



**Social Justice and Peace Studies 1025F (574) (575) (576) (577)**  
**INTRODUCTION TO SOCIAL JUSTICE AND PEACE STUDIES**  
**Fall/ Winter 2025-2026**

**Instructor:** B. Muller  
**Email:** bmuller@uwo.ca

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### **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.

**SJPS 1025F**  
**Sept – Dec 2025**

**Introduction to Social Justice & Peace Studies**  
 SJPS 1025F S574 (in person lecture and tutorial)

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Office Hours by [appointment](#)

### **COURSE 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. What motivates movements such as Black Lives Matter, Idle No More, Occupy, or Indivisible? What are the factors that contribute to huge disparities of wealth and access to services and justice in our world, and what can we do about it? How is it possible that some populations are incarcerated so much more frequently than others? Why are societies often so hostile and exclusionary towards migrants and asylum seekers? How can we challenge these circumstances? We examine these and many other questions, considering systems of oppression, forms of resistance, conditions of possibility for justice, the interconnections between ecological crises, capitalism, colonialism, Indigenous rights, and a host of other related issues.

### **LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

- Students will learn to define and critically analyze key concepts and theories in social justice and peace studies, including equality, human rights, nonviolence, and conflict resolution.
- Engage in critical self-reflection to understand student's own positionality, privileges, and responsibilities as allies in relation to forms of systemic oppression and the social movements that work to challenge these inequities
- Students will critically analyze the historical and ongoing impacts of colonization, including the impacts on Indigenous communities, such as residential schools, land dispossession, and cultural assimilation, and the implications for contemporary social justice.
- Demonstrate the ability to analyze contemporary social justice issues, including systemic inequality, discrimination, and violence, using interdisciplinary approaches
- Challenge and assess hierarchies of race, class, gender, and sexuality
- Develop, enhance, hone, and apply critical thinking skills.
- Develop, enhance, hone, and apply critical writing skills.
- Develop, enhance, hone, and apply professional communication skills.

### **GRADING:**

**A+ >90%** Excellent. Mind-blowingly good. Can I get your autograph?

**A >80%** Extremely good. You're working hard and the work is paying off.

**70-79%** Very Good work at this level of university; Mostly exceeds expectations.

**C 60-69%** Satisfactory work; Average; You did what you had to do, but likely neither you nor I are not overly excited with it.

**D 50-59%** Subpar. This is a big reason why I have office hours, so let's chat to facilitate improvement.

**F <49%** Oops. It's obvious that there is a problem unless this was the result of a careless error in judgement. Let's work together to get you on track for success in your future assignments and assessments.

## ASSIGNMENTS

**All assignments must be submitted through Brightspace in the appropriate assignment box, with a file name that includes your last name. All components of this course are mandatory. Failure to complete book reviews and the Mid-term exam can prevent students from sitting the final exam.**

Tutorial Participation (ongoing)	10%
Book Reviews (three oral reviews, out of 10)	30%
Jigsaws (3 x 5%)	15%

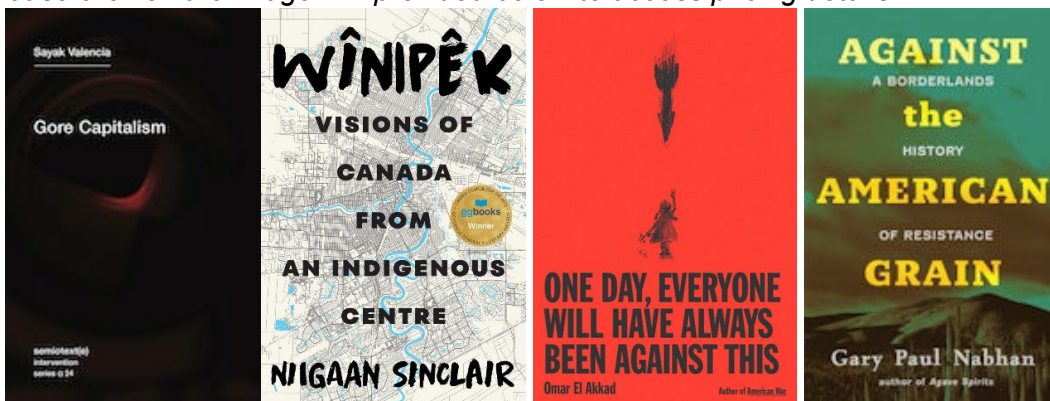
Mid-Term Exam (28 October)	15%
Final Exam (December Exam Period)	30%

## FORMAT (In-Person)

This course involves one **2-hour lecture** period per week and a **1-hour tutorial** session, for a total of **3 hours per week**. To successfully complete this course, students are required to attend both the lecture and tutorial. Tutorials and lectures will sometimes be clearly distinguished, and other times will flow together. As much as is possible, lectures and tutorials will generally be interactive, involve Jigsaw exercises, debates and discussion, writing workshops, and so on. Lectures will involve student engagement, but will focus on key concepts, ideas, theories, cases, to give students the tools necessary to both understand the foundations of the interdisciplinary field of Social Justice and Peace Studies and empower students to recognize and critically engage with injustice and transformative alternatives.

## COURSE TEXTS (REQUIRED)

Please click on the image link provided below to access pricing details



Students will be required to orally review **three** of these texts.

## TUTORIAL PARTICIPATION/ DISCUSSION [10% OF FINAL GRADE]

Your participation grade is derived from several contributions. **Participation is mandatory**, and success in participation or in the course is not possible without full engagement with the material. Everyone has one “freebie”, where your attendance/engagement in a tutorial session or jigsaw will be overlooked. However, more than one absence – and in our environment, absence can also mean lack of engagement and not solely physical absence – will have negative results. Academic counsellors will provide the necessary accommodations for medical or other issues and please notify your instructor of the accommodation. You are encouraged to speak with your instructor about concerns at any time during the semester so we can create

plans for your success and avoid problems, when and if we can. Life happens, I get it, but let's try and figure things out so you can thrive.

Marks will be awarded for raising questions and concerns pertinent to the assigned required readings, expressing cogent arguments, and general participation in the discussion that demonstrates some comprehension and critical engagement in the required material covered for that specific session. Talking to fill time and space will not result in positive marks. **Before coming to class, specifically tutorial, students should read, view, and/or listen to the appropriate material listed in the syllabus, and consider the following before attending the seminar: what is the primary argument? What is particularly compelling and/ or relevant about the material? What kind of epistemological and ontological assumptions are made by the author(s)? Attempt to critically evaluate the internal and external logic of the argument(s) presented; reflect on the broader implications for the themes in our course; and raise at least two interesting and provocative discussion questions.**

### **JIGSAWS [15% OF FINAL GRADE – Dates will be provided in Schedule]**

This exercise encourages you to develop knowledge about a specific area, issue or debate surrounding the main themes discussed in class and to effectively and persuasively share this knowledge with your peers. Each jigsaw has three different topics. **Students will be assigned ONE JIGSAW topic and must come prepared to present this topic in 5 minutes to your group members**; the other members of your group will be assigned the other two topics, and they will each present their topics in turn. Each jigsaw exercise will be marked out of 5 through the completion of a self-evaluation document that must be submitted one-week after the Jigsaw exercise, and collectively Jigsaws are worth **15% of your final grade. All Jigsaw evaluations are subject to a grace period and will not be assessed until after the last class of the semester, meaning the last class is the absolute deadline without penalty for jigsaw submissions.**

### **BOOK REVIEWS [10% each x 3 = 30% - The book reviews will take place Oct 7; Nov 11; Dec 2 – see Brightspace Calendar for details]**

**You are required to complete 3 Book reviews.** You will receive a more detailed handout on this assignment in the first two weeks of class. The books are required material for the course and will form the basis of some lectures, and a portion of your tutorials. These Book Reviews will be done **orally** during tutorial times as indicated in the course schedule and on Brightspace. A Rubric will be provided. All students are required to review *Winipêk*, and *Against the American Grain*. Students will have a choice between *Gore Capitalism*, and *One Day, Everyone Will Have Always Been Against This*.

### **MIDTERM EXAM [15% OF FINAL GRADE – 28 OCTOBER 2025]**

This will be a closed book essay exam and will be written in class on 28 October 2025. Further details will be provided in class.

### **FINAL EXAM [30% OF FINAL GRADE]**

The final exam will be scheduled during the December examination period. This will be a closed book written essay exam. There will be 3 essay questions on the final exam. During our last class in December, students will be provided with 5 or 6 essay questions from which the 3 exam essay questions will be chosen.

### **SUBMISSION GUIDELINES & LATE POLICY**

There is no need to submit paper copies of any assignment, other than the final exam. All other assignments should be submitted in electronic form via Brightspace. The Professor reserves the right to use plagiarism and AI detection software. Please include your name, the course number, your section number, the instructor's name, and your TA's name at the top of the first page. A title page is not necessary. **Word limits include**

**references. APA or Harvard style referencing is necessary.** If you have questions or concerns about citations, please ask, and/or avail yourself of the excellent support at [The Write Place](#). ***Unless otherwise noted in the syllabus, late assignments will require official accommodations or an application of the academic considerations policy. There is plenty of flexibility in both types of assessment and submission deadlines; if this is insufficient, please speak with me.***

**PLEASE NOTE: Further information on academic dishonesty and the use of AI is attached, and more information will be provided on Brightspace and discussed in our first class.**

## **FINAL NOTES**

In this course, we will cover challenging and sometimes emotional material. This will demand your attention, commitment, patience, passion, and attentiveness. Along with a reasonable amount of reading and writing, I hope everyone learns to listen better, realizing how much more there is to know on any given topic, and move towards more clearly articulating your ideas. I can direct you to a series of policies and standards, and contacts for support, etc., which I will obviously make available on Brightspace. However, I want to emphasize a few important points here that I want you to keep in mind throughout the semester.

As someone whose research areas include technology, surveillance and security, I'm intimately aware of Artificial Intelligence: both its capabilities and its limitations. We will discuss this further in class, but the most essential question you need to ask yourself is: Why are you here and what you wish to gain from your experience at university? I will be with you for the entire semester, and I'm passionate about the material we cover in this course and committed to your engagement and success. I also realize it's not 1992, 1967, or 1885, so I'm conscious of the fact that technology is not something we can or ought to avoid or shut ourselves off from.

I hope that together, we can learn to manage and harness technology and be infected with a passion for the material we cover in the course – at least some of it or some aspects of it. Part of your job is to discover your specific passion. My purpose here is also to facilitate your success; Never forget this. If at any time material, assignments, etc. seem overwhelming, if you're having trouble, you're unclear about what we're doing, where we're headed, what the readings or assignments are about, please reach out and speak with me. Challenges, problems, the temptation of ChatGPT, and a range of difficulties from in the classroom and beyond are a part of life and a part of an undergraduate education. My hope is that together we can navigate these challenges and have a rewarding and inspiring time together.

**PLEASE NOTE: All other policies and handouts associated with this class are located on the course Brightspace page**

**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](https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses%20enrollment/exams%20and%20tests/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](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/](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](mailto: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](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](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.