Contentious politics involve groups of people engaged in collective action to bring about or resist social change. Contentious actors challenge authorities or other elites. To my mind, contentious politics constitute one of the most fascinating and important aspects of politics. The stakes for those involved often are high. Injustice wears people down and challenging it never is easy or simple. Moreover, injustice often is not self-evident; convincing others that a particular situation is unjust may require considerable thought and good luck. Participants in contentious politics make decisions about how they will organize, the kinds of goals they will seek, and the nature of tactics they will employ. Research on contentious politics and social movements addresses these issues as well as the political contexts of movements and the conditions under which individuals choose to participate in them. Our study of this research will focus on the contexts and practices of contentious actors and the relations between them.

Texts

Grades and Requirements
Grades are a source of unpleasantness and ambivalence for me. I am not at all sure of their value; their assignment often reveals a gulf in understanding between students and me. But assigning grades is part of my job and I am committed to doing it with integrity. Thus I do my best to assign letter grades that reflect the quality of students' work. In my experience, some of that work is excellent; some is good; much of it is fair; and some is indeed poor. For the purpose of calculating course grades, each assignment will be weighted according to the table below.

Regarding all written assignments: please submit them on paper, printed on both sides of each page. Include a list of references. No title page is necessary. A title is essential.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
<th>(Date)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Communication Technology Paper</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(10/15, 1 PM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review (preliminary draft)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(11/12, 1 PM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Literature Review (final draft)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>(11/30, 2 PM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer Reviews</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>(11/20, 2 PM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Examination</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>(12/13, 8 AM)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participation**

Students play a major role in the success of upper-level courses. Classroom discussions provide opportunity for students to learn from others’ understanding of particular texts. These discussions also allow me to gauge how well students understand the reading and the extent to which my lectures should review or extend particular readings. For these reasons it is crucial that students come to class having read the texts assigned for the day. Moreover, participation in classroom discussions will constitute a substantial portion of the course grade. Students who are not prepared to take on significant reading and participation assignments should not enroll in this course.

Participation grades will reflect regular attendance, timely submission of empirical propositions (see below), and the quality of contributions to class discussion. I will not formally monitor attendance but will, on randomly selected dates, assign in-class projects that are due at the end of class; these projects will be part of participation grades.

The following is offered as a general set of guidelines and should not be seen as a promise of any particular grade. Other things being equal, regular attendance and occasional questions/comments related to course reading will merit a grade in the range from C to B. Participation characterized by regular attendance and specific questions about the reading that lead to clarification of concepts and arguments presented by the authors will generally merit a grade of B+. Students who go beyond this level to extend particular ideas from the reading and grapple broader issues in politics will merit grades in the A range.

**Empirical Propositions**

During the first six weeks of the quarter, students should come to each class session with a typed, single-spaced page presenting one empirical proposition from each of the chapters/articles assigned for the day. Try to rewrite each author’s claims as if/then statements. Each proposition should be
accompanied by a relevant quoted passage from the reading and a paragraph explaining the reasoning the author uses to support each claim. Also include the page number for each passage. An example: if technology advances to facilitate communication across greater spaces, then the geographic range of social movements will expand. Another example: if the state has the capacity to repress, then movements are unlikely to engage in violence. We will review and share these propositions in class.

Empirical propositions are due at the beginning of class. Late propositions will not be accepted.

Writing
Because this course is designated writing proficiency, we will devote particular attention to improving the quality of your writing. We will take some class time to discuss common challenges in writing. In advance of those discussions, I offer the following suggestions regarding writing. First, use words economically. If a word, sentence, or paragraph is not essential to your analysis, omit it. Second, organize your effort by constructing an outline before you write. An outline will help to discipline your analysis. Third, do not submit your first draft; few of us are sufficiently talented to inflict our first drafts on others (I do not ask others to read my first drafts and I decline to read the first drafts of my closest colleagues). Plan your schedule so that you have sufficient time to complete a draft of each assignment and then return to it at least a day later. Re-read it and revise to ensure clarity. Fourth, consider your audience. For this course, you may assume an audience of political science students who have not studied contentious politics. You should demonstrate your regard for that audience by presenting clear explanations that do not unduly tax your readers’ patience. Fifth, for all assignments, be sure to cite all sources and append a list of references; please use parenthetical citation as described in the APSA style booklet (you can find an online version here). You may also use Tarrow’s book as a model for citation. Within the text, cite the author and date for ideas that are not your own and for facts that are not common knowledge. When you quote or paraphrase a very specific claim, cite the page number on which the relevant passage may be found. Try to paraphrase when possible, avoiding extended quotations. Finally, there are rules or conventions of grammar, punctuation, citation, and syntax. Please follow these rules.

For further discussion of grammar and style, you may wish to consult Jack Lynch’s, Guide to Grammar and Style, and William Strunk and E.B. White’s, The Elements of Style. The latter is available in most bookstores.

Communication Technology and Mobilization Paper
Your task in this paper is to compare the roles of print and digital media in the development of contentious politics. Review Tarrow’s analysis of how print media helped to transform the nature of contentious politics in the late eighteenth century. Have digital media contributed to a similar transformation in the early twenty-first century? Your paper should be double-spaced and not exceed four pages. Follow the writing guidelines outlined above. Include a title (no need to have a separate title page) and list of references. This will give you an opportunity to practice APSA style. This paper is due at 1 PM on 15 October.

Literature Review Assignment
The purpose of this assignment is to offer you the opportunity to review social science research on some aspect of social movements. Sidney Tarrow’s, Power in Movement, outlines numerous findings from social movement research. The articles assigned also present research findings. Your essay should pose a question related to one of these findings. Initially your question will be broad. For
example, how are political opportunities related to the emergence of social movements? Or, what is the relation between movement tactics and state responses? The question will drive your selection of articles for review. You should find at least four journal articles (from peer-reviewed social science journals) that are related to your research question. These articles should report the results of an empirical study; they should not be literature reviews or primarily theoretical. You should identify at least three of these articles before you submit your paper proposal on 22 October at 1 PM. Proposals should state your research question and identify the variables that appear to be important. You cannot write a good proposal without having first read the articles you cite. Maximum length for proposals is one single-spaced page.

The purpose of a literature review is to reveal areas where there are consistent findings, knowledge gaps, and contradictory findings. Papers should be organized by key variables or themes (not by author). Your papers should begin with a statement of the problem, that is, a description of the research issue and an explanation of its political importance. You should then summarize key findings from social movement research that relate to your question. Papers should conclude by showing how your research question is related to previous research and suggest further research that might resolve contradictory findings. Literature reviews should range from eight to ten pages; pages should be numbered. The Bartley article on organizational fields (recommended reading 11 October) offers a model for reviewing literature.

By completing a two-stage paper assignment, you will have the opportunity to revise in response to comments on your papers. To facilitate peer review, students will be assigned to groups of three. On 12 November by 1 PM, you will distribute a preliminary (not first) draft of your literature review to me and to the members of your peer review team. Though you may arrange to distribute electronic copies of your paper to your group members, I will accept only paper copies. Group members will return the draft to you, along with written comments, on 20 November during class. I will return your preliminary draft during a meeting with you the same week. At that time we will discuss your plans for revision.

Because of the short time between your submission of preliminary drafts and the due date for the final version of literature reviews, late preliminary drafts will not be accepted. Absent a documented emergency, any student who does not submit a preliminary draft on time will forfeit 10% of her/his/their course grade and the opportunity for comments prior to the final paper.

**Tentative Schedule** (I may make changes in the schedule below. It is your responsibility to be aware of any such changes.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic and Reading</th>
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| 9/27 | Contentious Politics, Social Movements, and Social Change  
Erica Chenowith on [Nonviolent Civil Resistance](#) (We will watch in class)  
Tarrow, Introduction |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>References</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 10/2  | Transforming Contention: the Printing Press and Social Media | Video: [Frontline: Revolution in Cairo](http://www.frontlinePBS.org/2010/10/revolution-in-cairo) (We will watch in class)  
Tarrow, Chs 1-3  
Available at: [http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa_fact_gladwell](http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa_fact_gladwell)  
Recommended:  
| 10/4  | Social Movements in Modern Societies           | Tarrow, Ch 4  
Recommended:  
| 10/9  | Contentious Action: The Repertoire             | Tarrow, Ch 5  

Recommended:

10/11  **The Organization of Contention**
Tarrow, Ch 6

Recommended:

10/15  **Communication Technology Paper Due 1 PM (in AH 415)**

10/16  **Movement Cultures**
Tarrow, Ch 7

Recommended:
| 10/18 | **Political Opportunities and Threats**  
|       | Tarrow, Chs 8,10  
|       | Recommended:  

| 10/22 | **Literature Review Proposal Due 1 PM (in AH 415)** |

| 10/23 | **Movement Outcomes and Social Change**  
|       | Tarrow, Ch 11 |

Recommended:

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10/25  Transnational Activism
Tarrow, Ch 12, Conclusion

Recommended:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/6</td>
<td>Making a Dreamer</td>
<td>Nicholls, Introduction, Chs 1-3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 11/8       | No Class (but complete reading below)     | Professor Salazar will be away at a conference but read the following: Nicholls, Ch 4  
<p>| 11/12      | Literature Review Drafts Due 1 PM          |                                                                           |
| 11/13      | Expanding a Collective Identity            | Nicholls, Chs 5-6, Conclusion                                           |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Activity</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11/14</td>
<td>Paper Consultations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/15</td>
<td>Paper Consultations (no class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/16</td>
<td>Paper Consultations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/19</td>
<td>Paper Consultations</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/20</td>
<td>Peer Review Meetings (reviews due at 2 PM)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Paper Consultations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/21</td>
<td>Paper Consultations</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/22</td>
<td>Holiday</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/27</td>
<td>Explaining Mobilization I</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Munson, Ch 1-3</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recommended:</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Film: Union Maids (We will watch in class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/29</td>
<td>Explaining Mobilization II</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Munson, Ch 4</td>
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<tr>
<td>11/30</td>
<td>Literature Reviews Due 2 PM (in AH 415)</td>
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<tr>
<td>12/4</td>
<td>Movement Structures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Munson, Chs 5-6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Recommended:</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Instructor’s Policies

Make-up Exams: Students are expected to take exams at the scheduled times. If you know now that you cannot take the exam at the scheduled time, you should not enroll in this class.

Accommodations: Please let me know if you require any accommodations regarding class sessions or examinations. I will work with the Disability Access Center to provide appropriate accommodations.

Academic Honesty: The core requirement of academic honesty is that we do not take credit for others’ work. When we draw on the work of others (through direct quotation, the use of ideas developed by other authors, or by making factual claims), we must acknowledge original sources. There are various methods for citing sources. The library maintains a collection of citation guides that you can find here: http://libguides.wwu.edu/citation_style. You may also find information about academic dishonesty at http://libguides.wwu.edu/plagiarism. You may find more general discussion of academic integrity at: http://www.wwu.edu/integrity/. I am happy to discuss any of these issues with you.

Student Learning Objectives

Of late, Western (along with many other universities) has taken great interest in the practice of assessment. One of the consequences of this interest is a requirement that faculty list student learning objectives on their syllabi. Please do not let the following limit what you take from your work in this class.

1. Develop substantive knowledge in the disciplines of political science and sociology related to contentious politics and social movements.
2. Practice analytical skills in interpreting data.
3. Demonstrate writing competence.
4. Engage in independent research. The literature review will afford you the opportunity to practice research (independently).
5. Demonstrate critical, independent thinking about politics and public life as related to institutional and extra-institutional politics.