

CPO 4721
The Politics of Ethnic Conflict

Fall 2015 Section 211H
MWF period 7 | Anderson 34

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Introduction

Genocide in Rwanda in 1994. Anti-Muslim pogroms in India in 1992. State disintegration by ethnic war in Yugoslavia. Separatist rebellion in Aceh, Indonesia from 1976 to 2005. Race riots in Los Angeles in 1992 and in Ferguson MO and elsewhere in 2014. Whether this is a new trend, or whether it was simply masked during the Cold War period, violent ethnic conflict is a central problem in world politics and a central concern in political science.

This course will introduce you to the systematic study of ethnic violence, to the major concepts in conflict studies, to the main approaches to studying conflict, and to major episodes of ethnic violence around the world. The class will focus heavily on in-depth discussion and analysis of the readings, and on high-caliber academic writing. As such, extensive preparation is a necessity for doing well in this course. We will talk in considerable detail about this in class, but do feel free to come by my office early and often to discuss any class assignments, readings, etc.

In addition to the course readings—through which I hope to help you continue to build your critical thinking and writing skills—we are going to spend most Friday class meetings in a computer lab, working with an array of statistical databases commonly used in political science and economics. When you all leave UF, it is my hope that in addition to the critical analytical skills that are the hallmark of a top-flight liberal arts education, you will also have a solid foundation from this course in the collection and interpretation of statistical data in the social sciences. That applied skill will be valuable in any number of career choices.

Course Requirements

The major assessment components of this course include

- A research paper of around 6,000 words on a topic of your choice worth 20% of the final grade. This paper will draw in part on your data assignments, which you'll develop in consultation with me. It is due December 14.

- Two short response papers of about 1,000 words (4 double spaced pages) based on issues in the readings. These will be due October 5 and November 18. 10% each or 20% total.
- 8 short data assignments related to our data lab work. 5% each for 40% of the total grade.
- Participation and short writing exercises. Your brief essays (detailed below), contributions to class discussion and to the data lab exercises will count for 15% of your total grade.

Cheating in any form undermines the integrity and mutual trust essential to a community of learning and places at a comparative disadvantage those students who respect and work by the rules of that community. It is understood that any work a student submits is indeed his/her own. Plagiarism—that is, lifting without giving credit from something someone else has written such as a published book, article, or even a student paper—is forbidden and is, in most cases, fairly easily detected. There are other, more obvious forms of academic dishonesty, such as turning in work completed by someone else, bringing inappropriate notes into an exam, and offering or receiving whispered, signaled, or other forms of assistance during an exam. Working with fellow students in exam study groups is not only acceptable but also encouraged, as long as one is refining ideas that are essentially his or her own. Included within this definition of academic integrity is the assumption that all documents and excuses provided as explanations for late or missed assignments have not been falsified. Please review the University’s policies regarding [student conduct and conflict resolution](#), available through the [Dean of Students Office website](#). Any violations of the Student Honor Code will result in a failing grade for the course and referral to Student Judicial Affairs.

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office, which will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the professor when requesting accommodation. For more information regarding University policies on this issue, please visit the [Disability Resource Center's website](#).

Letter grades will be assigned according to the following numerical scales:

Letter Grade	Numerical Equivalent	GPA equivalent
A	93-	4.0
A-	90-92	3.67
B+	87-89	3.33
B	83-86	3.0
B-	80-82	2.67
C+	77-79	2.33
C	73-76	2.0
C-	70-72	1.67
D+	67-69	1.33
D	63-66	1.0
D-	60-62	0.67
E	<60	0.00
E1	stopped attending	0.00
I	Incomplete ¹	0.00

¹ In my classes incompletes are extremely rare, like white tigers, and are only granted in exceptional cases.

Required Readings

Scott Straus, *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power and War in Rwanda*

Lisa Baglione, *Writing a Research Paper in Political Science: A Practical Guide to Inquiry, Structure and Methods* (2nd edition, 2011)

Stefan Wolff, *Ethnic Conflict: A Global Perspective*

These books are available at local bookstores and online. There are also a number of required articles or chapters listed below for specific days. You are expected to download and print these article and to have them in class on the days in which we discuss them. Similarly, you should bring the books for particular days to class when we discuss them.

What is Ethnic Conflict? Why do People Mobilize Along Ethnic Lines?

August 24: Course Introduction.

August 26: Learning About the Social Scientific Study of Ethnicity.

- Paul Brass, "Development of an Institutionalized Riot System in Meerut City, 1961-1982," *Economic and Political Weekly* October 30, 2004.
- Alan Lightman, "A Sense of the Mysterious," *Daedalus* Fall 2003, 5-21.
- Baglione, Chapter 1.

August 28:

- Wolff, Introduction and Chapter 1.

August 31:

- Wolff, Chapter 2.
- Writing Workshop: Research questions. Baglione, Chapter 2

September 2 & 4: No class. I am in San Francisco at the annual meetings of the American Political Science Association (apsanet.org). Your assignment for these days is:

Write a short essay of about 250 words outlining the major parts of your own identity—that is, the identifying lenses through which you view yourself in the world. Which parts of your identity most strongly influence how you think about politics? Bring this in hard copy to class on September 9.

September 7: No class. Labor Day. Your assignment: eat something grilled and pay homage to the working person.

September 9:

- Wolff, chapter 3.
- Robert Bates, "Ethnic Competition and Modernization in Contemporary Africa," *Comparative Political Studies*, 6:4 (1974:Jan.) p.457-84.

September 11: Computer lab meeting

September 14:

- Ashutosh Varshney, "Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict and Rationality," *Perspectives on Politics*, 1, 1: 85-99.
- Henry Hale, "Explaining Ethnicity," *Comparative Political Studies* 37, 4 (May 2004): 458-85.
- Writing Workshop: Situating your question in a Research Program. Baglione, Chapter 3.

The Causes of Ethnic and Nationalist Violence

Macro Causes.

September 16:

- James Fearon and David Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *American Political Science Review* 97:1 (2003), pp. 75-90.

September 18: Computer lab meeting.

September 21: **RESEARCH QUESTIONS DUE**

- Barbara Harff, "No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust? Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1945," *American Political Science Review* 97:1 (2003), pp. 57-73.
- Barry Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," *Survival* 35:1 (1993), pp. 27-47.
- Writing Workshop: The Literature Review. Baglione, Chapter 4.

Micro Causes

September 23:

- Robert White, "From Peaceful Protest to Guerilla War: Micromobilization of the Provisional Irish Republican Army," *American Journal of Sociology* 94:6 (1989), 1277-1302.
- Writing Workshop: Crafting Theoretical Arguments. Baglione, Chapter 5.

September 25: Computer lab meeting.

September 28:

- John Mueller, "The Banality of 'Ethnic War'," *International Security* 25:1 (200), pp. 42-70.

September 30:

- Writing Workshop: Research Design. Baglione, Chapter 7.

October 2: No class. I am at Princeton presenting a paper titled “Resource Wealth as Rent Leverage: Rethinking the Oil-Stability Nexus.” Your assignment: use Google Scholar to find two academic articles or working papers that explore the relationship between natural resources and ethnic conflict. Download them and summarize them briefly (a paragraph each).

October 5: **First response paper due.**

- Donald Green and Rachel Seher, “What Role Does Prejudice Play in Ethnic Conflict?” *Annual Review of Political Science* 6 (2003), pp. 509-531.

October 7:

- Stathis Kalyas, “The Ontology of ‘Political Violence’: Action and Identity in Civil Wars,” *Perspectives on Politics* 2003: 475-94.
- Writing Workshop: Data Analysis and Assessment. Baglione, Chapter 8.

October 9: Computer lab meeting.

October 12: **PRELIMINARY LITERATURE REVIEW DUE.**

Focused Topics in the Study of Ethnic Violence

Causes of Genocide in Rwanda.

October 14:

- Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, Preface, Acknowledgements, Introduction and Chapter 1.
- Writing Workshop: Tying it Together. Baglione, Chapter 9.

October 16: computer lab meeting.

October 19:

- Straus, chapters 2-3

October 21:

- Straus, chapters 4-5.

October 23: computer lab meeting.

Political Institutions and Ethnic Politics.

October 26: **WORKING ARGUMENT (MODEL) AND HYPOTHESIS/ES DUE**

- Straus, chapters 6-7.

October 28:

- Straus, chapter 8 and conclusion.

October 30: computer lab meeting.

November 2:

- Writing Workshop: the importance of editing and revision. Baglione Chapter 6.

November 4: **RESEARCH DESIGN DUE**

- Smith, “Separatist Conflict in the Former Soviet Union and Beyond: How Different Was Communism?” *World Politics* April 2013.

November 6: No class. Homecoming. Your assignment: spend 30-60 minutes observing a Homecoming-related event—parade, football game, tail gating party, etc. Write a brief (250 words) essay describing the key expressions of Gator identity going on. *Imagine that you’re describing the Gator Nation as an ethnic group to someone from another country who has never heard of the University of Florida.*

November 9:

- Roeder, Philip & Donald Rothchild, Chapter 2 from *Sustainable Peace: Power and Democracy After Civil Wars*.
- Writing Workshop.

November 11: No class. Veteran’s Day. Your assignment: thank any members of your family, or friends you have, who are veterans of the armed forces.

November 13: computer lab meeting.

November 16:

- Posner, Daniel, *Institutions and Ethnic Politics*, Chapter 1.

November 18: **Paper Two due.**

- Cornell, Svante, “Autonomy as a Source of Conflict: Caucasian Conflicts in Comparative Perspective,” *World Politics* 54 (January 2002): 245-76.

November 20: computer lab meeting.

November 23: online virtual class meeting.

November 25 & 27: no class. Thanksgiving break. Your assignment: write a couple of paragraphs describing what you ate at Thanksgiving dinner, if you celebrated. Is this food you usually eat on Thanksgiving? If your family has traditions for that meal, where do the traditions come from?

Ethnic Riots.

November 30: **ANALYSIS & ASSESSMENT SECTION DUE**

- Wilkinson, chapter 1 from *Votes and Violence*.
- Varshney, Ashutosh, “Ethnic Conflict and Civil Society: India and Beyond,” *World Politics* 53 (April 2001), 362–98.
- Writing Workshop.

December 2:

- Panggabean, Rizal and Benjamin Smith, "Explaining Anti-Chinese Riots in Late 20th Century Indonesia, *World Development* Vol. 39, No. 2, pp. 231–242, 2011.
- Albert Bergesen and Max Herman, "Immigration, Race, and Riot: The 1992 Los Angeles Uprising," *American Sociological Review* 63, 1 (1998), 39-54.

Secession Conflicts

December 4:

- Monica Duffy Toft (2002) Indivisible territory, geographic concentration, and ethnic war, *Security Studies*, 12:2, 82-119,
- Smith, Benjamin, *History and Rebellion*, chapter 1.
- Writing Workshop.

December 7:

- Edward Aspinall, "The Construction of Grievance," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* Volume 51 Number 6 December 2007 950-972

December 9:

- Barbara F. Walter, "Information, Uncertainty and the Decision to Secede," *International Organization*, Vol. 60, No. 1 (Winter, 2006), pp. 105-135.

December 14: **FINAL PAPER DUE BY NOON IN HARD COPY AND UPLOADED TO CANVAS. NO EXCEPTIONS OTHER THAN DOCUMENTED EMERGENCIES SUCH AS ALIEN ABDUCTION.**