Politicul Science 401  
Seminar: Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict  
Professor Nadav Shelef  
Fall 2014

Office Hours: Monday 1-3, and by appointment  
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Course Description  
Nationalist conflict and ethnic contestation remain major components of global politics. Drawing on cases from around the world, this course explores why this is the case. In the process, we will address a number of crucial questions: What are nations and ethnic groups? Where do they come from? Why do they pick particular territories? How do they define who can be part of the group? Why are they so successful in mobilizing people to kill and be killed? In the course of answering these questions, the course investigates the interactions between nations and states, religion and nationalism, globalization, citizenship and minority rights, and the causes and solutions for national and ethnic conflict.

Grading Criteria  
Final course grades will be assigned according to the following weights:  
  Participation 20%  
  Research paper 40%  
  Final Exam 40%

Course Requirements  
Students are expected to attend all classes having read the assigned readings and ready to participate in class discussions. Most topics will be split between lectures and class discussions. Students are required to email two questions about the reading to me after each “lecture” module that I will use to structure our class discussion the following meeting.

Research Paper  
The research paper will provide you with an opportunity to explore nationalism or ethnic relations in a particular context in significant depth. I am relatively open about the scope of topics that can be chosen. If you are having trouble coming up with a topic. However, if you have trouble coming up with one, I would be happy to assign a research topic to you.

Students are required to submit a research proposal to the professor by October 23rd. This proposal should be no more than one page long and include a discussion of the research question and no less than eight sources that you plan on using in your research. You are also strongly encouraged to meet with the professor to discuss the progress of your paper throughout the class. The papers must be uploaded to the course’s Learn@UW site on December 11th. Late papers will be penalized half of one letter grade for every day they are late.
The paper itself should be 3000-4000 words. Citations must be provided in footnotes using the Chicago Manual style. For information see:

A good paper both informs and persuades; to do this it must be logically organized, clearly argued, and well documented. Avoid writing a paper that merely restates the readings or repeats the lectures or discussion sections. You need to do some original thinking, research, and analysis in this paper. Stay away from normative arguments or political polemics. This is hard work. You are strongly encouraged to meet with me to discuss the progress of your paper throughout the semester.

Style Counts! Spelling mistakes as well as errors of syntax and grammar are unacceptable. At best they are evidence of sloppy work. At worst they make your argument impossible to understand. While style does not replace substance, a poorly written or organized paper makes it difficult to get to your argument. I encourage you to consult the UW Writing Center’s “Writer’s Handbook” for more information about style, organization and references.

There are also a number of excellent guides on the web that I encourage you to consult about how you could go about writing an analytical research paper. Some good sites include:

- How to Research a Political Science Paper, by Peter Liberman:
  http://qcpages.qc.edu/Political_Science/researching.html
- Writing Political Science Papers: Some Useful Guidelines, by Peter Liberman:,
  http://qcpages.qc.edu/Political_Science/tips.html

Here is a rough explanation of how to understand the grading of the papers:
A: This is an outstanding paper. It is well organized around a clear and insightful argument that is logically organized and well-supported with evidence from the historical record and the scholarly literature. The paper considers alternative arguments, deals with countervailing evidence, and weighs their relative merits. It also convincingly shows that its main argument is better/more complete than the alternatives. This paper also shows how and why the question it pursues and the answer it offers are significant and important. There are few (or no) spelling or proofreading problems and the paper is well and appropriately documented.

AB: High quality in terms of style and content. The paper has a clear thesis statement, good organization and supporting evidence. It shows a solid grasp of the issues at stake and is well written. This paper shows evidence of original thought and planning. While it makes some reference to the scholarly literature it does not fully engage it.

B: The paper shows a decent understanding of the phenomenon and the overall argument is relatively clear although it may tend more toward summary than analysis. While the wider literature is acknowledged, the paper does not add its own insights. However, there may be significant grammatical and syntax errors, organizational problems, and the references to the literature may be perhaps a bit narrow, superficial or insufficient.
BC: The paper conforms to some of the requirements, but falls short on many, or is seriously marred by crucial shortcomings, including, but not limited to, poor organization, poor grammar or a poor understanding of the question. While there is some attempt to deal with the question, the argument is unclear and/or it is not adequately supported by appropriate evidence. There is little attempt to anchor the argument in the literature on the topic.

C: The paper attempts to pose and answer a question but does not actually do so. In other words, it has no argument. It may also be plagued by, among other problems, poor organization, poor writing, over-generality, lack of evidence or its inappropriate, selective or partial use.

F: The paper does not meet the requirements of the assignment and/or is so poorly written as to be unintelligible or has plagiarized from a published text or another student. Note also that an adequate paper that is not on an appropriate topic also falls within this realm.

I will take into consideration papers whose final draft shows substantial and significant improvement over earlier drafts. Note, to take advantage of this you have to complete drafts of your paper early enough to get feedback. I require at least 3 business days to get a draft back to you with comments. In other words, don’t wait until the last moment to start your paper.

**Academic Conduct**

This seminar is geared to maximize our joint exploration of the course material. Serious scholarly discussion becomes impossible when diatribe and invective displace scholarly analysis. As a result, when posing questions or responding to others, students are expected to demonstrate an appropriate level of respect despite what might be deep disagreements.

The paper you are required to write will require you to cite other people’s work. **Plagiarism will not be tolerated!** If you are caught turning in work that is not your own or using another author’s work without properly citing it, you will receive an F on the assignment. If you have any questions about what constituted academic dishonesty, please consult the Dean of Students Web page, at [http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html](http://www.wisc.edu/students/saja/misconduct/UWS14.html)

**Required Readings**

Many of the required readings for this course are in the course reader, which is available online through the Learn@UW site. The following books are required for the course:


COURSE SCHEDULE

September 2: Course overview

September 4-9: What is ethnicity and where does it come from?

September 11-16: What makes ethnicity politically relevant?

September 16-18: What are nations and nationalisms and why do they matter?
Hechter, Containing Nationalism, chapters 1, 2.
Laitin, Nations, States, and Violence chapter 2.

September 23: Where does nationalism come from? I
Hechter, Containing Nationalism, chapters 6, 7.

September 25: No class

September 30-October 2: Where does nationalism come from? II

October 7-14: Nationalism and the state
Anderson, Imagined Communities, 83-113, 163-185.
Hechter, *Containing Nationalism*, chapters 4-5.

October 16-October 21: Nationalism, citizenship, and membership
Rogers Brubaker, 1992. *Citizenship and nationhood in France and Germany*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press. Everybody reads 1-34, 75-84 and either the chapters on France (chs.2,5,7) or the chapters on Germany (chs. 3,6,8).

October 23: Film: Blood and Belonging

October 28-October 30: Nationalism and Colonialism

November 4-November 6: Ethnicity and Conflict: Theory and evidence
Laitin, *Nations, States, and Violence* chapter 1

November 11-13: Nationalism and Conflict
November 18-25: Resolving ethnic and national conflict
Hechter, Containing Nationalism, Chapter 8
Laitin, Nations, States, and Violence chapter 5

December 2-4: Nationalism, the nation-state, and globalization
Laitin, Nations, States, and Violence, chapter 4

December 9-11: Simulation: Resolving Ethnic and national conflict in Iraq

December 11: Papers due