

CPO 4721
The Politics of Ethnic Conflict

Fall 2020

MWF period 7 | Synchronous online or Matherly 016 if we ever transition back to F2F

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Introduction

Genocide in Rwanda in 1994. Anti-Irish riots in New York City 1900-1920. Anti-Muslim pogroms in India, 1950-1992, and anti-Black pogroms in the United States, 1877-1940. State disintegration by ethnic war in Yugoslavia. Separatist rebellion in Aceh, Indonesia from 1976 to 2005 in Northern Ireland, UK, until 1998, and in the American South 1861-65. Race riots in the United States: St. Louis 1919, Tulsa 1918, Los Angeles in 1992 and in Ferguson MO and elsewhere in 2014. Ethnic cleavages are sometimes the sight of political violence, and as such are a central problem in world politics and a central concern in political science. As we will see, they are also central to US political development.

This course will introduce you to the systematic study of ethnic identities, to the outbreak of ethnically motivated violence, to the major concepts in conflict studies, 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 sign up for a meeting during my office hours early and often to discuss any class assignments, readings, etc.

Just as importantly, this course will provide you with the analytical tools to make sense of ethnic and racial violence. It will not always be easy: this is an emotionally loaded topic and is at the heart of current American politics just as much as many other parts of the world. For this reason, I ask, and I expect that you all approach this course with open minds and with a baseline of respect for your fellow students. We can probably all agree that we want a more understanding world: during the semester, we are going to work together to try and make it just a little more *understandable* too.

Course Requirements

Because of the odd times we currently live in, I have substantially modified my normal structure of course assignments. I have done so in part to lower the 'stakes' of any single assignment for students, to give myself frequent opportunities to make sure that students

are taking in the important themes and issues for each course component, and lastly to try to minimize the stress to you of any single class requirement. That in mind:

The major assessment components of this course include

- A take-home final, format TBA, due December 16, worth 20%
- 7 learning assessment quizzes, together worth 50% of your grade. *You have the option, should you choose, of applying the best 5 of your 7 quiz grades to that 50%*
- Class participation via discussion boards and broad discussion, completion of short writing assignments as specified below, and active contribution to numerous breakout team activities – 20% total
- 10% total for 4 short response essays to news articles. You can choose which days or course components you write for, but you must submit at least the first one by start of class September 25, and you must have submitted at least the second one by start of class October 23.
- These elements add up to 100%. Because I really like nice even numbers.

Academic Honesty

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 their 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. 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 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 \(Links to an external site.\)](#), available through the [Dean of Students Office website \(Links to an external site.\)](#). 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 \(Links to an external site.\)](#).

Disruptive, disrespectful, or other behaviors that violate UF’s Student Code of Conduct will be handled just as they would in a regular classroom setting: by referral to Student Judicial Affairs.

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 | 0.00 |

Required Readings

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

This book is available at local bookstores and online. There are also many required articles or chapters listed below for specific days. ***You should complete each reading prior to the start of class for the day in which we discuss that reading. For example, you should have read the Sadowski article prior to 155pm on September 2.***

I. What is Ethnic Identity, and What is Ethnic Conflict? Why do People Mobilize Along Ethnic Lines?

August 31: Course Introduction: logistics, assignments, topics.

September 2: Learning About the Social Scientific Study of Ethnicity.

- Yahya Sadowski, "Ethnic Conflict," *Foreign Policy* Summer 1998, 12-23.

September 4:

- Werner Bergmann and Robert Crutchfield, "Introduction: Racial and Ethnic Conflict and Violence," *International Journal of Conflict and Violence* 3, 2 (2009): 146-53.

September 7: No class. Labor Day. Your assignment: eat something grilled and raise a toast to the working person.

Assignment: On a sheet of paper (yes, actual paper), after some thought, write down five elements that make up the way you self-identify, i.e. how you view the way the world affects you. Cross off the least important of the five to you. Then cross off another. Then another. Then another. You will be left with one. Take a picture of your list and upload it to this assignment in Canvas. In a paragraph (length up to you) in the box provided in the assignment, explain why that last element is the most important for you. And please indicate at the end with a simple Yes or No whether you might be willing during the week of September 14 to briefly explain to the class.

September 9 and 11: No class meeting. I am (virtually) attending the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association.

September 14:

- 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.

September 16:

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

September 18:

- Ashutosh Varshney, "Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict and Rationality," *Perspectives on Politics*, 1, 1: 85-99.

September 21:

- Henry Hale, "Explaining Ethnicity," *Comparative Political Studies* 37, 4 (May 2004): 458-85.

Canvas Learning Assessment Quiz #1 open September 20-September 22. Once you begin, you will have 30 minutes to complete this quiz.

II. The Causes of Ethnic and Nationalist Violence

Macro Causes.

September 23:

- Lars-Erik Cederman, Andreas Wimmer and Brian Min, "Why do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis," *World Politics* 61, 1: 87-119.

September 25:

- 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.

September 28:

- Barry Posen, "The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict," *Survival* 35:1 (1993), pp. 27-47.

Micro Causes

September 30:

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

Canvas Learning Assessment Quiz #2 Open Sept. 30-Oct. 1. Once you begin you will have 30 minutes to complete the quiz.

October 2:

- Robert White, "From Peaceful Protest to Guerilla War: Micromobilization of the Provisional Irish Republican Army," *American Journal of Sociology* 94:6 (1989), 1277-1302.

October 5:

- 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.

October 9:

- Jens Rydgren, "The Power of the Past: A Contribution to a Cognitive Sociology of Ethnic Conflict," *Sociological Theory* 25, 3 (2007): 225-44.

Canvas Learning Assessment Quiz #3 open October 9-10. Once you begin, you will have 30 minutes to complete this quiz.

Topics in the Study of Ethnic Violence

IV. Causes of Genocide in Rwanda.

October 12:

- Straus, *The Order of Genocide*, Preface, Acknowledgements, and Introduction.

October 14:

- Straus, Chapter 1.

October 16:

- Straus, Chapter 2.

October 19:

- Straus, Chapter 3.

October 21:

- Straus, Chapter 4.

October 23:

- Straus, Chapter 5.

October 26:

- Straus, Chapter 6.

October 28:

- Straus, Chapter 7.

October 30:

- Straus, Chapter 8 and skim conclusion.

Canvas Learning Assessment Quiz #4 open October 30-31. Once you begin, you will have 30 minutes to complete this quiz.

V. Political Institutions and Ethnic Politics.

November 2:

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

November 4:

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

November 9:

- Saumitra Jha, "Trade, Institutions, and Ethnic Tolerance: Evidence from South Asia," *American Political Science Review* 107, 4 (2013): 806-32.

Canvas Learning Assessment Quiz #5 open November 10-11. Once you begin, you will have 30 minutes to complete this quiz.

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:

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

November 16:

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

November 18:

- Arend Lijphart, "Constitutional Design for Divided Societies," *Journal of Democracy* 15, 2 (2004): 96-109.

Canvas Learning Assessment Quiz #6 open November 23-24. Once you begin, you will have 30 minutes to complete this quiz.

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 and/or traditional dishes that you always eat for that meal, where do the traditions come from?

VI. Ethnic Riots.

November 30:

- Wilkinson, chapter 1 from *Votes and Violence*.

December 2:

- Panggabean, Rizal and Benjamin Smith, "Explaining Anti-Chinese Riots in Late 20th Century Indonesia," *World Development* Vol. 39, No. 2 (2011), pp. 231–242.

December 4:

- Albert Bergesen and Max Herman, "Immigration, Race, and Riot: The 1992 Los Angeles Uprising," *American Sociological Review* 63, 1 (1998), 39-54.

Identity, Grievance, and Secession Conflicts: Constructing Identity Across Time and Space.

December 7:

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

December 9:

- J.P. Radford, "Identity and Tradition in the Post-Civil War South," *Journal of Historical Geography* 18, 1 (1992): 91-103.

Canvas Learning Assessment Quiz #7 open December 9-10. Once you begin, you will have 30 minutes to complete this quiz.

December 16: TAKE-HOME FINAL DUE BY 5PM UPLOADED TO CANVAS. NO EXCEPTIONS OTHER THAN DOCUMENTED EMERGENCIES SUCH AS ALIEN ABDUCTION.