## Seminar Overview

This senior seminar analyzes cause-oriented action in transnational relations, with emphases on advocacy, organizing, mobilization and resistance. It examines the origins and outcomes of transnational activism. Careful thought is given to specific tactics of activism across borders, research methods, and international relations (IR) more broadly.

Activism between two or more polities is committed to causes including religion, independence, democratization, labor, environmentalism, pacifism, health, poverty reduction, human rights, and ethnic or gender equity. We will focus on the transnational activism of advocacy networks, civic organizations, social movements, and defiant weak actors who resist. Well-known examples of these sorts of activists, respectively, range from the Climate Action Network to Transparency International; from Doctors (or Engineers) Without Borders to the National Rifle Association; from the global justice movement to al-Qaeda; and from whistleblowers to wildlife poachers.

While our semester will begin and end with pre and post surveys of transnational activist relations taken together, steady attention to methods for research on activism will fill a comprehensive toolbox that will strengthen research projects produced as capstones for the seminar (and IR major). In the early part of the semester we will assess the theoretical lenses that have been used to view transnational activism from various angles. In this initial phase we will learn, for instance, to view transnational activist entities at once in five distinct ways: as infrastructures for change; non-governmental, non-profit, civil-society, public-interest or third-sector organizations; social movement organizations; everyday disorganizations; and protest businesses or social enterprises. During the bulk of the semester we will concentrate on transnational activism while extending our consideration to both its upstream origins and downstream outcomes. Sampling varieties of cause-oriented action across borders, we will disaggregate this activism into at least ten specific types of tactical modes on five distinct spatial scales of transnationality. Generalizing to broader IR questions through numerous geographic and issue areas, we will also bring the tactical repertoire to bear on themes such as globalization, governance, multilateral cooperation, state sovereignty, normative change, and domestic-foreign frontiers.
Note that this is a relatively new and long-term seminar, which is being taught for the second time with the intent of being taught for years to come. The professor intends to use his expertise in this arena of research to meet a growing demand for this theme on the part of college students. This student interest has been amplified by the recent protests across Arab borders; transatlantic protests of either the Tea Party or the Occupy Wall Street movements in the United States and Europe; and changes in philanthropy, volunteerism and conscious consumerism due to economic declines in the industrialized world and rising trends in parts of the ‘third world’ such as Brazil, China and India.

SEMINAR REQUIREMENTS (AND GRADE COMPONENTS)

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirements</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tr>
<td>Research project</td>
<td>30%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Discussant leadership and preparation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Classroom participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Final exam</td>
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<td>Midterm exam</td>
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<td>Research panel</td>
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-Research project (30%): The proposal is due on February 1st; the literature review on February 25th; the draft on April 11th, 16th or 18th depending on your panel schedule; and the final project on April 29th—in hardcopy as well as electronically through Angel by the times highlighted on the calendar below. The final project should be between 6,000 and 8,000 words (22-30 double-spaced pages) and integrate no fewer than ten scholarly sources beyond those in this syllabus. More information will be provided.

-Discussant leadership and preparation (20%): In order to honor this seminar, we all share the responsibility to facilitate collective learning in and beyond the classroom. Each student will lead three seminar sessions with two fellow discussion leaders. Discussion leaders will be responsible for launching and guiding classroom discussions during the eighteen seminar meetings noted in the semester calendar below. On these occasions, each student in the trio will also be responsible for preparing his/her questions on the readings. These (2-page) discussion questions must be posted on Angel by 7 p.m. on the day before each seminar session that you choose to lead. The list below offers examples of questions to consider when preparing for your three rounds as discussion leader.

* What is the reading’s thesis or central idea? What particular quotes express the thesis?
* What is the reading’s unit of analysis? What variable or concept informs its argument?
* Where are the key turns on which the argument of the reading hinges? Do you agree or disagree with these passages that the argument depends on?
* What are the reading’s key terms (i.e. names, entities)? Where do they gravitate along an agency-structure spectrum? Are they at a micro, meso or macro level of analysis?
* What quotes are particularly important, interesting, provocative or controversial?
* How does the reading compare with previous seminar readings?
* What is the evidence presented and is it convincing? What methods were used to
analyze that evidence? Could different evidence and methods be more persuasive?
* How do the central ideas in the reading relate to lives, experiences—ours or ‘others’?
* How would you refute the argument presented? Can one show it to be false?
* How well-organized is the reading? Could a different organization improve it?
* What is the main contribution of the reading? What are its strengths and weaknesses?
* Does the reading ignore or assume anything relevant?
* Does the reading have more general relevance for different times and places?

In addition, each student will write a single page of comments on the research projects of her/his (2-3) fellow panelists in hardcopy and online. Two copies (for professor and fellow student) of the comments will be due on April 23rd or 25th, depending on your panel schedule. Your prepared discussion questions, classroom facilitation, and research comments will add up to your discussant grade.

- **Classroom participation (15%)**: We will create a conversational and collegial classroom community. We will be expected to talk and listen to each other carefully and actively. Contributions will be graded qualitatively and quantitatively. As such, good questions, responses and/or thoughtful comments on the readings being discussed will serve us all better than a stream of unsupported opinions. Your participation includes constructive stimulus to the participation of your fellow students. As such, you are encouraged to facilitate conversation. Let me know if you face particular obstacles or difficulties with seminar participation; that way we can overcome them together. The following criteria assign the participation component of your grade.

  4.0 = Highly effective participant; insightful questions/comments; clearly does the reading. The student is a consistently excellent colleague who is always present and prepared for the seminar, and brings interesting and relevant questions/comments to bear on the subject material. S/he is also a good listener and shows a genuine interest in the thoughts of her/his fellow students. The participant fully commits to the seminar and improves it through her/his contributions.

  3.0 = Consistent participant; thoughtful questions/comments; does the reading. The student’s performance fits somewhere between two patterns. One type misses two or three seminar meetings, but is generally an active and enthusiastic participant. Another type is in the classroom and prepared for every seminar meeting, but occasionally talks without being aware of the direction of the conversation; that is, s/he talks without listening to colleagues’ earlier ideas.

  2.0 = Occasional participant; regularly attends the seminar, sporadic involvement in discussions, based more on personal opinion than analysis of course material. The student’s performance fits somewhere between three patterns. One type misses more than three seminar meetings or comes to several meetings without having fully read and understood the assigned materials. Another type is generally prepared for the seminar and is present in every seminar meeting, but shies away or holds back from discussion. A third type of student occasionally dominates a seminar discussion and uses stifling rhetorical devices.

  1.0 = Observer; regularly attends the seminar but does not get involved in discussion. The student misses more than three seminar meetings and comes to several meetings without fully preparing through work on the assigned materials. S/he avoids participating in or occasionally attempts to dominate the discussions.
0.0 = Occasional observer; sporadic attendance, no participation.

Missing more than three seminar sessions without appropriate documentation (such as a doctor’s note) will lower your participation grade. Students who fail to attend at least two-thirds of the seminar sessions without justifiable reasons will fail this seminar. Each student is expected to complete the required readings before the seminar session for which they are assigned. A student observed using a technical device (e.g., laptop, cell phone) for non-educational ends in the seminar will be considered absent on that day. To use such a device while considered present (rather than absent), a student must sit in a position that makes its display and/or screen visible to the instructor.

-Exams (10% midterm, 15% final): The professor will administer two exams based upon the expectation that a majority of seminar participants needs added incentive to be ready to make the most of classroom discussion. Any such exam also allows for the consistently well-prepared student to earn well-deserved seminar credit. Incidentally, this incentive structure serves as our own practical application of the lesson from social movement studies that most influences international studies: As with advocate and intergovernmental cooperators, incentives mobilize seminar participants to overcome ‘senioritis’ and other individual barriers to collective action for the public good. The exams are closed-book (no notes or materials allowed). These exams will test your understanding of all the material analyzed up to their respective points, with emphases on untested material. Each exam will consist of short and long essay questions. The short-answer, identification questions will ask for items such as key concepts, trends, patterns, events, people etc.

-Research panel (10%): On one of the three dates highlighted on the calendar below (April 18th, 23rd or 25th), each seminar member will deliver a 10 minute presentation on her/his research project as part of a panel with 2-3 other students who have some common threads to their research. Each seminar member will be responsible for reading the research projects of every other student in her/his panel prior to the presentations. Panel members will be assigned to serve as discussants for each other. They will comment on research projects and presentations of panelists and facilitate questions to the panelists from fellow seminar members. At the end of each panel, each panelist will use 5 additional minutes to respond to the comments from her/his discussant and respond to questions from fellow seminar members. In balancing which aspects of the research project to fit into the presentation, keep in mind that a fraction of the audience will have read the inquiry in advance and another portion will encounter it for the first time through the highlights prioritized in the presentation. For the presentation, audio, visual and/or tactile material is encouraged: audio or film clips, PowerPoint, handouts or anything else.

COURSE DYNAMICS
-Office hours: I encourage you to take advantage of office hours, which are the best way to reach me. If you have a schedule conflict at those times we can schedule another time for us to meet: Simply send me an e-mail including all possible times that work for you.

-Reading materials: The three books in the following list are required readings that you will need to obtain for use throughout the semester. Unlike the other required materials,
the three case studies will not be available at university or other booksellers. You can purchase and download them as listed and linked below. Harvard University charges US$6.90 for each of its publications. For other assigned readings, specified below in the calendar section of this syllabus, we will rely on materials that will be available to students from our website on Angel and/or from the MSU Library course reserves (observing “fair use” intellectual property guidelines).


Bert Klandermans and Suzanne Staggenborg, eds., Methods of Social Movement Research (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2002). Noted as KlaSta below.


-Academic honesty: You must observe the rules of the General Student Regulation 1.00 on Protection of Scholarship and Grades, and the all-University policy on Integrity of Scholarship and Grades. As an MSU professor at James Madison College, I am required to bring all cases of suspected violation to the appropriate offices. If anything about the rules is still unclear to you after reading them do not hesitate to ask me. Penalties typically include automatic course failure and a violation note on the student’s transcript.

-Students with special needs: Every effort will be made to accommodate students with special needs who are registered with MSU’s Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities (RCPD) and who provide me with an RCPD accommodation form within the first two weeks of the semester. Guidelines for eligibility, types of accommodations, and DSS registration and forms can all be accessed online (at http://www.rcpd.msu.edu). The RCPD and I will classify all information about such special needs as confidential.

-Religious observances: The university policy on religious observances will be followed in this course. It states that students have a right not to be penalized or disadvantaged for
practicing their religion. The rule also states that students have a duty to inform their instructors of any religious observance that will cause an absence from a course or affect their ability to submit work within due dates. To ensure that we can make alternative arrangements, please let me know well in advance and in writing about such an event.

- **Extensions, late penalties, incomplete grades, and extended absences**: Extensions will be offered only for students with a serious and verifiable reason. Late assignments will be penalized by one-half of a point per day on the university’s 4-point scale, unless lateness can be attributed to a serious and verifiable reason. Incomplete grades (“Is”) will be offered only if a student provides me with a justifiable reason. If such a reason causes you to end up with a large number of absences, talk to me ASAP so that I can offer you work to make-up for seminar participation. Official university closures and delays will be observed.

- **Interval thresholds for seminar grade on the Madison, MSU scale**: At the end of the seminar, I will use the following table to transfer your semester-long, final grade from a continuous scale into MSU’s discontinuous, interval scale.

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<tr>
<th>4.0 = 3.8 - 4.0</th>
<th>3.5 = 3.3 - 3.7</th>
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<td>3.0 = 2.8 - 3.2</td>
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<td>2.0 = 1.8 - 2.2</td>
<td>1.5 = 1.3 - 1.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>1.0 = 0.8 - 1.2</td>
<td>0.0 ≤ 0.7 (the MSU scale skips 0.5)</td>
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- **Procedures for any grading grievance**: Any grievance regarding grading should be submitted to me in a written statement, which includes both the grievance and the proposed solution, within 48 hours after I return the assignment. After being given notice of this petition in writing, I will then discuss the grievance in person.

**NOTE**
The professor has a right to make minor changes to the syllabus; and a duty to notify you.

**CALENDAR OF THEMES AND ASSIGNMENTS**

**Engage (E-1): Overview and Theoretical Perspectives**

**1/8 (Tue.): Introductions**

**1/10 (Th.): Disciplinary scope of seminar, or transnational activism ‘in 25 words’**
Read this syllabus.
Tarrow, Ch. 1: Introduction, pp. 1-14.

**1/15 (Tue.): Interdisciplinary scope of seminar, or transnational activism ‘in 25 words’**


**1/17 (Th.): Perspectives on global civil society (I)**


Discussion leaders: ________________, _______________ and ________________

**1/22 (Tue.): Perspectives on global civil society (II)**


KlaSta, Ch. 1: Survey research: a case for comparative designs, pp. 3-31.

Discussion leaders: ________________, _______________ and ________________

**1/24 (Th.): Perspectives on social movement(s) across borders (I)**


Excerpts from KlaSta, Ch. 2: Formal models in studying collective action and social movements, pp. 32-38 and 52-54 excerpts.

Discussion leaders: ________________, _______________ and ________________
1/29 (Tue.): Perspectives on social movement(s) across borders (II)
KlaSta, Ch. 9: Protest event analysis, pp. 231-259.
Discussion leaders: _______________, _______________ and ____________________

1/31 (Th.): Perspectives on transnational advocacy networks (I)
KeckSikk, Ch. 1: Transnational advocacy networks in international politics: introduction, pp. 1-38.
Discussion leaders: _______________, _______________ and ____________________

2/1 (Fri., 10am): Research proposals due, on paper and online

2/5 (Tue.): Perspectives on transnational advocacy networks (II)
KlaSta, Ch. 7: Network analysis, pp. 173-200.
Discussion leaders: _______________, _______________ and ____________________

2/7 (Th.): Perspectives on transnational activism in history
KeckSikk, Ch. 2: Historical precursors to modern transnational advocacy networks, pp. 39-78.
Discussion leaders: _______________, _______________ and ____________________

2/12 (Tue.): Perspectives on transnational resistance from the present to the past
KlaSta, Ch. 8: Recovering past protest: historical research on social movements, pp. 201-230.
Discussion leaders: _______________, _______________ and ____________________
Explore (E-2): Issues and Outcomes of Transnational Activism

2/14 (Th.): Human rights
KeckSikk, Ch. 3: Human rights advocacy networks in Latin America, pp. 79-120.
Discussion leaders: ________________, ________________ and ________________

2/19 (Tue.): Environment and development
KeckSikk, Ch. 4: Environmental advocacy networks, pp. 121-164.
Discussion leaders: ________________, ________________ and ________________

2/21 (Th.): Gender and women
KeckSikk, Ch. 5: Transnational networks on violence against women, pp. 165-198.
Discussion leaders: ________________, ________________ and ________________

2/25 (Mon., 10am): Literature review due, on paper and online

2/26 (Tue.): Peace and security
Discussion leaders: ________________, ________________ and ________________

2/28 (Th.): Outcomes for international relations
KeckSikk, Ch. 6: Conclusions, pp. 199-218.
KlaSta, Ch. 6: The case study and the study of social movements, pp. 146-172.
Discussion leaders: ________________, ________________ and ________________

3/5; 3/7 (Tue.; Th.): Spring break at mid-semester

3/12 (Tue.): Midterm exam

Explain (E-3): Modes and Origins of Activism on Transnationality Scales

3/14 (Th.): Origins in statist multilateralism
Tarrow, Ch. 2: Internationalism and contention, pp. 15-34.
Tarrow, Ch. 3: Rooted cosmopolitans and transnational activists, pp. 35-58.
Discussion leaders: ________________, ________________ and ________________

3/19 (Tue.): Local tactics (I)
Tarrow, Ch. 4: Global framing, pp. 59-76.
KlaSta, Ch. 3: Verification and proof in frame and discourse analysis, pp. 62-91.
Discussion leaders: __________________, _______________ and ____________________

3/21 (Th.): Local tactics (II)
Tarrow, Ch. 5: Internalizing contention, pp. 77-98.
KlaSta, Ch. 10: Macro-organizational analysis, pp. 260-285.
Discussion leaders: __________________, _______________ and ____________________

3/26 (Tue.): Transitional tactics (I)
Tarrow, Ch. 6: Diffusion and modularity, pp. 99-119.
Discussion leaders: __________________, _______________ and ____________________

3/28 (Th.): Transitional tactics (II)
Tarrow, Ch. 7: Shifting the scale of contention, pp. 120-142.
KlaSta, Ch. 4: Semi-structured interviewing in social movement research, pp. 92-117.
Discussion leaders: __________________, _______________ and ____________________

4/2 (Tue.): Global tactics (I)
Tarrow, Ch. 8: Externalizing contention, pp. 143-160.

4/4 (Th.): Global tactics (II)
Tarrow, Ch. 9: Building transnational coalitions, pp. 161-182.
KlaSta, Ch. 5: Seeing structure happen: theory-driven participant observation, pp. 118-145.

4/9 (Tue.): Origins in statist multilateralism revisited
Tarrow, Ch. 11: Transnational activism and internationalization, pp. 201-220.
Elaborate (E-4): Other Activist Modes, Origins, Outcomes and Transnationalities

4/11 (Th.): Dual-level, ‘glocal’ tactics (I)
Draft projects that will be presented in a week are due, on paper and online.

4/16 (Tue.): Dual-level, ‘glocal’ tactics (II)
Draft projects that will be presented in a week are due, on paper and online.

4/18 (Th.): Research panels:
KlaSta, Ch. 12: Conclusion: blending methods and building theories in social movement research, pp. 314-350.
Each seminar member will be responsible for reading the research projects of every other student in her/his panel prior to the presentations. Discussants will comment on research projects and presentations.
Draft projects that will be presented in a week are due, on paper and online.

4/23 (Tue.): Research panels:
Each seminar member will be responsible for reading the research projects of every other student in her/his panel prior to the presentations. Discussants will comment on research projects and presentations.
Comments on research projects and presentations from the previous meeting due.

4/25 (Th.): Research panels:
Each seminar member will be responsible for reading the research projects of every other student in her/his panel prior to the presentations. Discussants will comment on research projects and presentations.
Comments on research projects and presentations from prior and current meetings due.

Evaluate (E-5): Revisiting and Revising our Studies

4/29 (Mon., 10am) Research project due, on paper and online.

5/1 (Wed., 7:45-9:45am) (scheduled exam period): Final exam.