

PSCI 4252: Politics of Ethnicity and Nationalism / Fall 2011

Location: 252 Hellems

Meeting time: Tu Th 11am -12:15pm

Instructor: Jaroslav Tir, PhD

e-mail: jtir@colorado.edu

Internet: sobek.colorado.edu/~jati3108

Office: 136 Ketchum

Office hours: Th 1:30-3:30 pm

Office phone: 492-8637

Teaching Assistant: Johannes Karreth

e-mail: johannes.karreth@colorado.edu

Office: 124 Ketchum

Office hours: Th 1-2 pm

Phone: (617) 671-0646

Important Note: To illustrate the background of some ethnic conflicts, movies dealing with the topic of ethnic war will be shown. Please note that war scenes and war-related coarse language depicted in the movies can be offensive to some individuals. If you are typically offended by such material, you may want to reconsider whether you want to take this course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The power of ethnicity has become brutally evident in recent years, as nationalism has ripped apart countries and interethnic strife has erupted into bloody conflict in a growing number of locations across the world. Why is ethnicity such a potent source of conflict? When does nationalism cease to be a celebration of one's heritage and become a force for fragmentation of communities and the repression of others? Is ethnic conflict an end in itself, or are ethnic groups trying to achieve other goals through violence? What can be done to prevent or ameliorate interethnic strife? This course will examine theoretical aspects of ethnicity, inter-ethnic conflict, as well as specific examples of ethnic crises.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Reading Materials

1. Taras, Ray and Rajat Ganguly. 2010. *Understanding Ethnic Conflict*. 4th ed. Longman.
2. CU library course reserves (abbreviated as "CR" below) <http://ucblibraries.colorado.edu/> The password is nationalism.
3. Students are advised to consult on-line international news sources and look for stories related to the course topics on a nearly daily basis. Examples of options include the *Christian Science Monitor*, *The New York Times*, Associated Press, Reuters, Yahoo News, Google News, etc. Some news services offer you the opportunity to sign up for daily e-mails.

Student Initiative

Students should be alerted to the obvious fact that it will not be easy to summarize the complexity of the course topics in terms of a few concepts and theories. Students should acquire the habit of regularly reading news magazines, opinion journals, and national newspapers. It is important that students **read assigned materials thoughtfully and thoroughly** and that they **attend classes regularly**, since class time will be primarily devoted to the exploration and integration of assigned readings.

Examinations

There will be two exams based on lectures, assigned readings, and class discussions. The exams will require students to demonstrate a detailed grasp of the material covered. A description of the exam format will be given prior to the exam dates.

Term Paper

Guidelines, assignments, deadlines, and criteria of evaluation are outlined at the end of the syllabus.

Participation and Quizzes

Participation in the class is essential to the success of this course. Two aspects of participation are key. (1) Students must read the assigned class readings in advance critically and in depth, so that they are able to identify the key points of the argument as well as find within them weaknesses and controversies. During a typical class session, students will be expected to clarify the readings and answer questions about them. To help ensure that students are reading the assigned materials, there may be a series of short quizzes, some of which will be unannounced. (2) At the beginning of each class session, students should bring up current events relevant to the course. Frequent and thoughtful participation will be rewarded when determining the final grade at the instructor's discretion.

Attendance

Each student starts out with 100 attendance points. Unexcused class absences beyond the third one will decrease this point total by 15 points. Use the three "freebees" wisely, for family affairs, job interviews, minor health problems, etc. but not on the days when assignments are due; an absence on the due date does not mean that you can make the assignment up. Absences will be excused only in cases of serious health or family emergencies and appropriate documentation will be required. Please note that excessive excused or unexcused absences will also hurt your participation grade, because one cannot participate in class discussions if one is not present in class.

Extra Credit

Students may attend lectures that the instructor determines to be pertinent to the course. To receive the extra credit, please turn in one single-spaced, typewritten summary of the lecture. The instructor will announce the lectures and due dates in advance. Late assignments (up to one week) will count for ½ credit. A maximum of three extra credit assignments will count. A perfect extra credit score will boost the student's overall course grade by 3%; partial scores will be prorated.

COURSE RULES

Grading Policy

Midterm Exam	25%
Final Exam	30%
Term Paper	25%
Participation / Quizzes	10%
Attendance	10%

Class Policies

1. Students are expected to turn in assignments at the beginning of class and take exams on the dates specified. Failure to meet a paper deadline does not exempt a student from fulfilling this requirement. Every assignment must be turned in within one week of the due date in order to pass the course. It is the student's responsibility to assure that the instructor has received the assignment.

2. Exceptions to the above rules are granted at the instructor's discretion, only under circumstances of extreme personal emergency or serious illness. In all instances, appropriate evidentiary documentation will be requested. The excuses must be submitted within one week of the original absence.
3. All academic work must meet the University's standards for academic honesty. Each student is responsible to inform themselves of these standards before conducting any academic work. My academic dishonesty policy is very simple: you will receive a failing grade for the class if you are found cheating on examinations, plagiarizing the work of others or attempting to turn in assignments used in previous classes, along with all other possible infractions noted in the University's policy on academic dishonesty. Moreover, disciplinary proceedings to dismiss you from the University may be initiated against you. I **will not** tolerate academic dishonesty and assure you that you **will** face the harshest punishment possible if you attempt it.
4. Students may request that the instructor re-read exam answers or papers that they feel have been unfairly evaluated. Requests for re-evaluation must be submitted to the instructor in typewritten form, along with the assignment, within a week after it has been returned to the class. The written statement must provide the specific reasons for reconsidering the grade and the student's assessment of the particular grade the assignment deserves. The assignment will be re-graded and a new grade assigned. Please be aware that the new grade may be higher, the same, or lower than the original grade.
5. The syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class may be necessary.

6. All students are expected to complete assigned readings before coming to class and they are expected to discuss and respond to random questioning by the instructor.

TOPICS AND REQUIRED READINGS

I. THE ORIGINS AND EVOLUTION OF ETHNIC IDENTITY

A. Introduction

- Taras and Ganguly (pp. xi-xiii, 1-3)
- CR: Hutchinson and Smith, "Introduction" (pp. 3-13)
- CR: Horowitz (3-12)
- CR: Montville, Ra'anana (5-12 only)

B. Ethnic Identity

- Taras and Ganguly (3-6)
- CR: Hutchinson and Smith, Stalin (18-21); Deutsch (26-29)
- CR: Horowitz (51-57)
- CR: Montville, Ra'anana (12-18)
- CR: Huntington, in *American Politics* (23-30)

C. (Forced) Evolution of Ethnic Identity

- CR: Hutchinson and Smith, Hobsbawm (76-83); Brass (83-89); Anderson (89-96)
- CR: Horowitz (64-74)

II. FROM IDENTITY TO INTER-ETHNIC VIOLENCE

A. Theories of Inter-ethnic Violence

- Taras and Ganguly (6-25, Chapters 2 and 3)
- CR: Bowen, "The Myth of Global Ethnic Conflict"

B. Case Study of the Former Socialist Europe: Nation-Building and Nation-Destroying

- Taras and Ganguly (Chapter 5 and 264-276)
- CR: *New York Times* article on Milošević
- Former Yugoslavia movie

C. Case Study of the Developing World: Colonization, Decolonization, and Modernization

- Taras and Ganguly (Chapters 7 and 8)
- CR: Hutchinson and Smith, Young (225-231)
- Rwanda movie

D. Case Study of the Developed World: A Different Kind of Nationalism?

- Taras and Ganguly (Chapter 6)
- CR: Montville, Rose (133-150)
- Northern Ireland movie

Midterm Exam: date TBD

Final Exam (tentative date and time): Monday, December 12 at 4:30 pm

TERM PAPER ASSIGNMENT

Overview

The objective of the exercise is to present an advanced and well-informed analysis of an ethnic conflict. Although you will need to research historical facts in order to obtain information necessary for the analysis, the goal of the exercise is not to report historical facts. Note that the page length of the assignment is relatively short and that you are likely to have more information to report than the space permits. This means that you will have to write succinctly and distinguish between more and less relevant information. Successfully dealing with this challenge is one of the objectives of the exercise.

Rules

(1) Choose a recent or ongoing ethnic conflict other than the ones in Kashmir, Palestine, Bosnia, Sri Lanka, Rwanda, Canada, or Northern Ireland. Each topic can be used only once, so the first-come, first-serve rule applies. Please sign up for a topic no later than **Thursday, October 29**. You can download the topic proposal form from my web page. (2) Work on this project will take place within a group consisting of about four students. Individual grades will be determined by the combination of (a) the quality of the submitted paper (90%) and (b) the peer grade assigned to you by your group-mates (10%) (3) Please note that all due dates are known well in advance, so you need to plan accordingly. Failure to turn in a copy of the assignment by the beginning of class time on the due date results in a 10% a day penalty. (4) The papers must properly reference all facts and ideas from outside sources according to the MLA style; both in-text parenthetical references and a bibliography consisting of at least 3 academic sources are required. (5) Students should note all other rules pertaining to the writing assignments noted on the syllabus.

Assignment Details

8-10 double-spaced, typewritten pages, **due Tuesday, December 6**

Conduct the below analysis focusing predominantly on the “underdog” ethnic group, that is the group which is rebelling. The focus of the paper is analysis, which means that you are asked to use the theories

we have learned in this course as tools for your project. Historical description or analysis that has only a superficial connection to the class materials will not merit a passing grade on the assignment.

Part I: Background (no more than 2 pages)

Please identify the ethnic conflict you are analyzing, its timing, approximate number of casualties, and the key participants (i.e. sides). What are the main contentious issues, that is who wants what? (Do not describe the chronology of the conflict, i.e. first this happened, then that happened, etc.).

Part II: Identity (about 3 pages)

Identify the sources and circumstances of the group's identity separate from the conflict factors (you will deal with these later). What is it based on? What evidence is there that the identity is in-born, instrumentally manufactured, socially constructed, etc.? Clearly and extensively connect the facts of the group's identity to the schools of thought and writings we have discussed in the course.

Part III: Conflict (about 3 pages)

Identify the factors that are motivating the ethnic group to rebel. What evidence is there that the conflict is caused by ancient hatreds, modernization, power struggle, insecurity, subjective discrimination, objective discrimination, and other motivators we learned about? Clearly and extensively connect the motivating factors to the schools of thought and writings we have discussed in the course.

Grading criteria for the assignments:

- | | |
|------------------------|------------------------------|
| 1. objectivity | 4. organization |
| 2. quality of research | 5. writing style and clarity |
| 3. quality of analysis | 6. mechanics and grammar |

Students who have difficulties with rhetoric are encouraged to use the University's resources to help them improve their writing and purchase a writer's manual such as Strunk and White's *Elements of Style*.

