Seminar in Comparative Politics: Social Movements  
GVPT 459M  
Spring 2018

Prof. Kanisha Bond  
Class Times & Location: Tuesday, Thursday 12:30p – 1:45p, Tydings 1118  
Office Hours: Tuesday 3:00p – 4:00p and by appointment.  
Office Location: Chincoteague 3117F  
Contact Information: kanisha@umd.edu  
** IMPORTANT: Subject any class-related emails to me as “GVPT459M: [subject]” **

**Course Objectives**
Welcome to our study of social movements. In this class, we will engage theoretical and empirical work in comparative politics, international relations, and political sociology that focuses on the development of social movements and the outcomes that they produce. Key questions will include:  
How and why do individuals participate in social movements, and how do movements self-organize?  
What are the different strategies that social movements can adopt, and why? When and how do governments repress movements? What sorts of political outcomes do social movements produce?  
How do we understand movement success, failure, or transformation?  
By the end of this course, you should have a good grasp of the major theoretical debates about social movements, the range of methods used to study them, and cursory knowledge of several different social movements in the U.S. and around the world.

This is a discussion-intensive, advanced undergraduate seminar. Much of our class time will include collaborative group work and critical discussion of the day’s readings (and/or events).  
While this is not a course in current events, I expect you to be familiar with contemporary issues in world politics. Even a minimal effort to familiarize yourself with current happenings – in light of the theoretical material covered in class – is likely to greatly increase your returns from this course.

**Course Policies**

The policies for this course align with those of the university Office of Undergraduate Studies. For more information, visit [www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html](http://www.ugst.umd.edu/courserelatedpolicies.html). **Disrespectful and/or disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated, and may result in a student’s dismissal from class and forfeiture of all credit for the day.**

**Prerequisites:** GVPT 200 or an alternative as approved by me.

**Contact:** I strongly encourage you to drop by my office hours for any clarifications of course policies, explanations of course materials/discussions, or to discuss any other concerns and/or
difficulties that you encounter during this course. Be assured that our conversations will be held in
the appropriate confidence; I am genuinely interested in each of you getting that most you can out
of this class. If you have a scheduling conflict during my usual office hours, do not hesitate to
contact me for an appointment at some other time. In all your email correspondence with me, be
sure to include GVPT 459M: [subject] in the subject field. I will occasionally post announcements to
the class through ELMS, but I cannot guarantee a timely response to direct emails sent to me
through ELMS.

**Electronics:** Place your phone on mute before you come to class. Laptop computers and/or tablets
will be allowed in this class provided that they are being used for classroom participation only.
Abuses of this privilege may result in all electronic devices being disallowed for all students in the
course, to be executed at my discretion. All other technological devices – including MP3 devices,
smartphones, phones, gaming devices, etc. – are prohibited in this class. You may be dismissed from
class (including forfeiture of all associated credit) for violating this policy.

**Copyright:** The lectures I deliver in this class and the course materials I create and distribute are
protected by federal copyright law as my original works. My lectures are delivered from written
lectures in order to ensure copyright protection. You are permitted to take notes of my lectures and
use course materials only for your personal use in this course. You may not record, reproduce, or
distribute my lectures/notes/materials for any commercial purpose and in any format (audio, photo,
video, or written) without my written consent. Persons who sell or distribute copies or modified
copies of my course materials, possess commercial copies of my notes (i.e., Terpnotes), or assist
another person or entity in selling or distributing those materials may be considered in violation of
the University Code of Student Conduct.

**Academic Integrity:** I, along with the Department of Government and Politics, the College of
Behavioral and Social Sciences and the University, take violations of academic integrity very
seriously. Observing honesty in one's work, words, ideas, and actions is a principle to which all
participants in this class are required to subscribe. All course work by students is to be done on an
individual basis unless I clearly state that an alternative is acceptable. Any reference materials used in
the preparation of any assignment must be explicitly cited. Students uncertain about proper citation
are responsible for checking with me. If laptops, MP3 devices, smart phones, phones, gaming
devices, etc. are seen and/or used as an assignment is in progress (including exams), the assignment
will be collected from the student immediately and scored as 0. Lying to the instructor or purposely
misleading any University of Maryland administrator shall also constitute a violation of academic
integrity. All University of Maryland students are bound by the University Code of Academic
Integrity and by your participation in this class you assume responsibility for honoring the
prescriptions and proscriptions therein. For additional information, see:
Accessibility: If you have a documented disability, anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course, or have questions/concerns about access, please tell me as soon as possible. Reasonable accommodations will be made for all students with disabilities, but it is your responsibility to inform me early in the term. I strongly encourage you to register any disability with the Accessibility and Disability Service (ADS). For major graded events, only written ADS documentation of the accommodation will be considered; any accommodations must be arranged well in advance. This documentation must be current for this semester and it must be presented by the Schedule Adjustment deadline. It is your responsibility to discuss accommodation options for taking exams, etc. with me, and for providing me with the appropriate paperwork to schedule alternative test-taking arrangements. Please do not present me with accommodation documentation from your doctor.

Absences: Makeup for pre-scheduled exams or quizzes will be given only in case of a documented emergency or excused absence. There will be no makeup for missed in-class assignments/activities or pop quizzes under any circumstances. You should make all reasonable attempts to let me know of circumstances that may impact your class attendance in advance. It is your responsibility to provide detailed contact information for me to obtain corroborating evidence from any appropriate third party, if necessary. In accordance with university policy, I will automatically excuse one one-day illness-related absence with receipt of a self-signed note from you. This does not apply to days where we have a Major Scheduled Grading Event. Use the self-signed note form distributed by the University at http://www.health.umd.edu/sites/default/files/Medical_attestation_5-2016.pdf. All requests for excused absence must contain an acknowledgement that the information is true and correct and that providing false information is prohibited under the Code of Student Conduct.

Grading

1. First exam: 35%
2. Second exam: 35%
3. Response papers: 25%
4. Active participation: 5%

Exams: You will complete two in-class exams in this course. The first exam will be held on March 13. The second exam will be held on May 1. They will not be cumulative, and are designed to demonstrate (1) how well you understand the material from the readings and our class discussions, and (2) your ability to analyze and critique arguments. All exams must be written in blue or black ink; I will not grade exams written in pencil or any other color ink than blue or black.

Response papers: Throughout the semester, you are required to hand in five written responses to some of our course material/discussions. These are short writing assignments, and should be no longer than about 3 pages each. Three of these papers must be in response to the films shown in class: Freedom Summer, A Force More Powerful, and Let the Fire Burn. These short papers are not to be
article/film summaries. Rather, they are meant to engage your ability to synthesize and critique the material in the assignments, to give you an opportunity to think past our course materials, to help you learn how to develop new research questions, and to engage further the parts of our class that most interest you. For example, you might identify a research area that you think deserves more attention than has been paid by the day’s article, delve further into a key definition or dynamic that we discussed, or address any unanswered questions that you think we should have addressed in class, but didn’t.

**Active participation:** Active participation will be one of the keys to getting the most from this course. Our class time will include critical discussions of the day’s readings (and/or events), along with some collaborative group work and brief lectures. It is your responsibility to read carefully the assigned readings before coming to class, to attend and participate in all class meetings, to write and turn in written assignments on time and in the appropriate format, and to take exams as scheduled. You should do your best to understand the material as it is presented and to form critical evaluations of it. There also may be occasional quizzes and/or short assignments to be completed in class for extra credit.

**Readings and Course Materials:** There are no required texts for this course. Our reading list includes mostly scholarly articles and book chapters. In most cases you will be able to download the articles directly from the class ELMS site; occasionally I may distribute them during class. Occasionally I will also assign news articles, op-eds, or other popular media for you to read and digest before class. It is your responsibility to bring all readings to class with you on the day for which they were assigned. You should come to class prepared to discuss the items listed under each day.

Some of the material presented will be technically and theoretically challenging (e.g., some of the theoretical arguments utilize formal mathematical modeling and/or advanced statistics). I do not expect any of you to have any background in advanced political research methods and, in most cases, my main concern is not in the technical details. Rather, my goal is for you to develop an intuitive understanding of the central arguments and conclusions and for you to be able to explain them.

This schedule is subject to change; updated versions will be distributed through ELMS as needed.

**Course Schedule**

**January 25: Introduction and Overview.**
(1) ELMS assignment.

**January 30: Defining Social Movement(s).**


February 1: No Class Meeting.

February 6: Structural Strain, Breakdown, and Deprivation Perspectives.


February 8: Emotions and Social Movements.


**February 15: Networks and Social Movements.**


**February 20: Theories of Social Movement: Political Process and Political Opportunities.**


**February 22: Collective Identity & Solidarity in Social Movement.**


**February 27: Theories of Social Movement: New Social Movements.**


**March 1: Individual Participation I** (No class meeting)

(1) Watch Film: *Freedom Summer* (2014). Film is available for streaming through ELMS>Modules>Online Video Reserves>Library Streaming Reserves.

**March 6: Individual Participation II**

**March 8: Framing in Social Movements.**  

**March 13: EXAM 1**

**March 15: Repertoires of Contention and Protest Cycles**  

**March 20-22: No Class Meeting - Spring Break!**

**March 27: Nonviolent Direct Action I** (No class meeting)  
(1) Watch Film: *A Force More Powerful* (1999). Film is available for streaming through ELMS>Modules>Online Video Reserves>Library Streaming Reserves.

**March 29: Nonviolent Direct Action II**  

**April 3: Student Movements I**  
**Class meets in lobby of Hornbake Library at 12:30 pm (sharp!).**  
(1) Private Instruction on Vietnam-Era Campus Unrest at UMD by Ashleigh Coren, Special Collections Librarian.
April 5: Student Movements II

April 10: Violent Direct Action I (No class meeting)

April 12: Violent Direct Action II
(1) Discussion of *The Whole World Was Watching* & *Charlottesville: Race and Terror*.

April 17: Transnational Movements

April 19: Countermovements.

April 24: State Repression I
April 26: State Repression II
(1) Student response papers: *Let the Fire Burn.*

May 1: EXAM 2

May 3: Social Movement Failure

May 8: Social Movement Success

May 10: TBD.