

POLI 3331 WAO Politics of COVID/W2022

Instructor: Todd Stubbs

Class Times: Friday 2:30 pm-5:50 pm

Office/Hours: Friday 1:30pm-2:30pm, or by appointment (including Zoom)

Email: tstubbs@lakeheadu.ca

Course Description

The novel coronavirus pandemic has tested political arrangements across the globe. Arriving just over a decade after the first major crisis of the “global age” – the economic shocks of 2008 – COVID-19 has exacerbated existing geopolitical problems and forced us to reckon with a new set of enormously difficult political and economic challenges. By the same token, many analysts and activists have approached the crisis as a rare chance for a political-economic reset – a “silver lining” opportunity to recalibrate the global political-economy in order to strengthen democracy and confront dire problems such as economic inequality, social injustice, and climate change. This course considers the politics of the pandemic on two fronts: as a global problem testing the limits of global governance, multilateral cooperation, and the global economy; and as a domestic crisis bearing down heavily on national and subnational political and economic systems. A set of key questions guides our analysis: How do we assess good governance in a time of existential emergency? Which sets of political ideas and values should predominate: liberty or authority, fairness or utility, individual rights or civic virtue? Whose interests should take priority? Can we build a better, more equitable, more sustainable world coming out of this crisis? If so, what would such a world look like?

Course Objectives

A major purpose of this course is to encourage students to work with and develop a range of theoretical and practical tools and approaches to analyzing and better understanding the politics of the most disruptive international crisis since the Second World War. A broader objective is to foster the development of transferrable writing, research, and analytical skills.

Evaluation

Essay Topic Proposal and Short Annotated Bibliography: 15%

Quiz: 10%

Research Essay: 25%

Participation: 25%

Final Exam: 25%

Required Materials

Adam Tooze, *Shutdown; How Covid Shook the World's Economy* (Viking, 2021).

Additional materials are posted on D2L. Be sure to consult the syllabus regularly for information on the scheduled readings.

Course Structure and Work Requirements

Course Structure:

The class meets once weekly for a total of three hours. A major emphasis is placed on discussions. Brief lectures, student presentations, and films are also part of the curriculum. Students are expected to read all assigned materials and take an active part in discussions. Please note, pandemic restrictions may result in slight changes to the delivery of the course.

Written Assignments/Work Requirements/Tests:

a) Essay Topic Proposal and Short Annotated Bibliography (15%)

Students will prepare a one-page double-spaced topic proposal for their Research Paper. The proposal must feature the following: 1) a research question, 2) a hypothesis statement that answers the research question directly, and 3) relevant background information describing the topic and the major relevant themes.

In addition, students will append to the proposal a preliminary annotated bibliography featuring no fewer than 3 scholarly sources, correctly formatted using APA or CMS.

Suggested topics and additional guidelines are posted on D2L. See the Assignment Guidelines file.

b) Quiz (10%)

A short multiple-choice quiz will be administered in week 7. The quiz will cover all the materials from Weeks 1 through 6.

c) Research Essay (25%)

Length: between 2,500 and 2,750 words
Minimum of 10 sources, five must be scholarly

For this assignment, students will research the topic they have chosen related to the politics of the COVID-19 pandemic. A successful paper will feature a strong analytical thesis derived from the research. The quality of the research and the writer's ability to distil and synthesize its findings are major features of the exercise.

Formatting must be in Chicago or APA. See the Assignment Guidelines file for more information about this assignment.

d) Participation (25%)

Discussion is a major feature of this course. You will be assessed a participation score based on your attendance and the quality and consistency of your class participation. To receive a strong participation grade, evidence of your engagement with the scheduled materials is crucial.

e) Final Exam (25%)

A final exam will be scheduled for the exam period at the end of the semester. It will be cumulative and cover the reading and lecture material from the whole semester.

Evaluation of Written Assignments/Projects:

80-100% (A range):

Shows advanced competency in meeting the research and/or analytical and/or communications and/or cognitive and/or technical requirements of the assignment.

- The work is of exceptional quality
- The work is insightful, detailed, articulate, grammatically correct, technically correct, and well organized

70-79% (B range):

Exhibits a good effort in meeting the requirements of the assignment or examination.

- The work may be less focused, detailed, organized or less widely researched than a paper worthy of a higher grade or communicates fewer ideas with less detailed analysis than an assignment worthy of a higher grade

60-69% (C range):

Average approach and level of success in communicating analysis, factual material, and ideas.

- The work offers less detailed analysis and/or a lack sufficient research, and /or a less articulate or less clearly focused argument and/or may have technical flaws

50-59% (D range):

A poor level of competency in meeting the requirements of an assignment or examination.

- The work is poorly organized and/or written, features generalized statements, lacks supporting details and/or critical analysis, and features significant technical flaws

Below 50% (F):

Failure to meet the requirements of the assignment.

Course Policies

Late Assignments:

All written work must be handed in on time. Late work will be penalized 2% per day, including weekends and holidays. Late assignments may not be accepted after more than ten days.

To obtain an exemption for medical or compassionate reasons, students must present signed supporting documentation to the instructor.

PLEASE NOTE: Unsubstantiated technical problems or electronic submission of blank files or otherwise unreadable files are not legitimate excuses for late penalty exemption.

Academic Misconduct:

Students are expected to abide by the principles of academic honesty in all aspects of their studies and course work. Academic dishonesty is defined as a deliberate act or failure to act in a manner resulting in, or intended to result in, the awarding of unearned credit or advantage. The major forms of academic dishonesty pertinent to this course include plagiarism, misrepresentation of authorship, and improper collaboration.

Behaviour deemed academically dishonest may result in a grade of “0,” loss of credit for the course (with a transcript notation indicating the failure was the result of academic misconduct), and, in certain cases, suspension or expulsion from the university. For more information see the Lakehead Calendar 2012-13 > University Regulation > IX Academic Misconduct.

A copy of the “Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures” including sections on plagiarism and other forms of misconduct may also be obtained from the Office of the Registrar.

The following rules shall govern the treatment of candidates who have been found guilty of attempting to obtain academic credit dishonestly.

- a. The minimum penalty for a candidate found guilty of plagiarism, or of cheating on any part of a course will be a zero for the work concerned.
- b. A candidate found guilty of cheating on a formal examination or a test, or of serious or repeated plagiarism, or of unofficially obtaining a copy of an examination paper before the examination is scheduled to be written, will receive zero for the course and may be expelled from the University.

Students disciplined under the Code of Student Behaviour and Disciplinary Procedures may appeal their case through the Judicial Panel.

Note: "Plagiarism" shall be deemed to include:

- a. Plagiarism of ideas as where an idea of an author or speaker is incorporated into the body of an assignment as though it were the writer's idea, i.e. no credit is given the person through referencing or footnoting or endnoting.
- b. Plagiarism of words occurs when phrases, sentences, tables or illustrations of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a writer's own, i.e. no quotations or indentations (depending on the format followed) are present but referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.

Plagiarism of ideas and words as where words and an idea(s) of an author or speaker are incorporated into the body of a written assignment as though they were the writer's own words and ideas, i.e., no quotations or indentations (depending on format followed) are present and no referencing or footnoting or endnoting is given.”

Due Dates and Weekly Schedule

Due Dates/Important Dates:

Essay Topic Proposal and Short Annotated Bibliography: 4 February 2022

Quiz: 4 March 2022

Research Essay: 1 April 2022

IMPORTANT: All due dates are valid to 11:59 pm on the specified day. All written assignments must be submitted electronically to the appropriate D2L drop box in pdf or .doc (Word) format. Please do not submit PAGES-formatted documents.

Weekly Schedule

Part I: Making Sense of COVID-19

Week 1 (14 Jan.) – Introduction to the Course

Adam Tooze, *Shutdown: How Covid Shook the World's Economy* (New York: Viking, 2021), "Introduction."

Week 2 (21 Jan.) – The Pandemic as a Global Problem

Tooze, *Shutdown*, Ch.1, 2.

Martin Farrer, "How Covid spread fear of globalisation and threatens a new world order," *The Guardian*, 16 October 2021.

Week 3 (28 Jan.) – The Pandemic as a Domestic Problem

Tooze, *Shutdown*, Ch. 3, 4.

Statistics Canada, "COVID-19 in Canada: Year-end Update on Social and Economic Impacts," *Statcan.ca*, <https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/pub/11-631-x/11-631-x2021003-eng.htm>

Part II: COVID in Context

Week 4 (4 Feb.) – Public Health Theory and Practice

Essay Topic Proposal and Short Annotated Bibliography due 4 February 2022

Tooze, *Shutdown*, Ch. 5.

Ann Bryan, “Public Health Theories,” in Frances Wilson and Mzwandile Mabhala, eds., *Key Concepts in Public Health* (London; Sage, 2009).

Week 5 (11 Feb.) – Past Pandemics and Government Responses

Tooze, *Shutdown*, Ch. 6.

Jones, “Surviving Influenza: Lived Experiences of Health Inequity and Pandemic Disease in Canada,” *CMAJ* 192, 25 (June 2020): E688-E689.

Part III: Debating the Politics of COVID

Week 6 (18 Feb.) – Science, Expertise, and the Problem of Authority

Tooze, *Shutdown*, Ch. 7.

(Film) “Should covid-19 vaccines be mandatory?” *The Economist* (2021).

Week 7 (4 Mar.) – Emergency Powers, Legal Checks, and Human Rights

Quiz

Tooze, *Shutdown*, Ch. 8.

Sophia A. Zweig, et al., “Ensuring Rights while Protecting Health,” *Health and Human Rights* 23, 2 (December 2021): 173-186.

Week 8 (11 Mar.) – Economic Shutdowns and Fiscal Policy

Tooze, *Shutdown*, Chs. 9, 10.

(Film) “The Power of the Fed,” *PBS* (2021).

Week 9 (18 Mar.) – Government Messaging and the Contemporary Mediascape

Tooze, *Shutdown*, 11, 12.

Jack L. Rozdilsky, “Doug Ford’s Flip-Flops: A Dangerous Failure of Risk Communication in COVID-19 Third Wave,” *The Conversation*, 22 April 2021.

Part IV: After COVID

Week 10 (25 Mar.) – What Will COVID Mean for the Health of Democracy?

Tooze, *Shutdown*, 13, 14.

Enrica Caraffini, “Democracy and Borderline Cases,” *Revista Portuguesa de Filosofia* 77, 2-3 (2021): 565-578.

Week 11 (1 Apr.) – COVID and Other Major Global Crises

Research Essay due 1 April 2022

Tooze, *Shutdown*, “Conclusion.”

Week 12 (8 Apr.) – Course Wrap-Up and Review