Geography 731: Insurgent Cities – Theorizing geographies of social movements

Spring 2018
Thursdays, 3:30 – 6:10 pm
[classroom TBD]
This course is a BLENDED/HYBRID course and will meet in person some weeks, and online other weeks.

Instructor: Dr. Kristin Sziarto
e-mail: sziarto@uwm.edu
468 Bolton Hall
Drop-in office hours: Tu/Th 11:15a – 12:30p;
Other times by appointment
Feel free to e-mail me any time, whether with a question, for an appointment, etc.

This graduate course explores current and past social movements, activism, resistance, and revolution – all related as forms of collective action – and their multiscalar geographies, from the urban, to the national, to the global. From a geographic perspective, social movements use and produce various spatialities, in relation to state forms, other social movements and forces, media assemblages, the built environment and so on. This course also delves into the theoretical perspectives on power, identities, and collectivities that inform such understandings of space and place, with an emphasis on the Marxist, post-marxist & post-structural, postcolonial, and feminist perspectives that have been influential within critical geography.

Studying social movements and contestation can be itself contested, for many who study movements are themselves activists or affected by contentious politics. The greatest respect must, therefore, be given to everyone in the class who voices their concerns, opinions, and experiences. At the same time, as a course in social research, you will be expected to support your arguments with evidence and consider assertions made in the course material and discussion critically.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

This course has five broad aims:

- To survey perspectives on social movements, protest, resistance, and related phenomena, especially those perspectives that have been influential in critical geography and urban studies, including (but not limited to) hegemony, radical democratic theory, contentious politics, and framing theory;
- To become acquainted with critical debates around power and spatialities within these perspectives, and their relation to theoretical terms/fields such as hegemony, neoliberalism, radical democracy,
- Recognize and critique claims made about spatialities of social movements in various media, including but not only scholarly work;
- Develop your thinking on social movements, etc. through the analysis of a social movement or social movement organization, or related phenomenon; and
Communicate your ideas and analysis of social movements and theories to others, and engage in scholarly discussion of and writing about these topics and issues.

To achieve these aims, we will read recent scholarship in geographies of social movements (or contentious politics, or resistance, or...) and some foundational texts from Gramsci, Foucault, Laclau & Mouffe, etc. Critical points of debate include the meaning and significance of power, society and the social; the relations between social movements and the state; understandings of social movements through the notion of representation vs. constitution, ideology vs. culture, discourse vs. framing; and ways of thinking about identity, collectivities, and agency.

This course is a seminar: Graduate students will be expected to read thoughtfully, deepen their engagement with the literatures through responsive writing and discussion, and build their own critical perspectives on the theories addressed. Assessment will stress preparation for class, participation in discussion, and engagement as made evident in written and oral practice. Students will write not only critical response pieces throughout the semester, but also work on longer essays using the course material to advance their own research.

READINGS will be available online, at electronic course reserve, on the course D2L site, and/or online. I strongly recommend printing the readings, as you will need them in class discussion, and underlining on the page is a useful practice. If you really prefer to use a digital copy only, you must download and save it to your device ahead of time for easy access in class (do not depend on an internet connection in class, and time spent online in class will detract from your engagement during our face-to-face time). THERE IS NO TEXTBOOK.

All UWM course policies apply; please be familiar with the following:
Student Rights & Responsibilities: http://www.uwm.edu/Dept/SecU/SyllabusLinks.pdf

For scholars, academic integrity is of the utmost importance, and you should conduct your scholarly practice in such a way as to acknowledge the intellectual labor of others. We will address this issue at least once in the face-to-face session through an exercise in identifying academic misconduct or through discussion of the importance of academic integrity in the social sciences. For the relevant UWM policy, see http://www4.uwm.edu/acad_aff/policy/academicmisconduct.cfm.

If you need certain accommodations because of disability, financial limitations, mental illness, and/or the limits of UWM technology, please contact Kristin about this as soon as possible, for direct assistance or guidance to services on the UWM campus. Some links to relevant services are listed on p. 4, below, in the syllabus.

Please check your university email regularly for occasional class announcements; such announcements will also be posted on the course D2L page. In case of an influenza outbreak, severe weather events, or other disruptive large-scale phenomena, alternative arrangements will be made for class and a new syllabus will be distributed to organize the completion of remaining assessed work.

To request an office appointment or ask a quick question by email, always include “GEOG 731” in the subject header. Please use your UWM e-mail; e-mail from other accounts may go to the junk
folder. I usually answer my e-mail within 48 hours. If you do not get an answer from me within a day, though, feel free to e-mail again to make sure I received your e-mail. --Kristin

COURSE FORMAT

This course is blended in two ways:

- First, it is a BLENDED/HYBRID ONLINE course, which means that we will have some face-to-face classes, but also carry out some of our interaction online.
- Second, it is being offered as a graduate/undergraduate course, which means that we will share our face-to-face class time with the undergraduates in Geog 531. Nevertheless, graduate readings, assignments, and expectations will differ somewhat from those for undergraduates. Graduate students will interact online primarily with other graduate students.

COURSE PREREQUISITES

You must have graduate standing to enroll in this course.

COURSE WORKLOAD

You can expect to spend 6 hours per week on this course outside of class in weeks we meet face-to-face, and 9 weeks when we do our work online. This course is a 3-credit course, which means a total of 144 instructional hours (that is, 9 hours per week in a 16-week semester).

Your time commitment for one week of this course in a week with a face-to-face meeting might look something like this:
- 4 hours reading the assigned articles or chapters and taking notes
- ½ hour taking the online quiz (optional for grads)
- 1 hour drafting your weekly response paper and posting it
- ½ - 1+ hour working on your research paper/project

In a week that is all online, your work might look like this:
- 4 hours reading the assigned articles or chapters and taking notes
- ½ hour taking the online quiz (optional for grads)
- 1 hour drafting your weekly response paper and posting it
- 1 hour responding to classmates’ response papers
- 1+ hour working on your research paper/project

ATTENDANCE POLICY (FACE-TO-FACE SESSIONS)

Attendance at face-to-face sessions is required, since your participation is graded – if you don’t attend, you get a zero for participation that day. Missing one face-to-face session may not affect your grade, provided that you contact Prof. Sziarto and carry out the work relevant to that session (response paper, e.g.) Missing more than one class will begin to affect your grade: Not only will your participation grade be directly affected, but your comprehension of the material will likely suffer, and that will be evident in your work.
DUE DATES, PENALTIES FOR LATE WORK, AND MAKE-UP ASSIGNMENTS

Because this is a graduate course, and partially online, you have a great deal of responsibility for ensuring your course progress especially as it supports your progress to completion of your graduate program. You have some flexibility in completing course requirements, but it is imperative that you complete these requirements by the deadlines or your grade will suffer.

Due dates
For the course to function as a seminar, with discussion following on writing, or peer reviewing to be done online, all work needs to be turned in on time. Quizzes and reading response papers are due by Monday midnight. Please see the course schedule for the deadlines for portions of the research paper. If another important event or course deadline converges with a deadline for Geog 731, it is your responsibility to plan your work accordingly. Always check the latest news posting on the course D2L site for any changes in deadlines.

Penalties for late work
To be fair to students in the course who turn their work in on time, late work will be penalized. Unless a documented medical or personal emergency arises, any work turned in late will be penalized 10% of your grade the first day it is late (from 0-24 hours of the due time/day), 10% the second day (25-48 hours), and an additional 10% for each 24-hour period thereafter. Please see me immediately if you know you will have a problem turning your work in on time.

Incomplete policy

A grade of Incomplete (“I”) may only be given to a student who has completed course material successfully until near the end of the semester but - because of illness, or some other unexpected cause beyond the student’s control – then becomes unable to complete the final assignments (in the case of this course, for example, the final paper). An Incomplete can only be given if the student provides the instructor with evidence (documentation of the unexpected cause or event) that s/he was prevented from completing course requirements for just cause as discussed above. In other words, failure to keep up with course material during the semester is not justification for an Incomplete.

See the full UWM policy at https://uwm.edu/letters-science/advising/answers-forms/policies/incomplete-policy

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCEOMMODATIONS

I am committed to making this course accessible to all enrolled, and providing accommodations or guidance with respect to services available on campus. If you need certain accommodations because of physical ability, financial limitations, and/or the limits of UWM technology, please contact me as soon as possible. I will help you find the services you need through UWM. Students with disabilities will find resources at http://www4.uwm.edu/arc.

I have tried to design the syllabus to avoid having major assignments, etc. conflict with most major religious holidays. However, if you will have difficulty with a due date because of religious observances, please contact Professor Sziarto as soon as possible to make alternate arrangements. University policy on this is at http://www4.uwm.edu/secu/docs/other/St.5.htm

Geography 731: Insurgent Cities – Geographies of social movements and resistance
Spring 2018
I am prepared to make accommodations for absences due to call-up of reserves to active military duty. To do this, I need you to let me know of call-up and provide documentation. This is UWM policy: [http://www4.uwm.edu/academics/military.cfm](http://www4.uwm.edu/academics/military.cfm)

**GRADING POLICY**

See the following site for UWM policy on grades and grading: [http://uwm.edu/registrar/students/enrollment-policies/#grading](http://uwm.edu/registrar/students/enrollment-policies/#grading)

**Guide to grades**

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**ASSESSMENT**

Your work in this course will be assessed as follows:

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<th>Assessment¹</th>
<th>Learning Goals</th>
<th>% of grade</th>
<th>Grading basis</th>
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<td>Response papers (9 papers @ 1 p each)</td>
<td>Develop critical understanding of concepts and methods in studies of social movements through independent reading and writing</td>
<td>9 response papers @ 3.5% each for a total of 31.5%</td>
<td>Out of 2 points (2= meets at least 80% of criteria; 1= meets &lt;80% of criteria; 0=not submitted)</td>
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<td>Class participation: Face-to-face and online discussion</td>
<td>Develop facility and self-confidence in scholarly debate and engagement with peers</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Letter</td>
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<td>Presentation of final paper</td>
<td>Develop thinking on research, its relevance &amp; significance</td>
<td>3.5%</td>
<td>Out of 5 points</td>
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<td>Final paper: PROPOSAL</td>
<td>Develop scholarly writing skills, including working with critique</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Submitted/ not submitted</td>
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<td>Final paper(s): ZERO DRAFT</td>
<td>Develop scholarly writing skills, including working with critique</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Out of 5 points</td>
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<td>Final paper(s): FULL FIRST DRAFT</td>
<td>Develop scholarly writing skills, including working with critique</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>Out of 5 points</td>
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<td>Final paper: PEER REVIEW</td>
<td>Develop scholarly engagement through reading, develop familiarity with critical review processes</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Out of 5 points</td>
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<td>Final paper(s): FINAL version</td>
<td>Demonstrate ability to synthesize insights from</td>
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¹ There will be no exams in this course.
RESPONSE PAPERS ASSIGNMENT

One of your tasks as a researcher/scholar is to develop your thinking, especially critical thinking. One of the most important ways to do this is through writing. This does NOT mean that you read a lot, think critically, then write about it. Rather, writing practice may actually start to tell you what you are thinking. To this end, in this course you will write at least 9 responses to the readings. You should write an approximately one-page, single-spaced piece (about 250-300 words) in response to the assigned reading(s), and circulate it to the entire class by posting it to that week’s Discussion page by 11:59 pm on the Tuesday before class. Earlier is better – but better late than missing...

I recommend you use this assignment to work toward several different goals:

- Establishing a habitual process of writing (as thinking)
- Developing your ability to respond critically to reading
  - grasping the arguments even as you subject them to critical scrutiny
  - relating them to other scholarly work
- Getting around writer’s block by free-writing before you are sure of your argument
- Developing arguments through responding to & revising your writing

What should you strive to do in these response pieces? You might, depending on the reading(s), focus on a particular term, and trace how the author develops her/his argument about that concept, OR how several authors use different conceptualizations of the same term (and think about which conceptualization works best for you). You might focus on grappling with one or two difficult concepts or passages by trying to summarize them, and relating them to the rest of the work. You might relate a reading to a previous week’s reading(s), by comparing and contrasting their approaches to a topic.

REMINDER: Response pieces are due to the course D2L Discussion page by Monday, 11:59 pm, to give everyone time to
In a week with a face-to-face meeting, you should at least skim them before Thursday’s class. This deadline also gives Kristin time to comment on them before class. See the instructions on that page regarding how to post your response paper.

In a fully online week, you will read your classmates’ response papers, and respond to at least three of them with a 100-200 word post (each).

If your work schedule makes this impossible in some way, talk with Kristin as soon as possible.

Resources on writing as thinking:
http://www.insidehighered.com/advice/summer/summer6
http://www.capella.edu/writingcenter/overview.aspx

FINAL PAPER ASSIGNMENT

Your final paper should investigate a social movement, in relation to the course themes and the debates in the literature, or some debate in the social movement literature, construed broadly. Also, you should use this course, and especially the final paper assignment, to further your graduate research project in some way. You may be building your preliminary reading lists, or writing your thesis or final master’s paper, or writing your dissertation proposal, or writing an article. Therefore, I expect you to take one of these options for the final paper, and tailor it to your needs.

Option 1: A review of literature, 20-25 pages. If you are working toward your preliminary exams, or writing your thesis, this might be what you need most. A long review of literature, in which you explore and critique several themes in a subset of literature, or use multiple literatures to set up a framework for research, is an important task early in any research project.

Option 2: An analytical essay or position paper, 20-25 pages. If you are working on a final master’s paper, or on an article to submit for publication, this might be the best choice. This option would also be a fine way to delve into one of the theoretical approaches we touch on but do not read in depth, e.g. hegemony theory, critical race theory, feminist alliance politics, assemblage theory, etc. In this assignment you would explicate the relevant literature in a short review, then apply and/or critique that literature, possibly through the analysis of your research findings.

Option 3: A research proposal, 20-25 pages. Again, whether this option is appropriate depends on at what stage you are in your research project.

This assignment will proceed in several stages. First, by February 2nd you should submit a proposal (1/2 to 1 pages, plus references) for the paper(s) to Kristin via the D2L Dropbox. I recommend you discuss this assignment, and its role in furthering your academic project, with your adviser as you write the proposal.

Second, you will write and hand in a “zero” draft of the paper by March 16th. This draft will be for credit, but I will not grade it on content – only on whether you have produced several pages of a draft.

Third, you will write a full draft of the paper(s) by March 30th for Kristin and a peer to review.
Fourth, you will review at least one classmate’s draft paper (due April 13th, details on whose paper TBA, depending on topics). You will write up your constructive criticism, answering these questions: Is the argument clear? How can it be clarified? Is it developed throughout the paper, and in relation to research findings (depending on which kind of paper)? Are relevant literatures addressed? What is the paper’s intellectual contribution and significance, in terms of theory and/or empirical work? And so on. WHY are we doing peer reviewing? Because scholarship is a collective endeavor, involving conversations (proximate, or at a distance) and debates about knowledge production. Peer review is an important part of this endeavor.

Fifth, you will present your paper in class on April 24th. Comments and questions from your classmates can aid you in clarifying your argument for the final draft.

Sixth and last, you will incorporate all your relevant work, and all comments, etc., into the final draft of the paper. The final version of the paper is due to the D2L Dropbox by May 17th (by 11:59 pm to the Dropbox).

CLASS CONDUCT & NETIQUETTE

In both the face-to-face and virtual classroom spaces, we must work together to create a positive learning environment, and I expect you to respect the rights of other students to learn.

Our face-to-face class time

- Please come to the class on time and stay until the end. If you must come in late or leave early, please avoid distracting other students or disrupting the lecture or discussion.
- Please respect me and your fellow students when we are speaking by not engaging in side conversations with your classmates.
- Please turn off your cell phone when you come to class. If you must leave it on for some reason (e.g., in case of family emergency), please set it to “silent” and sit near an exit.
- You may use laptops, PDAs, or other electronic devices in class only to record lecture notes, complete class-related activities, or refer to digital copies of course texts or notes. Please do not use such devices for e-mail, messaging, web-surfing, gaming, or other activities during class.
- At times we will discuss controversial issues in this course, and students in the class will not always be on the same side. I hope that you will seek to develop an understanding of the different perspectives on the topics we address—including positions that differ from your own—and to challenge your own preconceptions.
- Even if you disagree with points of view expressed by your instructor or your fellow students, as citizens of this class you are responsible for considering different points of view respectfully. I will do the same.

Netiquette, or civility in online discussion

All of the above rules apply as appropriate. Furthermore, because of the nature of the online environment, additional guidelines are as follows:
Although the online environment often makes people feel alone and anonymous, in the D2L Discussion forum spaces all of your classmates and I can read whatever you post. Choose your words carefully.

Hostile, threatening, or inappropriate comments posted to the discussion board or emailed to other course participants are serious breaches in academic integrity and will not be tolerated.

Although disagreements are encouraged in discussions, *abuse and cruelty will not be tolerated.* Such posts will lower your grade in the course.

Tips for effective emails and posts:
- Properly address your emails, e.g., “Dear Dr. Sziarto” or “Hi Kristin,” and put the course name and number in the subject line.
- Review your email/post before you send it to ensure proper tone and clarity.
- Minimize use of all caps or other text that could be construed as yelling.
- Be kind to others and tolerant of errors in their emails/posts. You could easily make the same error.
- Most importantly, strive for each email/post to achieve a constructive objective (e.g., getting a question answered, seeking or providing feedback).

MORE ON COMMUNICATIONS

Although there are many forms of digital communication, in this class we will stay in touch with each other using our UWM e-mails and D2L. Yes, they are not exciting or new, but they are university-provided and secure.

Since class will only meet every other week, the best way to reach me is e-mail.
- If you e-mail me during Monday-Friday, you can expect a reply within 48 hours (if I do not reply within 48 hours, e-mail me again!)
- If you e-mail me on the weekend, it may take me longer to reply, up to 72 hours.
- Make sure you put the course name and number in the subject line.

I am also available to talk face-to-face during my drop-in office hours, right after class (briefly), or by appointment (e-mail to set up a meeting).

Online work will be through UWM’s D2L website: [https://idp.uwm.edu/idp/Authn/UserPassword](https://idp.uwm.edu/idp/Authn/UserPassword)
- D2L course content is best viewed using the *Firefox* web browser.
- Use a computer or laptop hardwired into the wall for posting your weekly responses and all other papers. This practice will prevent any loss of signal from causing an error when you submit.
- For questions about accessing or working D2L, please contact the UWM Help Desk before contacting me. The Help Desk staff members know D2L much better than I do, so they can answer your questions better and faster than I can. The Help Desk can be reached in any of the following ways:
  - 414-229-4040 or 877-381-3459 (toll free)
  - [http://www4.uwm.edu/technology/help/campus/gettechhelp.cfm](http://www4.uwm.edu/technology/help/campus/gettechhelp.cfm)

You will find it useful to stay in touch with your graduate student colleagues regarding coursework, program, disciplinary or departmental cultures, graduate student life, etc. For such purposes I will
set up Discussion forums in D2L for not only the course assignments, but Discussion spaces for communicating about other course matters as well.

QUESTIONS?

➔ If you have questions, comments, or concerns about the class, please get in touch with me.

--Dr. Kristin Sziarto
READINGS WEEK BY WEEK, TOPIC BY TOPIC

Week 1 - Introduction to social movements & reading in social theory

REQUIRED:

SUGGESTED:

Week 2 (ONLINE Module 1): Spatialities of social movements; intro to hegemony

REQUIRED:

SUGGESTED:
Walton, Grant W. (201). Gramsci’s activists: How local civil society is shaped by the anti-corruption industry, political society and translocal encounters. Political Geography 53, 10-19.

Week 3: Place and space

REQUIRED:

2 The readings are ALL available in digital format from the course D2L site.
3 Readings are marked as to Women’s and Gender Studies content (&), and/or Urban Studies content (*).


SUGGESTED:


**Week 4 (ONLINE Module 2): Networks and assemblages**

REQUIRED:


SUGGESTED:


**Week 5: Scale**

**REQUIRED:**

**SUGGESTED:**

**Week 6 (ONLINE Module 3): Public space**


**SUGGESTED:**

**Week 7: Territory & the state**
Smith, Sara. (2011). ‘She says herself, “I have no future”: love, fate and territory in Leh District, India. Gender, Place and Culture 18 (4), 455-476.

**SUGGESTED:**

**Week 8: Theoretical round-up**
Through our discussion in weeks 1-7, we will identify one or two bodies of theory in which we would like to read more deeply. During weeks 6-7 we will select pieces we want to read together, and in this week we will discuss those readings. Likely authors include Chantal Mouffe, Ernesto Laclau, Gilles Deleuze, Jacques Ranciere, Judith Butler, Chandra Talpade Mohanty...

**Week 9: Spring break**

**Week 10: Globalizing social movements**

**REQUIRED:**


**SUGGESTED:**


**Week 11: The politicizing city**

**REQUIRED:**


**SUGGESTED:**


**Week 12: (ONLINE Module 4): What about rural social movements?**

**REQUIRED:**


**Week 13: Gendered and gendering movements and spaces**


**Week 14: Graduate student presentations**

**Week 15: Undergraduate student presentations**

**Week 16: Undergraduate student presentations**

**Week 17: Final paper due May 18th by 11:59 pm (Dropbox)**
## COURSE SCHEDULE

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<td>25 Face-to-face class: Introductions</td>
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<td>Reading response 6 due by 11:59 pm</td>
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<td>14</td>
<td>15 Face-to-face class: Theory round-up, readings TBD</td>
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<td>17/18</td>
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<td>Reading response 7 due by 11:59 pm</td>
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**Geography 731: Insurgent Cities – Geographies of social movements and resistance**  
**Spring 2018**
<table>
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<tr>
<th>Wk</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
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<th>Sat/Sun</th>
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<td>19</td>
<td>Spring break this week  </td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
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<td>Spring break</td>
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<td>18</td>
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<td>24</td>
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<td>Face-to-face class: Graduate Presentations</td>
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<tr>
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<td>30</td>
<td>1 MAY DAY</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Face-to-face class: Grad. &amp; Undergrad. presentations</td>
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<td>8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Face-to-face class: Undergrad. presentations</td>
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<td>17</td>
<td>Exam week is May 12, and May 14-19. Final paper due May 17th by 11:59 pm.</td>
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