

Department: Political Science

Course number: 3210W

Course title: Ethnic Conflict and Democracy in Comparative Perspective

Credits: 3

Contact Person: Oksan Bayulgen

W/Q : W

Regional campus availability: This course will not be available on a regular basis at the regional campuses owing to the lack of availability of lecturers and adjuncts who could teach it at those locations.

Proposed catalog copy:

POLS 3210W: Ethnic Conflict and Democracy in Comparative Perspective

Either semester. Three credits. Prerequisite: ENGL 1010 [110] or 1011 [111] or 3800 [250]; Open to Juniors or higher. Recommended preparation POLS 1202 [121] or 1207 [143].

Survey of conflicts among ethno-national groups in democratic and democratizing states around the world and conflict management strategies. Theoretical approaches to understanding origin of identity conflicts.

Justification

This is a new course in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences for which we are adding a W variant in order to meet GEOC's expectations of a 200-level W in the major. There will be no mixing of the non-W class and the writing variant of the course.

#### W Criteria:

1. When taught as a W-variant, this course will require students to produce a 15-page research paper (not including bibliography) on a topic related to course themes, chosen in consultation with the professor during the first three weeks of class. In addition to teaching writing and research skills, the research paper provides to students an opportunity to deepen knowledge of a particular indigenous people and its relationship to state and to apply theoretical concepts learned in class. The first draft (which is worth 15% of the final grade) must include an abstract, outline, working bibliography, and text. During the two weeks that follow, the instructor will meet individually with students to provide oral and written feedback. In addition, class lectures will cover the proper citation of sources, the organization of a research paper, and common writing problems of undergraduates. Students must address instructor comments in the final version of the paper (worth 35 % of the final grade). Taken together, the writing portion of this course constitutes 50 % of the final grade. Students' grades on the final version of their research paper will reflect the content and substance of their essay, the extent of their research and the accuracy with which you have provided citations, and the quality of their writing style. Writing quality will constitute 50% of the grade on the research paper.

2. The primary modes of writing instruction are individual conferences with each student, in-class seminars on writing and research techniques, and written commentary on drafts-in-progress.

3. Students will substantially revise their first draft of the paper, incorporating instructor comments with respect to writing style, organization, clarity, and citation style. Students will submit their first and final drafts at the end of the course to enable the instructor assess the content and extent of revisions.

4. The following language will appear on the syllabus: POLS 3210W is a W course. Writing the research paper, submitting it for comments, discussing the comments in conference with the instructor, and revising and resubmitting the paper are all fundamental components of the W component of the course. You must pass the W portion of this course to pass the course. 50% of your writing grade will reflect writing quality.

Resources to offer proposed course: yes

Syllabus:

## ETHNIC CONFLICT AND DEMOCRACY IN COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

POLITICAL SCIENCE 3210W – Spring 2009

Prof. Van Cott

486-8425

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course examines the impact of nationalist ideologies and conflicts among ethno-national groups on politics in democratic and democratizing states. In the first part of the course, we will study theoretical approaches developed by political scientists, sociologists and anthropologists for understanding the formation of national and ethnic identities and how such identities come to be the basis of political action. We will explore the rise of the modern state in Europe in the 17-19th centuries and the development of the idea of the nation in relation to the state as a form of political organization, and how both the nation and state were transformed by the emergence of democracy. In the second part of the course we will study particular cases of ethnic and national conflict in democratic or democratizing societies, observing the operation of the concepts and theories studied in the first part of the course. In the third part of the course we will examine strategies developed by social scientists and policy makers for the resolution or management of ethnic and national conflicts, such as power-sharing, electoral engineering, territorial and non-territorial forms of autonomy, and international intervention.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

**WRITING REQUIREMENT.** Students will write a 15-page research paper (not including bibliography) evaluating efforts to resolve ethnic conflict in a democratic or democratizing country, to be chosen in consultation with the professor during the first three weeks of class. The first draft, which is worth 150 points (15% of the final grade) must include an abstract, outline, working bibliography, and text. During the two weeks that follow, the instructor will meet individually with students to provide oral and written feedback and comments. Students must address these comments in the final version of the paper, which is worth 400 points (40 % of the final grade). Students should retain the first draft -- with its written comments -- and submit it with the final paper. Taken together, the writing portion of this course

constitutes 55% of the final grade. Your grade on the final version of your research paper will reflect the content and substance of your essay (25%), the extent of your research and the accuracy with which you have provided citations (25%), and the quality of your writing. Writing quality will constitute 50% of the grade on that paper.

NOTE: POLS 3210W is a W course. Writing the research paper, submitting it for comments, discussing the comments in conference with the instructor, and revising and resubmitting the paper are all fundamental components of the W. component of the course. You must pass the W portion of this course to pass the course.

EXAMS. There will be two in-class exams, each worth 200 points (20 % of the final grade each).

CLASS PARTICIPATION. The extent to which you participate actively in class discussions will be taken into account when the final grade is calculated. Students are expected to come to class having read assignments and prepared to discuss them thoughtfully. Participation is worth 50 points (5% of the final grade).

#### BOOKS TO BE PURCHASED

Edward Mortimer, ed. *People, Nation and State. The Meaning of Ethnicity and Nationalism.* London: I.B. Tauris Publishers, 1999. ISBN 1-86064-401-5

Raymond C. Taras and Rajat Ganguly. *Understanding Ethnic Conflict: The International Dimension.* Longman Publishers, 2006, second edition. ISBN 0-321-08594-9.

#### SAMPLE OF OTHER READINGS:

Jamaal Benomar, "Constitution-Making after Conflict: Lessons for Iraq," *Journal of Democracy*, 15, 2 (April 2004): 82-95.

Paul brass, "Ethnic Conflict in Multiethnic Societies: The Consociational Solution and its Critics," *Ethnicity and Nationalism: Theory and Comparison.* New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1991.

COURSE PLAN: The course is organized into the following sections.

Part one. Theoretical perspectives

Part two. Case studies

Ethnic conflict in post-communist societies: the former Soviet Union and Yugoslavia

Ethnic conflict in the developing world: examples from Africa and the Middle East

Part three. Strategies for ethnic conflict resolution