

SOCI 356¹

International Crimes and Social Justice

Instructor: Dr. Midori Ogasawara

Course Description:

This course provides an introduction to the fields of International Crimes and Social Justice from a sociological and criminological perspective. International crimes include genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity, and crimes of aggression, committed by states or armed groups. These continue to rage around the world as modern atrocities, from Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan to postcolonial Guatemala, Cambodia, Rwanda, and Iraq. By coupling the legal and sociological readings, this course unpacks the historical formations of international crimes through the lens of race/ethnicity, gender, and class, examines the key socio-legal concepts, and analyse case studies by situating them in political, economic, and social dynamics, such as colonialism, capitalism, and patriarchy. To address the systematic offenses and the outcomes of massive human rights abuses shaped by the international crimes, we will also explore the contemporary measures developed in international criminal justice systems, such as the International Criminal Court and truth commission, particularly focusing on the practices of transitional justice. Transitional justice is rooted in accountability and redress for victims, including criminal prosecutions, ‘truth-seeking’, reparation, and reform of laws, police, and military institutions. The course will draw on various case studies abroad as well as Canada’s Indian residential school system and the internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the course, you will understand the historical origins, operations, and outcomes of international crimes and identify the objectives and obstacles of the international criminal justice systems. You will obtain a sociological and criminological perspective of modern atrocities, from which you can develop in-depth analysis of the human rights abuses led by states, police or military, against the backdrops of political, economic, and social systems, and further comprehend how the inequalities in race/ethnicity, gender, and class have contributed to war crimes and crimes against humanity. By tackling one of the most pressing, but often silenced, and difficult issues in the global communities, you will also improve your skills to

¹ This outline is only intended to give an overall sense of the course. A detailed course outline will be made available in the first day of class. Only that outline is to be considered official.

untangle social issues and to find approaches to solve the problems. This course is also aimed to decolonize our knowledge on modernity and open the eyes to what we can do to overcome the past injustice and facilitate future reconciliation and social equalities.

Course Pre-requisites:

SOCI 100A&B Introduction to Sociology and SOCI 206 Crime and Deviance are *recommended* prior to taking this course, but all students are welcome.

Topics May Include:

International justice for the Second World War in Nazi Germany and Imperial Japan, Women's International Tribunal on Japanese Military Sexual Slavery, Apartheid and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in South Africa, Genocide and International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda, Civil war, racial profiling and extrajudicial killing of the Indigenous people in Guatemala, Settler colonialism and apartheid in Palestine, the Indian Residential School system and TRC in Canada, the internment of Japanese Canadians during the Second World War.

Required Resources May Include:

Textbook: TBA. All other required readings will be made available via Brightspace.