

Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict
Political Science 211
Dr. Jason Sorens, Instructor

Class Hours: Tuesdays & Thursdays, 11:00 AM to 12:20 PM, 209 O'Brian Hall

Office Hours: Wednesdays 9 AM-1 PM and by appointment; 419 Park Hall

Contact: jsorens@buffalo.edu

Course Description

Particularly since the end of the Cold War, nationalist and ethnic conflicts have represented the primary threats to peace, stability, and democratic consolidation in many countries. The purpose of this course is to familiarize you with the different perspectives we can use to analyze nationalism, and to help you develop your own criteria for evaluating particular nationalist mobilizations and proffered solutions to nationalist conflict. We will compare theories of national and ethnic identity and of the relationship between identity differences and conflict, then examine the applicability of these theories to real-world cases. We'll do an in-depth study of the breakup of Yugoslavia. The structure of the class will be a mix of lecture and seminar, and like a seminar the ultimate goal is a term paper, as described below.

Course Requirements

The lectures are intended to incorporate class discussion, so students are required to do the reading for a day *prior to* that day's lecture. Lecture notes for each week will be posted on Blackboard after that week is over, but because so much of what goes on in class will occur outside the framework of the prepared lecture notes, you cannot do well in this class if you do not actually come to class and participate.

In order to "prompt" you with points for discussion and improve your reasoning and writing skills prior to the final paper, I require every student to turn in a maximum one-page, single-spaced response paper to the reading every week (due dates are noted on the schedule below). The response paper should include your reaction to a *particular point* in one of the week's readings. *They should not be summaries of the reading.* Explain something that you agree or disagree with and why, and explain why it's important. Response papers are due starting the **third class meeting (September 8)**. I do not take late papers without a valid excuse (no make-ups, late submissions, etc.). I encourage all submissions to be made by e-mail as Word documents only. I will then comment on and return them electronically. Once they are returned, you should make revisions and post them to the class Discussion Forum, following the procedure described on the first day of class. The eleven response papers cumulatively make up 30% of your final grade. As long as you do the assignments as described, you get full credit (all or nothing).

The other assignments are related to the final paper you must write. The paper itself, 15-20 pages in length, will make up 50% of your grade. In this final paper, you will present your solutions for managing, resolving, or preventing a particular nationalist or ethnic conflict. It will be an *interpretive case study*, by which I mean that you will apply evidence and theory from the course to explain a particular ethnic or national movement. In order to make your recommendations, you will need to pay particular attention to political institutions, the economics of nationalism and/or civil war, and international relations. You will also want to think about other cases that we have studied that might be comparable to your own. To research your case, you will need to do outside reading, so be sure to plan accordingly (you won't be able to do all your research at the last minute). We will talk in class about what kinds of sources are acceptable for this paper. The grade is based on your ability to support your conclusions with compelling logic and reliable evidence.

Along the way, you will need to have your topic (case) approved by me by **October 22**. That means you actually have to come and talk to me well before submitting your topic on that date. Your submitted topic should be a one-paragraph proposal briefly describing your case and which aspects of the conflict or movement you plan to focus on. Then you will need to turn in a rough draft of your paper by **November 24**. Fulfilling each of these requirements accounts for 5% of your grade (all or nothing). Students will present a five-minute synopsis of their research in the last week of the course and field questions from the class and from me. Doing your presentation properly makes up 5% of your final grade (all or nothing). Attendance at your fellow students' presentations and at the documentary film showing, described below, makes up the final 5% of your grade.

The final paper will be due **Monday December 21** at 4 PM at my office. I will not accept late submissions: you will have to take either an F or an Incomplete in the course if you do not turn in your final paper on time.

Required Texts

- Silber & Little, *Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation* (available at bookstore)
- Donald L. Horowitz, *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* (available at bookstore) – any edition is fine, text is the same
- Coursepack available through University Readers: go to universityreaders.com and click on “Students – Buy Now.” Readings from the coursepack are marked with an asterisk (*) in the syllabus.
- Other readings are on Blackboard for download & printing. Readings from Blackboard are marked with a number sign (#) in the syllabus.

On **October 20** at 6 PM in Park 152, we will be viewing the PBS documentary film *Frontline: Ghosts of Rwanda*, about the Rwandan genocide, followed by a discussion. All students are required to attend.

Helpful References

Minorities at Risk project, <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/>.

James Minahan (2002), *Encyclopedia of the Stateless Nations: Ethnic and National Groups Around the World*. Lockwood Reference section: D860 .M56 2002.

BBC News Online, <http://news.bbc.co.uk/>.

Lexis-Nexis Academic search, available through UB library homepage.

Academic Integrity

I have noticed that many UB students are not adequately familiar with the scope, content, and importance of academic integrity. According to UB Rules and Regulations:

‘The University has a responsibility to promote academic honesty and integrity and to develop procedures to deal effectively with instances of academic dishonesty. Students are responsible for the honest completion and representation of their work, for the appropriate citation of sources, and for respect for others’ academic endeavors. By placing their name on academic work, students certify the originality of all work not otherwise identified by appropriate acknowledgments.’

Academic dishonesty includes:

- (a) Previously submitted work: submitting academically required material that has been previously submitted in whole or in substantial part in another course, without prior and expressed consent of the instructor;
- (b) Plagiarism: copying or receiving material from a source or sources and submitting this material as one's own without acknowledging the particular debts to the source (quotations, paraphrases, basic ideas), or otherwise representing the work of another as one's own;
- (c) Cheating: receiving information, or soliciting information, from another student or other unauthorized source, or giving information to another student, with the intent to deceive while completing an examination or individual assignment;
- (d) Falsification of academic materials: fabricating laboratory materials, notes, reports, or any forms of computer data; forging an instructor's name or initials; resubmitting an examination or assignment for reevaluation which has been altered without the instructor's authorization; or submitting a report, paper, materials, computer data, or examination (or any considerable part thereof) prepared by any person other than the student responsible for the assignment;
- (e) Misrepresentation of documents: Forgery, alteration, or misuse of any University or Official document, record, or instrument of identification.
- (f) Confidential academic materials: procurement, distribution or acceptance of examinations, laboratory results without prior and expressed consent of the instructor.
- (g) Selling academic assignments: No person shall, for financial consideration, or the promise or financial consideration, prepare, offer to prepare, cause to be prepared, sell or offer for sale to any person any written material which the seller knows, is informed or has reason to believe is intended for submission as a dissertation or thesis, term paper, essay, report or other written assignment by a student in a university, college, academy, school or other educational institution to such institution or to a course, seminar or degree program held by such institution.
- (h) Selling computer assignments: No person shall sell or offer for sale to any person enrolled in the State University of New York any computer assignment, or any assistance in the preparation, research, or writing of a computer assignment intended for submission in fulfillment of any academic requirement.

UB guidelines currently provide the instructor with a wide range of discretion as to the penalties to pursue for any violation of academic integrity. For clear and particularly serious violations of academic integrity such as cheating, my policy, with no exceptions, is to fail the student in the course. For lesser violations such as low-degree plagiarism, severe point deductions up to failure of the assignment, depending on extent and intent, is standard. Regarding plagiarism, please note that **you must cite every idea or piece of evidence in your paper that you derived from someone else.** In addition, encyclopedias such as Wikipedia and biased publications from activist organizations are not acceptable sources for scholarly research, although they may well be appropriate places to begin your research. Use primary sources such as news articles for establishing facts and refereed, published research for establishing generally accepted relationships and ideas.

Week 1: Introduction to Important Course Concepts (Sep 1)

Week 2: Concepts of Identity

Sep 3:

Michael Hechter, *Containing Nationalism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), pp. 1-17. *

Sep 8 – **response papers due:**

Max Weber, 'The Nation,' in John Hutchinson and Anthony D. Smith (eds.), *Nationalism* (Oxford, England: Oxford University Press, 1994), pp. 21-25. *

Week 3: Origins of Nation and State

Sep 10:

Franz Oppenheimer (1922), 'The Genesis of the State,' in *The State*. #

Sep 15 – **response papers due:**

Anthony D. Smith (1995), 'The Crisis of the National State,' in *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era*, pp. 85-115. *

Week 4: Theories of Identity

Sep 17:

David D. Laitin (1989), 'Linguistic Revival: Politics and Culture in Catalonia,' *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 31(2):297-317. #

Sep 22 – **response papers due:**

Ethnic Groups in Conflict, pp. 55-83.

Week 5: Origins of Nationalism

Sep 24:

Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, rev. ed. (London: Verso, 1991), pp. 37-65. *

Sep 29 – **response papers due:**

Hechter, *Containing Nationalism*, pp. 35-69. *

Week 6: Varieties and Theories of Conflict I: Psychological Explanations

Oct 1:

Ethnic Groups in Conflict, pp. 141-184, 216-226.

Oct 6 – **response papers due:**

Hale, *Foundations of Ethnic Politics*, pp. 33-56. *

Week 7: Varieties and Theories of Conflict II: Rationalist Explanations

Oct 8:

James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin (1996), 'Explaining Interethnic Cooperation,' *American Political Science Review* 90 (4): 715-35. #

Oct 13 – **response papers due:**

David A. Lake and Donald Rothchild (1996), 'Containing Fear: The Origins and Management of Ethnic Conflict,' *International Security* 21 (2): 41-75. #

Week 8: Contemporary Ethnic & Nationalist Movements

Oct 15:

Ethnic Groups in Conflict, pp. 302-32.

Oct 20 – **response papers due:**

Hale, *Foundations of Ethnic Politics*, pp. 161-89. *

Film showing – 6 PM – Park 152

Week 9: The Sources of Political Violence

Oct 22 – **topic paragraphs due:**

James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin (2003), 'Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War,' *American Political Science Review*. #

Oct 27:

Halvard Buhaug (2006), 'Relative Capability and Rebel Objective in Civil War,' *Journal of Peace Research* 43 (6): 691-708. #

Oct 29 – **response papers due:**

Barbara F. Walter (2006), 'Information, Uncertainty, and the Decision to Secede,' *International Organization* 60 (Winter): 105-35. #

Week 10: The Breakup of Yugoslavia

Nov 3:

Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation, pp. 22-204.

Nov 5 – **response papers due:**

Yugoslavia: Death of a Nation, pp. 205-390.

Week 11: Conflict Management I: Institutions

Nov 10:

Ethnic Groups in Conflict, pp. 601-52.

Nov 12:

Stephen M. Saideman, David J. Lanoue, Michael Campenni, and Samuel Stanton (2002), 'Democratization, Political Institutions, and Ethnic Conflict,' *Comparative Political Studies* 35(1):103-29. #

Nov 17:

Wayne Norman, 'Domesticating Secession,' in Stephen Macedo and Allen E. Buchanan (eds.), *NOMOS XLV: Secession and Self-Determination* (New York University, 2004), pp. 193-237. *

Nov 19 – **response papers due:**

Will Kymlicka, 'Is Federalism a Desirable Alternative to Secession?,' in Percy B. Lehning (ed.), *Theories of Secession* (Routledge, 1998), pp. 111-50. *

Week 12: Conflict Management II: Intervention

Nov 24 – **rough drafts due:**

Rupen Cetinyan (2002), 'Ethnic Bargaining in the Shadow of Third-Party Intervention,' *International Organization* 56 (3): 645-77. #

~ **Fall Recess** ~

Dec 1:

Chaim Kaufmann (1996), 'Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars,' *International Security* 20 (4): 136-75. #

Dec 3 – **response papers due:**

Radha Kumar, 'The Troubled History of Partition,' *Foreign Affairs* 76 (1). #

Week 13: Student Presentations (Dec 8, 10)