



**Social Justice and Peace Studies 4404F (570)
RESEARCH SYMPOSIUM
Fall/ Winter 2025-2026**

Instructor: A. Larkin
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Course Information

Calendar Description:

A research seminar designed to facilitate a final year integration process in Social Justice and Peace Studies. This course will focus on an in-depth individual research project that relates to the history, and philosophical foundations of social justice and peace, while exploring the relationship between theory, research and practice.

Antirequisite(s): The former Social Justice and Peace Studies 4401F/G.

Prerequisite(s): Fourth year standing in a Social Justice and Peace Studies program, or permission of the Department.

Extra Information: 3 lecture 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.



Social Justice and Peace Studies

SJPS 4404F Fall Term 2025

Contemporary Issues in Social Justice and Peace Studies

Instructor: Professor A. Larkin alarkin2@uwo.ca (preferred method of contact)

Mode of instruction: In-person

Office Hours: Zoom and in-person by appointment.

Prerequisite(s): Fourth year standing in a Social Justice and Peace Studies program, or permission of the Department.

Anti-requisites: The former Social Justice and Peace Studies 4401F/G.

Course Overview. This senior seminar course examines contemporary issues of social justice and peace studies. It provides students with an opportunity to research and analyze individually selected issues of social justice or peace building in depth through research and public presentation. Emphasis is on critical and action-oriented research methods and analysis. It is also a seminar, so the emphasis is on discussion and all students are expected to participate extensively in each class meeting.

Creating a learning and researching community. My teaching philosophy is deeply rooted in collaboration, cooperation and support. In this course, it is my hope that we will establish a strong, supportive learning community as we examine key issues of social justice, conflict, peace, equity and social change. Typically, the topics we take on in this course involve a fair degree of difficulty and often stress because inequity, war, violence, and other social conditions that produce inequality speak to the very nature of our collective humanity. To build community, each week we will begin class with a check in, to give students a chance to share what ideas, issues, events or other topics are drawing their attention. This time is an opportunity

to get to know one another as scholars and activists and to establish a foundation for research support.

Course Design and Objectives. This class is a highly participatory senior seminar. It requires students to take an active role in leading weekly discussions and critiquing selected readings or assigned resources. As a senior level course, students are expected to bring an informed critique to the resources examined in this course. It is expected that students will arrive to class having completed readings and bringing to class notes, questions, concerns, and (potentially) related items for further consideration. This is an opportunity for students to take a lead in their learning and to continue to build on knowledge from the first three years of the SJPS program and to synthesize theory and content at a sophisticated level. By the end of this class, students will have produced a significant piece of original research that demonstrates mastery of social justice and peace building research.

This research paper will be a substantive project based on your original research. You will choose the topic and it must be related to issues or themes of social justice and peace. The paper must be at 3000 – 4000 words and cite at least 10 academic sources. We will have benchmarks throughout this course to work together on the process of writing an extended research paper. More information on the research assignment will be presented in class and posted on the class OWL site.

Learning Expectations and Goals. It is expected that by the end of this course students will:

- Develop a broad understanding of the complexity of contemporary issues of peace and justice
- Explore ethical strategies for research with vulnerable communities
- Analyze different social theories, methods, thinkers that are necessary to examine issues of peace and justice
- Design and complete a research proposal and project
- Mobilize knowledge through public presentation.

Media. For this class students are expected to be reading the news, watching the news, listening to the news and/or following social media outlets to keep up with relevant events and to critique how they are messaged to the public. I encourage all students to regularly read a wide range of media sites to develop a depth of understanding and to critically evaluate the perspectives and positions taken by media to communicate issues and events. Please don't hesitate to ask me if you would like suggestions for diverse media to follow.

- I. Lead Seminar Discussion **20%** (date TBD)
- II. Research Project—staged:
 1. Research Proposal **15%** October 5
 2. Extended Outline and Expected Works Cited list. **15%** Nov 10
 3. Final Project **20%** Dec 7
- III. Formal Presentation at SJPS Symposium **15%** (Date TBD)
- IV. Attendance and participation throughout term **15%** (ongoing)

Course requirements

Attendance. Attendance will be taken at every class meeting. I do understand that life is more complex these days, and that sometimes it is necessary to miss a class. If you need to miss a class for any reason, please notify me by email as soon as possible. This is especially important if you are responsible for leading that day's discussion. Each student gets one 'free' pass where you can miss a class without any explanation or documentation. If there are repeated absences, this may impact your ability to pass this course.

Preparation. Please come to class prepared with your notes, questions and any other ideas that you have to contribute to the weekly discussion. Each week, students must come prepared with at least three questions developed from their critical reading of the week's assigned resources.

A note on participation. Each student is expected to be engaged in each week's discussions and presentations. Participation is a critical part of your development in this course and to prepare you for your life 'after King's.' Although I am aware that participation in class discussions can be anxiety-inducing for some students, we will work very hard to create a welcoming community of learners so that everyone feels confident and free to share their thoughts. Most of the literature on anxiety recommends engaging with those situations that create anxiety in a consistent way to try to alleviate the sensations that they may cause. Communication is a key skill that you will each need to develop for your future lives beyond King's, and in this class I am committed to supporting each of you with the process of public speaking and engagement with discussions.

Course Materials. This course has no required text and no cost.

Seminar Facilitation.

Each student will be responsible for leading a one-hour seminar over the course of the term. This seminar will focus on selected readings/podcasts/documentaries or other resources that students will select in relation to their chosen research project.

We will discuss the structure for a class seminar facilitated by students in class. It is essential that students prepare their seminar to be engaging and not to just present a power-point slide deck to the class. Questions, discussion, activities and any other creative ways to engage students are expected. You should not summarize the readings/resources, rather the idea here is to engage in a critique of the methods, ideas, perspectives or findings presented in each one. This is an opportunity to help you make connections between the readings that you have presented

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.