**Security and International Political Sociology, MA, 2 credit**

**Instructor:** Xymena Kurowska

**Seminar description**

The field of security studies has proven one of the most dynamic and contested areas in International Relations, giving rise to versatile research agendas over the last decades. The development of these agendas has unfolded in close affinity with the young field of International Political Sociology that responds to the need for more productive collaboration among political sociologists, international relations specialists, and sociopolitical theorists. As emphasized by the flagship journal in the field, this collaboration is especially concerned with challenges arising from contemporary transformations of social, political, and global orders given the statist forms of traditional sociologies and the marginalization of social processes in traditional International Relations. The course engages a number of themes that have become sites of theoretical innovation and new modes of empirical research at the intersection of critical security studies and International Political Sociology. It should be thought of as a survey.

The course will be useful for graduate students interested in interdisciplinary and in particular critical sociological approaches to International Relations. Successful participation requires basic familiarity with sociological and political concepts, as well as interest in critical methodologies. Most seminar readings contain recommendation for background reading of use for all participants but particularly pertinent for those new to the debate.

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of the course, the students will:
- Be familiar with cutting edge conceptual, political and social debates at the intersection of critical security studies/critical International Relations and International Political Sociology;
- Have developed transferable interdisciplinary competence to engage and critique conceptual arguments and empirical research in this area;
- Have applied theoretical and analytical frameworks for examining different types of empirical cases.

**Evaluation**

- *Active participation in class discussion 10%*

- *Resume of a chosen theme ca 500 words 20%*

Please choose any theme and write a resume of ALL the required reading in up to 500 words. The resume should be sent by email to the instructor before the seminar it concerns. In the resume, please consider:

What is the author’s purpose in writing this piece? E.g. what debates s/he engages, is the purpose to critique existing arguments, extend them, refine them, reject them, or to build on them to propose a new one, etc.

What are the author’s guiding questions?

What concepts does the author emphasise? How are these concepts defined? How are they related to each other?

What is the author’s overall argument? Does it seem sustainable given the evidence provided? Would you draw different conclusions based on the discussion and evidence offered? Is there any obvious error in the logic of the presented argument?
What questions remain ignored or unanswered although the author promises to deal with them? How would you re-frame the argument?

- **Desecuritisation case essay ca 2,000 35% Paper due 3 March by 11.55 pm**
  The aim of this essay is to analyse an empirical case through the lens of desecuritisation. Desecuritisation is not a clear-cut theory and contestation abounds as to its specification. The conceptual part of the essay should address this challenge, suggesting a justifiable desecuritisation analytical framework that the author will use for empirical analysis.

- **‘Security situation’ essay ca 2,000 35% Paper due 31 March by 11.55 pm**
  The aim of this essay is to analyse any security situation that the author has recently found themselves in by means of any of the theoretical propositions discussed in the course.

**Seminar breakdown**

1. **Politics of security and threat construction 9 Jan**
   **Background:**
   **Required:**
   **Additional:**

2. **Critique of security and emancipation 16 Jan**
   **Background:**
   **Required:**
• Bourne, M & D Bulley (2011) ‘Securing the human in critical security studies: the insecurity of a secure ethics’, *European Security* 20(3)

*Additional:*


### 3. Gendering security 23 Jan

*Background:*


*Required:*


*Additional:*


### 4. Militarism 30 Jan

*Background:*


*Required:*


*Additional:*


Sjoberg, L and S Via (eds) Gender, War and Militarism, Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO Press

5. Securitization and desecuritization (1) 6 Feb

Background:

Required:

Additional:

6. Securitization and desecuritization (2) 13 Feb

Required:

Additional:

7. Environmental security 20 Feb
Background:
Required:

Additional:

8. 27 FEB NO CLASS – INTERNATIONAL STUDIES ASSOCIATION ANNUAL CONVENTION

9. Risk and Resilience 6 Mar
Required:
- Juncos, A (2016) ‘Resilience as the new EU foreign policy paradigm: a pragmatist turn?’, European Security

Additional:

10. Migration and border security 13 Mar
Background:

**Required:**

**Additional:**

11. Homeland security and the ‘war against terrorism’ 20 Mar

**Background:**

**Required:**
- Johnson, J ‘Beyond a politics of recrimination: Scandal, ethics and the rehabilitation of violence’, European Journal of International Relations, first view

**Additional:**

12. Technology and warfare in the information age. Big data security. 27 Mar

**Background:**


**Required:**

Additional:
Manjikian, M (2014) 'Becoming Unmanned', International Feminist Journal of Politics, 16(1)
Wilcox, L ‘Embodying algorithmic war: Gender, race, and the posthuman in drone warfare’, Security Dialogue, first view