POSC 241 Ethnic Conflict

Preliminary Syllabus - Winter 2001

Professor: Kanishkan (Kani) Sathasivam
Office: Willis 404
Office Hours: Mon & Wed 1:40 - 4:00 PM, Tue 9:30 - 11:30 AM, Fri 2:10 - 3:30 PM
Phone: x4116 (office)
Email: ksathasi@carleton.edu

Course Description & Objectives:

The interstate implications of ethnic conflict are the focus of this course. Wherever one looks in the world there seems to be an ethnic conflict underway. The problem has serious implications for the future of the international system since fewer than twenty of the more than 180 countries in existence today are "ethnically homogenous." It is inevitable, then, that interstate relations will be affected by the problems experienced in a world where there is not a neat convergence between state borders and cultural boundaries, just as it is inevitable that the interstate system will affect how states cope with the demands of their multicultural realities.

Scholarly interest in the topic of ethnicity prior to the early 1970s was dominated by a body of social science literature that argued forcefully in support of ethnic assimilation as the wave of the future. The nation-state system was considered to be growing steadily in its role as the center of political power around the world. Differences among peoples based on race, ethnicity, religion, language, and culture were thought to be irrelevant in the modern era because the developed states of the West, it appeared, had overcome such differences. The presumption, therefore, was that economic development and political modernization would have an integrating effect on nation-states that would overpower subnational differences. Most 'integrationist' scholars have since conceded that politicized and mobilized ethnocultural pluralism is a powerful and dynamic force in both developed and developing nations, and that it actually appears to be gaining strength and momentum despite increased political modernization and economic development.

This course will address four critical questions about ethnic conflict: (i) What makes a conflict an "ethnic" conflict? (ii) Why is the study of ethnic conflict important to us? (iii) What are the sources of ethnic conflict in our changing world? (iv) What are the implications of ethnic conflict for interstate relations? The first two questions are meant to introduce the subject matter to the student; most of the course will be devoted to addressing the latter two questions. Questions iii and iv thus reflect the two central topics to be addressed in this course: the internal (intrastate) causes of ethnic conflict, and the international (interstate) consequences of ethnic conflict.

Course Requirements, Policies, & Grading:

There will be three primary requirements for this course: a short essay, a minor media research project, and a major research paper that includes an annotated bibliography. All written submissions must be: typed, double-spaced, in 12pt font, and with 1" page margins; with within-text citations (author year, page) and footnotes or endnotes (choose one) if necessary; and with a complete bibliography. They must generally follow the standards established in commonly accepted academic writing style manuals.

Note: To receive any grade above a 'B,' a student must produce a thoughtful, comprehensive, and well-written essay/paper that borrows ideas and arguments from the assigned readings as well as from "outside" source material to critically analyze the subject.

The short essay (6-8 pages of text) will be an exploration of your "identity" as an individual. It will apply the first four weeks worth of lectures and readings to each student's own life experiences. Do any of the various arguments presented in the lectures and readings make sense with respect to how you perceive your identity? What is your primary identity? Are you an ethnic or religious nationalist or a civic one? Describe your reasons for placing yourself into one of these categories (see Hutchinson and Smith book). Do you have any close
relatives or friends who consider themselves to be either ethnic or religious nationalists? What role does ethnic
or religious nationalism play in your life or the life of your relative/friend? What influences your perception of
your identity and your perceptions of identity conflicts in your life and in the world around you? Does your
identity change? Can it change? What do your life experiences say about the concepts we have developed?

The **media research project** (6-8 pages of text) will result in a research paper on current events pertaining to
ethnonationalism. You will need to follow current events in daily newspapers and/or weekly periodicals,
commercial and noncommercial television and/or radio broadcasts, and the Internet with the goal of assessing the
value of these sources for your understanding of nationalism and ethnicity in the world today. Be sure to record
carefully (in a bibliography) where and when you found information. This research paper must address whether
and how you feel better informed on issues of ethnonationalism in the world since you began more closely
following the news through these media sources.

The **research paper** (~15 pages of text) will use the Leatherman et al. book as the primary source and guide for
an in-depth case study of an ongoing ethnic conflict selected by the student with the instructor's consent. This
paper, **which is due no later than the last day of classes**, will be preceded by an **annotated bibliography** for the
selected case that must be turned in by its due date. Students are **strongly advised** to discuss potential research
cases with me within the first two to three weeks of the term.

**Active student participation in class discussions is expected**, and will be the basis upon which the 'class
participation' grade is decided. In addition to active class participation, a **good class attendance record is also
expected through the entire course.**

**Grades will be based on the following distribution scheme:**

- Short essay: 20 %
- Media research project: 20 %
- Research paper: 35 %
- Research paper annotated bibliography: 15 %
- Class participation: 10 %

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>95 - 100 %</td>
<td>91 - 94 %</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>91 - 90 %</td>
<td>88 - 90 %</td>
<td>A-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>87 - 87 %</td>
<td>84 - 87 %</td>
<td>B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>83 - 83 %</td>
<td>81 - 83 %</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 - 83 %</td>
<td>76 - 80 %</td>
<td>C+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80 - 76 %</td>
<td>81 - 70 %</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>76 - 80 %</td>
<td>71 - 75 %</td>
<td>C-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>71 - 51 %</td>
<td>51 - 65 %</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51 - 50 %</td>
<td>0 - 50 %</td>
<td>F</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All students are expected to maintain **the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity**. Any act of
academic dishonesty or misconduct will be referred to the Office of the Dean. For further information, see
Carleton College's **Academic Honesty in the Writing of Essays and Other Papers** and the section on "academic
honesty" in **Academic Regulations and Procedures, 2000-01**. Both are available in Laird 140.

**Special needs**: Students requiring access to learning tools or special schedules approved by Student Support
Services should contact me at the beginning of the course.

**Reading Assignments:**
You are expected to keep up with the reading assignments as we go through the term, which means that you are supposed to read each assignment before the corresponding class period. The class lectures and discussions are meant to build upon the assigned reading material.

The three "required" and two "optional but recommended" books that will be used in this course are available for purchase at the bookstore. The two "optional" books are also on closed reserve in the library, as are four additional books with reading assignments drawn from them.

Required books:


Optional but recommended books (in closed reserve):


Additional books with reading assignments (also in closed reserve):


W 1/3 - Introduction to the course.

SECTION I: Ethnicity, politics, and conflict-definitions, context, and four sample cases.

F 1/5 - Definitions and concepts: G&H 1.

M 1/8 - Some context and four sample cases: G&H 2, 3, & 4.

W 1/10 - A framework for analysis: G&H 5, 6, & 7.

SECTION II: The sources of ethnonationalism and ethnic conflict-contending explanations.

F 1/12 - Introduction and overview: G&T 1; Brown, & Van Evera articles in BCLM.

M 1/15 - Systemic sources (i.e., collapsed empires and weak/failed states): G&T 8; C&H 2 & 3.
W 1/17 - Domestic sources (i.e., social, economic, and political conditions): MEB 3; DLH 4 & 5.

F 1/19 - Discussion session.

M 1/22 - Psychological sources (i.e., loyalties, identities, images, and myths): H&S Section II.

W 1/24 - Psychological sources (cont.): C&H 6; Snyder & Ballentine, & Gagnon articles in BCLM.

F 1/26 - Discussion session: identities.

**Short essay is due.**

**SECTION III: The implications of ethnic conflict for interstate relations.**

M 1/29 - Introduction and overview: G&H 8; G&T 2; Brown & Oudrant article in BCLM.

**Part 1: Ethnic conflict as a transnational problem.**

W 1/31 - G&T 3; L&R 15; DLH 6.

F 2/2 - Discussion session: findings from your media research projects.

**Media research project is due.**

M 2/5 - Mid-term break.

W 2/7 - L&R 4, 5, & 6.

F 2/9 - Discussion session.

**Part 2: The management of transnational ethnic conflict.**

M 2/12 - L&R 9, 10, & 11.

W 2/14 - L&R 12, 13, & 14.

F 2/16 - Discussion session.

**Research paper annotated bibliography is due.**

**Part 3: Resolving ethnic conflict through international third-party action.**

M 2/19 - G&H 9; G&T 4; C. Kaufmann article in BCLM.

W 2/21 - C&H 12, 26, & 30; Loescher & Dowty article in BCLM.

F 2/23 - Discussion session.

**Part 4: Case Studies.**

M 2/26 - Russia: G&T 5.


M 3/5 - Discussion session.

F 3/9 - Course wrap-up; course evaluation.

Research paper is due.