Socy 21 - Introduction to Political Sociology

Spring 2023: March 27 – May 31

Lev Grinberg

Course Description: Politics exists everywhere, when certain decisions affect two or more human beings. Immediately emerge political questions: who makes the decision, and how? Is it a result of dialogue and negotiations, or unilateral imposition of the most powerful? Who benefits? Who lose? Political Sociology studies processes of decision making and power relations at larger levels of society. In this Introductory course we will study basic questions of political processes, starting with the historical formation of States in Europe during centuries of Wars, their violent expansion overseas by colonialism and settler societies, and the emergence of nationalism and democracy. We will study democratic decision-making processes, theories of power elites, pluralism and class domination. How democratic processes represent classes, ethnic groups and race, and how civil society, social movements and trade unions organize and demand representation, at local and global levels. Finally, we will discuss how globalization impacts democratic processes.

General Course Requirements: All students are expected to attend lectures, do the reading, participate in class discussions; they will write four short reports commenting on the readings, do one mid-term take home exam and one final take home exam.

Grading: Each one of the reading reports will be 5% of the final grade. The mid-term exam will be 30% and the final exam 50%.

Honor Principle: Examinations and the research paper will be conducted in accord with the principles of academic honor detailed in Dartmouth’s Organization, Regulations and Courses and in the Student Handbook.

Students with Disabilities: I encourage students with disabilities, including “invisible” disabilities like chronic diseases, learning disabilities, and psychiatric disabilities to discuss with me after class or during my office hours by the end of the second week of the term appropriate academic adjustments or accommodations that might be helpful to you. All discussions will remain confidential, although the Academic Skills Center may be consulted to verify the documentation of the disability.

Week 1. March 27 – April 2 - Classical Theories

Week 2. April 3—9 – Politics: Who Rules?


Week 3. April 10-16 - On Democracy


Week 4. April 17-23 - On Leadership and Representation Crisis


Week 5. April 24-30 – - Social Movements and Political Processes

Week 6. May 1-6 On Violence


Week 7. May 7-13 - on Military power


Week 8. May 14-20 - national identity


Week 9 May 21-27 Colonialism, Race and racism


Week 10 May 29-31 Globalization and its opponents