

Term Information

Effective Term Spring 2015

General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area Political Science
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org Political Science - D0755
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences
Level/Career Undergraduate
Course Number/Catalog 3200
Course Title Nationalism and Ethnicity
Transcript Abbreviation Natnlism & Ethnict
Course Description This course explores socio-political identities – especially ethnicity and nationality – from a comparative perspective. Drawing upon theories from political science, psychology, anthropology, sociology, and economics, we will study the origins and characteristics of these identities, as well as their consequences for democracy, economic development, and violent conflict.
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3

Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week, 7 Week, 4 Week (May Session), 12 Week (May + Summer)
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No
Grading Basis Letter Grade
Repeatable No
Course Components Lecture
Grade Roster Component Lecture
Credit Available by Exam No
Admission Condition Course No
Off Campus Never
Campus of Offering Columbus

Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites
Exclusions

Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 45.1001
Subsidy Level Baccalaureate Course
Intended Rank Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

Requirement/Elective Designation

General Education course:

Individual and Groups; Cross-Disciplinary Seminar (597 successors and new)

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

Course Details

Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes

- Students understand the benefits and limitations of different disciplinary perspectives.
- Students understand the benefits of synthesizing multiple disciplinary perspectives.
- Students synthesize and apply knowledge from diverse disciplines to a topic of interest.

Content Topic List

- Studying Nationalism and Ethnicity
- The Nature of Identity
- Causes of Nationalism and Ethnicity
- Relationship b/w Nationalism and Ethnicity
- Impacts of Nationalism and Ethnicity

Attachments

- 3200_Syllabus.pdf: 3200 syllabus
(Syllabus. Owner: Smith,Charles William)
- 3200_GEAAssessment.pdf: GE Assessment Plan
(GEC Course Assessment Plan. Owner: Smith,Charles William)

Comments

Workflow Information

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Smith,Charles William	03/31/2014 11:40 AM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Herrmann,Richard Karl	03/31/2014 11:57 AM	Unit Approval
Approved	Haddad,Deborah Moore	03/31/2014 12:19 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Hanlin,Deborah Kay Hogle,Danielle Nicole Jenkins,Mary Ellen Bigler Nolen,Dawn Vankeerbergen,Bernadette Chantal	03/31/2014 12:19 PM	ASCCAO Approval

Nationalism and Ethnicity: The Politics of Belonging

POLITSC 3200

Professor: Amanda Lea Robinson
Email: robinson.1012@osu.edu
Office: Derby Hall 2080

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores socio-political identities – especially ethnicity and nationality – from a comparative perspective. Drawing upon theories from political science, psychology, anthropology, sociology, and economics, we will study the origins and characteristics of these identities, as well as their consequences for democracy, economic development, and violent conflict. The course materials will be largely theoretical, but build on cases from around the world.

GENERAL EDUCATION DESIGNATIONS

This course fulfills a General Education (GE) requirement as a Cross-Disciplinary Seminar. The goal of this type of GE course is for students to “demonstrate an understanding of a topic of interest through scholarly activities that draw upon multiple disciplines and through their interactions with students from different majors.” The expected learning outcomes are:

1. Students understand the benefits and limitations of different disciplinary perspectives.
2. Students understand the benefits of synthesizing multiple disciplinary perspectives.
3. Students synthesize and apply knowledge from diverse disciplines to a topic of interest.

To achieve these expected outcomes, our study of nationalism and ethnic politics will include literature published in top academic journals and presses from multiple disciplines. Students will be expected to identify the advantages and disadvantages of different disciplinary approaches to the study of identity, as well as to synthesize those different approaches into a unified framework of knowledge.

The course also fulfills a General Education (GE) requirement in Social Science: Individuals and Groups. The goal of this type of GE course is for students to “understand the systematic study of human behavior and cognition; the structure of human societies, cultures, and institutions; and the processes by which individuals, groups, and societies interact, communicate, and use human, natural, and economic resources.” The expected learning outcomes are:

1. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they apply to the study of individuals and groups.
2. Students understand the behavior of individuals, differences and similarities in social and cultural contexts of human existence, and the processes by which groups function.
3. Students comprehend and assess individual and group values and their importance in social problem solving and policy making.

To achieve these learning outcomes, we will read scholarship from political science and related disciplines that utilize a variety of social science methods to understand the origins, persistence, and implications of social identification in general, and ethnic and national forms of group identification in particular. By studying particular instances of these general processes across many different regions of the world, students will come to appreciate both the commonalities in social identity formation and functioning across cultures, as well as how the consequences of these common processes play out differently in different contexts. Finally, the course content will elucidate the role of social identification and group-dynamics in addressing authoritarianism, divided societies, democratic instability, economic underdevelopment, and violent conflict.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This class meets twice per week. In order to succeed in the course, you should be prepared to meet the following requirements:

1. **Attend class.**

In addition to building on assigned readings, lectures will also include material not covered in readings. As result, regular class attendance is necessary in order to do well in the course. To further incentivize attendance, regular pop quizzes will constitute a portion of your final grade.

2. **Read the assigned materials.**

The course schedule details course reading assignments day-by-day. Students are expected to have read the assigned material *before* class. We will have irregular in-class quizzes and assignments to ensure that you are keeping up with the reading and to help stimulate class discussion. For each assigned reading, you should be able to succinctly state the following:

- The question addressed.
- The author's argument.
- The evidence presented in support of that argument.
- Your critique of the argument/evidence.

3. **Be attentive and participate in class.**

Students will maximize the course's benefits by actively engaging in in-class discussions and activities. It is the responsibility of the student to raise questions when something is unclear.

4. **Complete required assignments and take scheduled exams on time.**

All exams must be taken when scheduled and assignments must be turned in on time, with exceptions made only for the following excused absences:

- Documented University sanctioned event
- Documented death in the family
- Observation of a religious holiday
- Illness or injury that prevents attendance

If an exam is missed due to an *excused* absence, a make-up exam will be scheduled through the OSU Testing Center's Make-Up Examination Program. Exams missed due to an *unexcused* absence will receive a grade of 0 and cannot be made up. Unexcused late assignments will be penalized a letter grade for each 24-hour period they are turned in after the due date and time.

ASSIGNMENTS AND EVALUATIONS

1. In-Class “Pop” Quizzes (15%)

Over the course of the semester, you will be given an undisclosed number of in-class “pop” quizzes. Each quiz will be given at the beginning of class, and will ask a few basic questions about the readings for that day (main argument, key facts, results, conclusions, etc.) that will be easily answered if you have done the reading. Filling in your name will count as one question so that you get some credit for simply showing up. Your lowest 3 in-class quiz scores will be dropped, and your overall in-class quiz grade will be an average of the remaining quizzes. Because the three lowest scores are dropped, there will be no make-ups for missed quizzes.

2. Personal Essays (10%)

You will write two 500-word personal essays. These essays give you the chance to reflect on your own social identities and the ways in which you use identities in interacting with others. As these are personal essays, there is no right or wrong answer – you will receive full credit for following the directions provided in the syllabus and turning your essays in on time.

3. Three Mid-Term Exams – 25% Each (75%)

Three mid-term exams will be held throughout the semester in weeks 5, 10, and finals week. Each mid-term will cover approximately 1/3 of the course material drawn from assigned readings, lectures, and class discussions, and will include a mixture of short answer questions (multiple choice, fill-in-the-blank, or identification) and an essay. A make-up exam will only be permissible if associated with an excused absence (see above). There is no cumulative final exam for this course.

Letter grades correspond to the following percentages:

A: 93-100	B: 83-86	C: 73-76	D: 60-66
A-: 90-92	B-: 80-82	C-: 70-72	E: <60
B+: 87-89	C+: 77-79	D+: 67-69	

COURSE MATERIALS

You may wish to purchase the following books, as we will read large portions of them. Copies are available for purchase in the University book store, and inexpensive copies are widely available online. If you do not wish to purchase them, both books are also on reserve in Thompson Library:

- Hutchinson, John and Anthony D. Smith (eds.). 1994. *Nationalism*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
(Referred to in the syllabus as the *Nationalism Reader*)
- Hutchinson, John and Anthony D. Smith (eds.). 1996. *Ethnicity*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.
(Referred to in the syllabus as the *Ethnicity Reader*)

All other readings will be available at least one week in advance through the Carmen course site.

COURSE POLICIES

Academic and Personal Integrity:

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct: <http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/csc>.

Distractions:

Please arrive on time and do not leave before the end of class. I prefer that you do not use your laptop or cell phones during class time. If you must use your laptop to take notes, please refrain from checking email and browsing the internet.

Students with Disabilities:

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>.

COURSE TOPICS

Wk1: COURSE OVERVIEW

Tuesday 1/7 Course Introduction

Ethnicity Reader, Chapter 4 (Eriksen), p. 28-31. [4]

Thursday 1/9 What is Identity?

Fearon, James. 1999. “What is Identity?” Mimeo, Stanford University. [37]

SECTION I: STUDYING NATIONALISM AND ETHNICITY

Wk 2: SOCIAL IDENTITY

Tuesday 1/14 Functions of Social Identity

Brubaker, Rogers. 2004. “Beyond Identity” in *Ethnicity Without Groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. p. 28-63. [35]

Thursday 1/16 Social Identities in Everyday Life

Billig, Michael. 1995. "Introduction" in *Banal Nationalism*. London, UK: Sage Publications. p. 5-6, 9-12 only. [6]

Brubaker, Rogers, Margit Feischmidt, Jon Fox, and Liana Grancea. 2006. "Introduction" in *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. p. 1-19. [20]

Personal Essays

Write two 500-word essays. These essays will only be read by your professor, so please be as candid and self-reflective as possible.

- **Essay 1**

Describe the social identity to which you feel the most attached and explain why.

- **Essay 2**

Discuss a social identity group towards which you hold/held a negative stereotypical view. Describe the group, your beliefs about members of the group, and from where you believe these beliefs come. Also discuss any personal experiences that have called your beliefs into questions (challenged your stereotype).

Due (via Carmen) by 5pm.

WK 3: DEFINING ETHNICITY AND NATIONALISM

Tuesday 1/21 What is Ethnicity?

Ethnicity Reader, Introduction, p. 3-7 only. [4]

Ethnicity Reader, Chapter 12 (Barth), p. 75-82. [8]

Nationalism Reader, Chapter 7 (Conner), p. 36-46. [10]

Fearon, James and David D. Laitin. 2000. "Ordinary Language and External Validity: Specifying Concepts in the Study of Ethnicity." Mimeo, Stanford University. p. 6-12 only. [7]

Thursday 1/23 What is Nationalism?

Nationalism Reader, Introduction, p. 3-13. [11]

Nationalism Reader, Chapter 4 (Deutsch), p. 26-29. [4]

Ethnicity Reader, Chapter 11 (Conner), p. 69-75. [6]

Gellner, Ernest. 1983. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press. p. 1-7. [8]

WK 4: THE NATURE OF IDENTITY

Tuesday 1/28 Primordialism

Ethnicity Reader, “Introduction: Approaches to Ethnicity,” p. 7-10 only. [4]

Nationalism Reader, Chapter 15 (Van Den Berghe), p. 96-103. [8]

Ethnicity Reader, Chapter 6 (Geertz), p. 40-45. [5]

Van Evra, Stephen. 2001. “Primordialism Lives.” *APSA-CP Newsletter* 12(1): 20-22. [3]

Thursday 1/30 Constructivism

Ethnicity Reader, Chapter 7 (Eller and Coughlin), p. 45-51. [6]

Chandra, Kanchan. 2012. “How Ethnic Identities Change” in *Constructivist Theories of Ethnic Politics*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. p. 135-142 only. [8]

Brubaker, Rogers. 2004. “Ethnicity as Cognition” in *Ethnicity Without Groups*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. p. 64-87. [24]

WK 5: MID-TERM I

Tuesday 2/4 Review and Exam Crafting

Exam Crafting

Students will work in small groups to propose potential exam questions. We will discuss several of the proposed questions and go through how one might address them successfully. The exercise will help help students review the material and ask any clarifying questions.

Thursday 2/6 Mid-Term Exam I

SECTION II: CAUSES OF NATIONALISM AND ETHNICITY

WK 6: MODERNIZATION

Tuesday 2/11 Modernization and Nationalism

Nationalism Reader, Chapter 9 (Gellner), p. 55-62. [8]

Nationalism Reader, Chapter 14 (Anderson), p. 89-96. [8]

Silverman, Sydel. 1978. Review of Eugen Weber's *Peasants into Frenchmen: The Modernization of Rural France, 1870-1914*. *Ethnohistory* 25(3): 295-297. [3]

Thursday 2/13 Modernization and Ethnicity

Nationalism Reader, Chapter 10 (Gellner), p. 66-70. [8]

Nationalism Reader, Chapter 41 (Lijphart), p. 258-261. [4]

Bates, Robert. 1974. "Ethnic Competition and Modernization in Contemporary Africa." *Comparative Political Studies* 6(4): 457-483. [18]

WK 7: POLITICS

Tuesday 2/18 The State

Nationalism Reader, Chapter 12 (Hobsbawm), p. 76-82. [7]

Nationalism Reader, Chapter 29 (Anderson), p. 198-205. [8]

Nations, States, and Violence, Chapter 4, p. 81-88 only. [7]

Nationalism Reader, Chapter 34 (Young), p. 225-231. [7]

Thursday 2/20 Politics and Cultural Entrepreneurs

Nationalism Reader, Chapter 11 (Narin), p. 70-76 [6]

Nationalism Reader, Chapter 13 (Brass), p. 83-89. [7]

Ethnicity Reader, Chapter 14 (Brass), p. 85-90. [5]

Posner, Daniel. 2004. "The Political Salience of Cultural Difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas Are Allies in Zambia and Adversaries in Malawi." *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 529-545. [16]

WK 8: PSYCHOLOGY

Tuesday 2/25 Psychological Predisposition

Gil-White, Francisco J. 2001. "Are Ethnic Groups Biological 'Species' to the Human Brain? Essentialism in Our Cognition of Some Social Categories." *Current Anthropology* 42(4): 515-536. [21]

Kurzban, Robert, John Tooby, and Leda Cosmides. 2001. "Can Race be Erased? Coalitional Computation and Social Categorization." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 98(26): 15387-15392. [5]

Thursday 2/27 Change in Identities Over Time

Chandra, Kanchan. 2012. "How Ethnic Identities Change" in *Constructivist Theories of Ethnic Politics*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press. p. 152-175 only. [24]

WK 9: RELATIONSHIP B/W NATIONALISM AND ETHNICITY

Tuesday 3/4 Can Nationalism Emerge in Multicultural Societies?

Ethnicity Reader, Chapter 29 (Tibi), p. 174-179. [6]

Putnam, Robert D. 2007. "E Pluribus Unum: Diversity and Community in the Twenty-first Century." *Scandinavian Political Studies* 30(2): 137-174. [28]

Thursday 3/6 Nationalism and Interethnic Relations

Miguel, Edward. 2004. "Tribe or Nation?: Nation Building and Public Goods in Kenya versus Tanzania." *World Politics* 56(3): 327-362. [34]

WK 10: MID-TERM II

Tuesday 3/11 Review and Exam Crafting

Exam Crafting

Students will work in small groups to propose potential exam questions. We will discuss several of the proposed questions and go through how one might address them successfully. The exercise will help help students review the material and ask any clarifying questions.

Thursday 3/13 Mid-Term Exam II

SECTION III: IMPACTS OF NATIONALISM AND ETHNICITY

WK 11: DEMOCRACY

Tuesday 3/18 Ethnic Voting

Reilly, Benjamin. 2013. "Identity Politics: Democratic Institutions in Ethnically Divided States." *World Politics Review*, October 8. [6]

Ferree, Karen. 2006. "Explaining South Africa's Racial Census." *Journal of Politics* 68(4): 803-815. [12]

Thursday 3/20 Democratic Stability

Horowitz, Donald L. 1993. "Democracy in Divided Societies." *Journal of Democracy* 4(4): 18-37. [20]

Chandra, Kanchan. 2005. "Ethnic Parties and Democratic Stability." *Perspectives on Politics* 3(2): 235-252 [14].

WK 12: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Tuesday 3/25 Ethnicity and Economic Development

Alesina, Alberto and Eliana La Ferrara. 2005. "Ethnic Diversity and Economic Performance." *Journal of Economic Literature* 43(3): 762-800. [33]

Thursday 3/27 Nationalism and Economic Development

Greenfield, Leah. 2001. "Introduction" in *The Spirit of Capitalism: Nationalism and Economic Growth*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press. p.1-28. [28]

WK 13: CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE

Tuesday 4/1 Ethnicity and Conflict

Fearon, James and David D. Laitin. 2000. "Ordinary Language and External Validity: Specifying Concepts in the Study of Ethnicity." Mimeo, Stanford University. p. 12-15 only. [4]

de Figueiredo, Rui and Barry R. Weingast. 1999. "The Rationality of Fear: Political Opportunism and Ethnic Conflict" in Barbara F. Walter and Jack Snyder (eds.) *Civil Wars, Insecurity, and Intervention..* New York, NY: Columbia University Press. p. 261-302. [32]

Thursday 4/3 Nationalism and Conflict

Schrock-Jacobson, Gretchen. 2012. "The Violent Consequences of the Nation: Nationalism and the Initiation of Interstate War." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56(5): 825-852. [23]

WK 14: LOOKING FORWARD

Tuesday 4/8 Dealing with Diversity, Multiculturalism, and Globalization

Ethnicity Reader, Chapter 55 (Smootha and Hanf), p. 326-333. [8]

Ethnicity Reader, Chapter 56 (McGarry and O'Leary), p. 333-341. [8]

Nationalism Reader, Chapter 49 (Schlesinger), p. 316-325. [10]

Thursday 4/10

Exam Crafting

Students will work in small groups to propose potential exam questions. We will discuss several of the proposed questions and go through how one might address them successfully. The exercise will help help students review the material and ask any clarifying questions.

Midterm Exam III

The final midterm will be held during the university-scheduled final exam time.

GE RATIONALE AND ASSESSMENT PLAN

POLITICAL SCIENCE 3200

NATIONALISM AND ETHNICITY: THE POLITICS OF BELONGING

Amanda Lea Robinson
robinson.1012@osu.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GENERAL EDUCATION RATIONALE

This course explores socio-political identities – especially ethnicity and nationality – from a comparative perspective. Drawing upon theories from political science, psychology, anthropology, sociology, and economics, we will study the origins and characteristics of these identities, as well as their consequences for democracy, economic development, and violent conflict. The course materials will be largely theoretical, but build on cases from around the world.

This course will fulfill two General Education (GE) course requirements. First, the study of nationalism and ethnicity has always been a multidisciplinary endeavor, but, unfortunately, rarely an interdisciplinary one. It has in fact been argued that the study of these identities has been hampered by the fact that scholars in different disciplinary traditions have worked independently on similar questions, without the benefit of disciplinary cross-fertilization or the accumulation of knowledge. One of the primary goals of this course is to bring together many of the disparate strands of literature across the social sciences and humanities in order to better understand the origins and implications of national and ethnic group identification. Thus, the course fulfills the requirements and goals of the the General Education (GE) designation as a Cross-Disciplinary Seminar.

Second, the course will also focus on introducing and using standard methods in social science research, and students will engage in hands-on learning of both qualitative and quantitative empirical methods. While the focus of these research projects will be on ethnic and national identification, student learning will reflect an understanding of the tools that social scientists use to study politics more broadly, and how social science influences social policy. Thus, the course also fulfills the requirements for the Social Science (Organizations and Politics) General Education requirement.

GE IN CROSS-DISCIPLINARY SEMINAR

Goals

Students demonstrate an understanding of a topic of interest through scholarly activities that draw upon multiple disciplines and through their interactions with students from different majors.

Achieving Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Students understand the benefits and limitations of different disciplinary perspectives.

As outlined above, the study of group identification, in general, and of national and ethnic forms of group identification, in particular, has spanned multiple disciplines: anthropology, economics, history, political science, psychology, and sociology. Consistent with this multidisciplinary tradition, course readings include scholars from all of these traditions, published in top journals and presses for each discipline. Because many of the authors write on the same topic from different disciplinary perspectives, students will be introduced to the disciplinary particularities of scholarship within the context of a single topic. As a result, it will be more manageable to ask students to identify the commonalities and differences across fields, as well as the benefits and limitations of different approaches. Such discussions will be a regular part of class discussion, and will constitute a portion of the examination materials.

2. Students understand the benefits of synthesizing multiple disciplinary perspectives.

Moving beyond the multidisciplinary tradition in the study of nationalism and ethnicity, the course will encourage the interdisciplinary consolidation of knowledge. Through demonstrations within lectures, I will model the process of integrating and synthesizing findings from across different disciplinary approaches, including “translating” concepts, identifying common findings, highlighting inconsistencies, and triangulating seemingly disparate evidence into a consolidated understanding of a particular question or problem. By modeling the benefits of consilience to the scholarly study of nationalism and ethnicity, students will be encouraged to adopt this approach in their own learning, within and beyond this particular course.

3. Students synthesize and apply knowledge from diverse disciplines to a topic of interest.

Students will have a chance to try their hand at disciplinary syntheses during in class discussions. As the course examinations will cover readings from multiple disciplines, students will be required to apply their knowledge from multiple disciplines to the study of nationalism and ethnicity. In the short answer and essay components of the course, they will be further required to synthesize these different traditions/approaches in order to receive full credit.

Assessment of Expected Learning Outcomes

The effectiveness of this course in achieving the expected learning outcomes outlined above will be determined in three ways:

1. All three course examinations will require the application and consolidation of information from multiple disciplines. The course will be deemed successful in meeting these learning outcomes if at least 75% of students pass each exam.
2. The final examination will include a long essay questions asking students to outline the different disciplinary approaches covered in the class, discuss their relative benefits and limitations, and to suggest at least two ways in which a interdisciplinary approach teaches us something about nationalism and ethnicity that we would not know by limiting ourself to a single discipline. The learning outcomes will be have been met if most students (at least 75%)
3. Written student feedback concerning the key learning outcomes will be elicited on the last day of class. Students will be asked directly about whether and how the interdisciplinary approach in the course aided their learning, and whether they feel that each learning outcome was achieved. This feedback will be anonymous, and will be turned in by one of the students to the Department of Political Science in order to protect anonymity. The Department of Political Science keeps this feedback on file as part of our internal course review process. The course will be deemed successful by this criteria if more than three quarters of the students feel that the three expected learning outcomes have been met in their case.

Based on these three forms of feedback, and in consultation with my senior colleagues, I will adjust the assigned readings and evaluation methods in order to increase my

success in meeting the expected learning outcomes. Student feedback on their learning outcomes, along with university and departmental SEIs, will be archived by the Department of Political Science.

GE IN SOCIAL SCIENCE: INDIVIDUALS AND GROUPS

Goals

Students understand the systematic study of human behavior and cognition; the structure of human societies, cultures, and institutions; and the processes by which individuals, groups, and societies interact, communicate, and use human, natural, and economic resources.

Achieving Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Students understand the theories and methods of social scientific inquiry as they apply to the study of individuals and groups.

Students will read primary scholarship from political science and related disciplines that utilize a variety of social science methods to understand the origins, persistence, and implications of social identification in general, and ethnic and national forms of group identification in particular. These methods will be discussed explicitly for every assigned reading that includes original research. The framework will focus on the following key steps in the social scientific process: theory generation, deriving observable implications from theory, stating those observable implications as falsifiable hypotheses, operationalizing concepts, deriving results, drawing conclusions from those results, and determining the scope of those conclusions. By assigning research articles and chapters that use a variety of research methods, including ethnographic, archival, case comparative, experimental, and econometric, students will observe how different methods proceed through the different stages of social science research.

2. Students understand the behavior of individuals, differences and similarities in social and cultural contexts of human existence, and the processes by which groups function.

Many of the readings for this class focus on understanding individual behavior as a function of group level dynamics. This approach recognizes the crucial role of social identity groups in organizing and shaping human social processes, without which it becomes hard to understand some behavior. We will study in particular the means by which individuals come to identify with particular politically relevant groups, such as an ethnic group or a nation, and then how and under what circumstances such ethnic or national identification influences individual behaviors, such as voting and vote choice, economic decision making and cooperation, and the willingness to use violence against other individuals and groups. By studying particular instances of these general processes across many different regions of the world, students will appreciate both the commonalities in social identity formation and functioning across cultures, as well as how the consequences of these common processes play out differently in different contexts.

3. Students comprehend and assess individual and group values and their importance in social problem solving and policy making.

The course will explore in detail some of the most pressing problems in the world today: authoritarianism, divided societies, democratic instability, economic underdevelopment, and violent conflict. We will study the impact that ethnic and national identities play in both addressing and perpetuating these problems, as well as whether and how policy can harness the power of group identity and ameliorate its negative implications.

Assessment of Expected Learning Outcomes

The effectiveness of this course in achieving the expected learning outcomes outlined above will be determined in three ways:

1. All three exams will include questions that require a student to summarize an argument presented in one of the readings, identify the key components of the research design, and offer an assessment of the approach's strengths and weaknesses. Success in understanding how social science methodologies are used to address key questions in the study of nationalism and ethnicity will be met if more than three quarters of students are able to successfully answer these questions.
2. All three exams will include essay questions that require students to explain of why individuals behave in particular ways a function of group identity, and how

such group-level dynamics influence policy outcomes and institutional design. Three quarters success in explaining the relationship between individuals and social groups, and how this influences democracy, development, and conflict, will be deemed successful.

3. Written student feedback concerning the key learning outcomes will be elicited on the last day of class. Students will be asked directly about whether they feel that each learning outcome was achieved. This feedback will be anonymous, and will be turned in by one of the students to the Department of Political Science in order to protect anonymity. The Department of Political Science keeps this feedback on file as part of our internal course review process. The course will be deemed successful by this criteria if more than three quarters of the students feel that the three expected learning outcomes have been met in their case.

Based on these three forms of feedback, and in consultation with my senior colleagues, I will adjust the assigned readings and evaluation methods in order to increase my success in meeting the expected learning outcomes. Student feedback on their learning outcomes, along with university and departmental SEI, will be archived by the Department of Political Science.