

PSCI 260: Social Movements in Comparative Perspective

QUARTER
Drexel University

MEETING TIMES
MEETING LOCATION

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1 Overview

Social movements aim to change how people treat each other in politics and civic life. Such movements can seek to accelerate the pace of change, slow it down, or take it in an altogether different direction. Unlike efforts that operate through “normal” political channels, social movements rely on “unconventional” tactics. And they originate in civil society, not among what some might call “political elites.” It may be that the social movement is specific to medium-sized democracy – not possible before its advent, nor likely to survive in an increasingly global community.

This course will introduce you to the study of social movements. First, we cover big theoretical perspectives. Then we cover movement tactics. I will try to arrange for guest speakers. The point of these is to have you interrogate whether what we’ve learned in class applies to what they are doing in practice. By the end of the course, you will:

- Be better at reading social science,
- Be better at persuasive writing,
- Have gained a structural perspective on the current political moment.

2 Things to buy

Please buy the Staggenborg book from your favorite bookseller. Either the first or second edition is fine.

- Staggenborg, Suzanne. 2011. *Social Movements*. New York: Oxford University Press.

3 Requirements

Your grade will be based on the following components. See below for an explanation of each.

1. Leading discussion, participating, and attendance (10%).

2. Discussion questions (10%).
3. Midterm exam (40%).
4. Paper (40%).

3.1 Leading discussion, participation, and attendance

In addition to attending all classes, you must lead class discussion at least once. What does this mean? Everything we will read either (a) offers an explanation for some social-movement outcome, (b) makes some critique of a theoretical perspective on social movements, or (c) is an example of social-movement advocacy. A good class discussion will revolve around how the reading fits into social-movement theory. Participation also means being part of class discussion, even when you do not lead it. See “discussion questions” just below.

3.2 Discussion questions

These exist to make you think about the reading. We will meet 23 times over the course of the term. You are required to prepare **two good questions** about the readings for a given day. You must do this **ten times** over the course of the term. Post these questions on **Blackboard Learn by noon** on the day class meets. Questions posted after that don’t count. I use these questions to make my lectures better, and your fellow students may rely on these as they lead discussion.

What is a good question? Basically, it gets other people thinking and talking. Maybe there’s an important concept you don’t understand. Maybe some historical event is important to the reading’s argument, but you haven’t heard of it. Or maybe you think the author is wrong, and some logical reason or piece of evidence is your reason for thinking so. All of these (and more) are worth raising in discussion questions. If you want, you can write a declarative sentence instead of a question. If you do that, please give me a little more to work with (e.g., some logic or evidence).

3.3 Midterm exam

This will be an essay-style, take-home exam, due at 11:59 PM on Sunday, October 28. You will upload your midterm to turnitin.com, using a login I will provide. Standard criteria for good writing will apply.

3.4 Paper

You will have choice. Either pick a social movement, determine whether it has been successful, then make an argument as to why – *or* write a conceptual paper on collective action in the face of within-movement differences. There will be prompts and more guidelines as the course progresses. For now, the important thing is that you’ll need a thesis statement – a main or “takeaway” point related to what we learn in class. It may be wise to pay attention to some movement over the course of the term. The length will be 1,250-2,500 words (5-10 pages). As a general guideline, conceptual papers will tend toward the lower end of this range, and movement-success papers will tend to be longer.

4 Other policies

You agree to:

1. Treat guest speakers with respect.
2. Check Drexel email daily through the final-exam date.
3. Attend class and meet course deadlines *except in documented cases of bereavement, severe illness, or medical emergency*. You must provide a doctor's note or funeral announcement if you cannot meet a deadline and/or attend a class meeting.
4. Turn in papers on time. Put a hard copy in my hands, and send me the digital version via e-mail. Five points are deducted if an assignment is late. Five more points are deducted for each 24-hour period past the time and date an assignment is due. Non-business and holiday hours count toward these 24-hour periods. Business hours are 9 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday, non-holiday.
5. Access the Drexel library website to download a given reading, if necessary.
6. Abide by all other Drexel policies, found at the following websites. Note: I reserve the right to use plagiarism-detection software.
 - Academic integrity: <https://drexel.edu/provost/policies/academic-integrity/>
 - Disability accommodation: <https://drexel.edu/oed/disabilityResources/students/Accommodations/>
 - Course withdrawal: <https://drexel.edu/provost/policies/course-withdrawal/>

I agree to:

1. Abide by any grading guidelines in this syllabus and related instructions for assignments. Grading is on the 0-100 scale: 93 and up (A), 90-92 (A-), 87-89 (B+), 83-87 (B), 80-82 (B-), and so on, down to 50 (F).
2. Answer student e-mail within 48 business hours. Business hours are 9 AM to 5:30 PM, Monday through Friday, non-holiday.
3. Except for the required book, post links to readings on Blackboard, if not the readings themselves.
4. Grade written work within 10 business days of its submission.
5. Notify you of changes to this syllabus at least one week in advance of affected due dates.
6. Give office hours on a by-appointment basis. My commuting schedule makes it hard to be present in my office. (I teach four classes, one of them in DC.) At my "appointments" link, however, I have blocked off time for Skype calls and in-person meetings.

5 Schedule of readings & classes

5.1 Housekeeping

Class 1 Staggenborg, “Introduction” (pp. 1-11).

5.2 A master theory? The “political process” model

Class 2 McAdam, Doug. “The Political Process Model” (pp. 36-59). In *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-70*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999.

Class 3 Staggenborg, “Theories of Social Movements and Collective Action” (pp. 12-27) and “Issues in the Study of Social Movements and Collective Action” (pp. 28-50).

5.3 Why the social movement, not some other form of contentious politics

Class 4 Tilly, Charles and Lesley J. Wood. “Social Movements as Politics” (pp. 1-15) and “Nineteenth-century Adventures” (pp. 38-64). In *Social Movements, 1768-2012*, Boulder: Paradigm Publishers, 2013.

5.4 Tactics targeting party systems

Class 5 Przeworski, Adam and John Sprague. “The Dilemma of Electoral Socialism” (pp. 29-56). In *Paper Stones: A History of Electoral Socialism*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986.

Class 6 McConaughy, Corrine M. “Coalitional Impossibilities: Race, Class, and Failure” (pp. 170-206) and “The National Story” (pp. 207-250). In *The Woman Suffrage Movement in America: A Reassessment*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Class 7 Heaney, Michael T. and Fabio Rojas. “The Party in the Street and its Historical Context” (pp. 14-45) and “Social Movements in a Polarized America” (pp. 229-243). In *Party in the Street: The Antiwar Movement and the Democratic Party after 9/11*, New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015.

Class 8 Amy, Douglas J. “The Forgotten History of the Single Transferable Vote in the United States.” *Representation* 43, no. 1 (1996): 13-20.

5.5 Midterm exam

Class 9 Review in class for take-home midterm. Discussion of final papers.

5.6 Tactics targeting public opinion

Class 10 Hall, Jacquelin Dowd. “The Long Civil Rights Movement and the Political Uses of the Past.” *Journal of American History* (April 2005): 1233-1263.

Class 11 Hunter, Nan D. “Varieties of Constitutional Experience: Democracy and the Marriage Equality Campaign.” *UCLA Law Review* 64 (2017): 1662-1725.

Class 12 Ferguson, Michael L. “Choice Feminism and the Fear of Politics.” *Perspectives on Politics* 8, no. 1 (2010): 247-253.

Class 13 Rickford, Russell. “Black Lives Matter: Toward a Modern Practice of Mass Struggle.” *New Labor Forum* 25, no. 1 (2016): 34-42.

5.7 Tactics targeting global order

Class 14 Weldon, S. Laurel. “Inclusion, Solidarity, and Social Movements: The Global Movement against Gender Violence.” *Perspectives on Politics* 4, no. 1 (2006): 55-74.

Class 15 Strong, Krystal. “Do African Lives Matter to Black Lives Matter? Youth Uprisings and the Borders of Solidarity.” *Urban Education* 53, no. 2 (2018): 265-285.

Class 16 Boykoff, Jules. “Framing Dissent: Mass-Media Coverage of the Global Justice Movement.” *New Political Science* 28, no. 2 (2006): 201-228.

Class 17 Inglehart, Ronald and Pippa Norris. “Trump and the Populist Authoritarian Parties: The Silent Revolution in Reverse.” *Perspectives on Politics* 15, no. 2 (2017): 443-454.

5.8 Current issues

Class 18 McAdam, Doug. “Social Movement Theory and the Prospects for Climate Change Activism in the United States” *Annual Review of Political Science* 20 (2017): 189-208.

Class 19 Guest speaker.

Class 20 Guest speaker. Paper is due.