article is subtly racist or sexist. The point is not to find an article/show that is explicitly racist or sexist. The point is to find an article/show that is presented as ideologically neutral, but under the surface is actually structured in such a way that it subtly encourages the reader/viewer to adopt a patriarchal or white supremacist perspective. In other words, your goal is to describe the ways in which a seemingly neutral article/show actually have ideological content. For the article, describe the ways in which the journalist discusses the issue in a way that is sexist or racist (good places to look are The Sun, Fox News, National Post, Daily Mail, etc). For the show, describe the ways in which the writers/producers make the show in a way that is sexist or racist. They should be roughly 400 words each, that is, roughly 800-1000 words total.

Essay Assignment (25%: 20% paper, 5% rough work): November 14th

Students are expected to write a final essay in response to one of the prompts posted online. This paper should be 1200-1500 words in length and written in APA formatting. You will also be required to submit your “rough work” (worth 5%) to demonstrate the originality of your paper (a detailed outline, notes from your literature review, etc.) Submitted to OWL prior to midnight on November 16th

Final Exam (30%):

During exam period

Absences and late assignments: Late assignments and papers will have 2% per day late penalty. Assignments and papers are due at the beginning of class. In the event of a medical emergency, students are requested to contact the Academic Dean's Office immediately to determine a course of action. This typically requires medical documentation or other relevant proof as to why an absence was unavoidable.

Please refer to this policy:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_illness.pdf

Policy on Accommodation for Medical Illness:

(http://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf). Student Medical

Certificate (SMC) https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf

Tests/Examinations: Students are responsible for seeking accommodation with appropriate documentation, prior to writing tests/examinations, if they are of the view that their performance may be affected by extenuating circumstances.

Support Services: Your mental health is important. Students who are in emotional/mental health distress should refer to Mental Health@Western:

<http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/> for a complete list of options about how to obtain help. University Students Council provides many valuable support services for students (including the health insurance plan) <http://westernusc.ca/services/>.

Information about Counselling and Student Development, including Accessibility Services (formerly Services for Students with Disabilities) at King's is available at <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/who-we-are/administrative-departments/dean-of-students/>

For emotional/mental health assistance see: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

The website for Academic Services at King's University College is <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-support/>

Statement on Use of Electronic Devices:

You are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations.

Use of Laptops in the Classroom:

King's University College at The University of Western Ontario acknowledges the integration of new

technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of laptop computers 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 laptops by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using laptops 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/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/studentLife/conduct/code_of_conduct_2003.pdf

Inappropriate use of laptops [or smart phones] 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 are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.”

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, at the following Web site: http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

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. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com <http://turnitin.uwo.ca/>.

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.

Copyright re: Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including power point 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. Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member is interested in posting a student’s answers or papers on the course web site he/she should ask for the student’s written permission.

(Commercial use of Course material - <http://umd.edu/legal/commercial.html>) **Mailbox re Submission of Late Essays/Assignments ONLY:**

Only late essays/assignments not handed in at class may be dropped off in the drop box, located between the inner doors of the Cardinal Carter Library. Please inform your students that

essays dropped into the mailbox will be picked-up twice per day: once in the morning (9:30 a.m.) and in the afternoon (4:00 p.m.). All essays dropped off after 4:00 p.m. on a Friday will be date-stamped the following Monday. Essays should be placed in an envelope addressed to the professor with the course code and student number clearly indicated.

Class Cancellations:

All reported class cancellations are posted at: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/outages-service-interruptions/>

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.