Course Overview
This course explores the emergence and resolution of separatist movements around the world—those groups of individuals who reject their continued membership in an existing sovereign state and instead claim the right to govern themselves. While we will be expansive in our focus, considering classic secessionist movements alongside movements for greater autonomy as well as irredentist movements, we will only investigate the dynamics of movements that have, at their core, some claim about political sovereignty. This excludes from our consideration groups that wish to withdraw from wider society or specific social/cultural/religious institutions, but that do not make any larger arguments about political sovereignty.

We will investigate the conditions under which separatist pressures are most likely to develop and when such pressures result in actual separation. We will contrast the tactics of movements, from peaceful approaches in places like contemporary Quebec or Scotland, to violent insurrections in places like the Chechnya and Northern Ireland. Along the way, we will consider the ethical and legal arguments for and against secession as well as consider cases where separatist tendencies lead to accommodation within the national state rather than independence from it.

Required Texts
There are no textbooks to purchase for this class (hooray!). Instead, all of the readings, videos, and other class materials will be posted on Moodle. You are expected to do all the required readings before coming to class.

Course Requirements
Your grade in this class will be based on the following four elements:

- Participation 15%
- Short response papers (2) 30%
- Case study journal 30%
- Final exam/paper 25%
Participation: Your participation grade is based on two equally important components: being an engaged and courteous member of class, and contributing to our shared understand of the topics for this term. Your class “citizenship” includes coming to class on time, taking the material and class activities seriously, giving others in class your attention and respect, making sure you allow space for the ideas of others in the class, and focusing your energies on what is happening in the room, not your computer screen. I start from the assumption that everyone in the class will display good citizenship; unexcused absences, habitual lateness, inattentiveness in class, and disruptive or disrespectful behavior will affect your participation score precipitously.

For the second component, I will consider your active contribution to our shared investigation of secession movements. Such contributions come in many forms (e.g., asking questions, responding to questions, taking an active role in small group discussions, reporting back the results of group discussions to the larger group, providing an illustrative example from the news, etc.). What they all have in common is that they require you to share your thoughts with others. Staying silent and simply absorbing what others have to say might feel comfortable and safe, but it limits both your own learning/retention and deprives the rest of your class of potentially insightful things you might be thinking. Speaking out in class comes easier for some people than others, but it is a skill that is highly useful to practice now, in the supportive confines of a Carleton classroom, rather than in the workplace or graduate school where it is often expected, but may feel particularly stressful. If the thought of sharing your ideas with your peers fills you with dread, please come see me as soon as possible so we can strategize about ways for you to participate actively during the term.

Short response papers: you will write two short (4-5 page) papers in response to prompts that ask you to make an argument drawing on and critically assessing the assigned class readings. Paper prompts will be posted at the end of the 2nd and 5th weeks; you will pick one prompt from the list and have one week to turn in the paper. You will not be required to do any outside research for either paper.

Case study journal: you will select a separatist movement — historical or contemporary — that you will investigate more closely over the course of the term using periodic, guided journal entries. There will be six entries total, each worth 5% of your grade. I will post several prompts each week, starting at the end of the 3rd week; you will pick one from each set and write a response of no more than 500 words, posted within one week. A list of eligible separatist movements will be posted on Moodle; if you are interested in a movement that is not on the list, please see me and I will approve them on a case-by-case basis. You are expected to do outside research on your chosen case to inform your journal entries.

Final exam/paper: you will have the option of either writing a 10-page paper on a topic of your choosing, or a 10-page take-home final exam. In order to be eligible for the paper option, you must discuss your proposed topic with me — and receive the green light to proceed — before the end of the 8th week. Anyone who does not have a cleared topic for the paper by this date will do the take-home final exam, which will be handed out on the last day of class. The final exam will require you to answer two prompts—one that is required of everyone doing the exam, and one that you will select from a set of provided options. The take home will draw on class readings and discussions. Both the paper and the final exam are due on the last day of the exam period.

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1 Yes, I can see you. Really, I can.
Course Policies

Attendance: is mandatory. You are expected to come to class regularly and on time. If you are unable to attend class because of illness or some other emergency, please do me the courtesy of letting me know ahead of time. A pattern of unexcused absences can drop your grade substantially:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Unexcused Absences</th>
<th>Penalty</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Participation grade lowered by 1/3 (e.g., from B+ to B)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Participation grade lowered by full grade (e.g., from B+ to C+)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Participation grade lowered by 2 full grades (e.g., from B+ to D+)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Participation grade = zero</td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Automatic F for the class</td>
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If you miss class, please FIRST get notes from a classmate, and if you need to fill in gaps, THEN come see me during office hours.

Deadlines: all assignments, unless otherwise noted, should be uploaded to Moodle in PDF format ONLY by 7pm on the due date. Documents not in PDF format are not counted as being turned in and incur a late penalty of 1/3 grade per 24 hours past the deadline. Technology failures—unless system-wide—do not excuse late work.

Extensions: will only be granted for extraordinary reasons or unforeseen complications/obstacles to completing your work on time. Simply being very busy is not, on its own, sufficient grounds for an extension.

Electronic devices in class: people learn better when they write out notes by hand (this is documented in a number of studies). Moreover, the quality of classroom interactions and conversations tend to be higher when people don’t hide behind screens, which is why I strongly prefer you to leave your computers, tablets, etc. in your rooms. That said, if you are entitled to having a computer in the class for taking notes, or if you would like to have a computer or device to access readings in class without having to print them out, this is fine, so long as you only use said device for class-related purposes. People who abuse this policy risk serious penalty to their participation grade.

Plagiarism and academic dishonesty: you are expected to adhere to the highest standards of academic integrity in this class, submitting only your own, original work and not taking credit for work done by anyone else or for any other class. Anyone in violation of this standard will automatically receive a zero for the assignment (and possibly the entire class). The case will also be referred to the Dean’s office for further investigation and possible disciplinary action. You are strongly encouraged to familiarize yourself with Carleton’s policy on academic honesty, which is available at https://apps.carleton.edu/campus/doc/integrity/.

Special needs: if you require accommodation due to a documented disability, please notify me as soon as possible to discuss how I might best assist you in meeting the requirements of the course.

Formatting and citations: please consult the class style guide (available on Moodle) for instructions on how to format your papers and details on the expected citation style for this class. Papers must adhere to the style guidelines or risk a penalty (which can be as much as 1/3 grade, depending on the number of violations).
A note on classroom climate: productive and thought-provoking discussions require participants to feel comfortable sharing their ideas with others in the class, even when those ideas may be uncommon or controversial. Disagreement is fine—even vehement disagreement—so long as individuals do not engage in personal attacks or comments that insult, denigrate, or dehumanize others. I will do my best to enforce this rule, but I also ask you to assist me by choosing your words thoughtfully and to take any critique of those words not as an attack, but as an invitation to examine your own assumptions and reasoning more deeply—and which might, in turn, lead you to articulate and defend your point of view in a more nuanced and effective way.

A note on triggers: some discussions of secession—especially those that are contested and violent—may contain upsetting descriptions of harm inflicted on others. When reading or discussing material that pertains to such episodes, you may encounter material that might cause extreme distress. Because triggers are highly individualized and often hard to predict, it will not be possible to provide case-by-case trigger warnings, but if you encounter material that is detrimental to your mental health, you will not incur any penalty for taking a moment and creating needed physical, emotional, or intellectual space for yourself.

Schedule of Readings
While most of the readings for this class come from scholarly sources, they will vary considerably in terms of their accessibility. Some will be pretty easy and straightforward; others may be tougher going and methodologically/theoretically complex. Regardless, it is your responsibility to engage seriously with each one, distilling the key arguments made by the authors and the evidence they present to support their arguments. Note: all readings are due for the date on which they are assigned, unless otherwise noted. If a reading is missing from the Moodle folder, please alert me ASAP.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Readings and Assignments</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Thursday, January 4</td>
<td>Introduction to the course</td>
<td>• No reading. Familiarize yourself with this syllabus, particularly the assignments and course policies, as well as the class Moodle page.</td>
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Ethical and Practical Debates

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• Excerpt from International Court of Justice Advisory Opinion on Kosovo  

First set of short paper prompts posted January 12
The politics of secession


A closer look: Scotland and Catalonia


*First short paper due, January 19 by 7pm. First set of journal prompts posted.*

Contextual Factors

Patterns of secessionist diffusion


Economic factors


*Second set of journal prompts posted.*

Political factors

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**Secession and its Aftermath**

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<tr>
<td>Thursday, March 8</td>
<td>Wrap-up</td>
<td>• No reading!</td>
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*Final set of journal prompts posted.*