Ethnic Politics

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Course Description

What motivates individuals to identify with an ethnic group? How does ethnic identity shape voting, political parties, democratic stability, economic growth, and political violence? This seminar explores the growing literature on ethnic politics in comparative politics and international relations. The course includes theoretical and multi-country studies of ethnic politics and also includes in-depth case studies of Nigeria, the United States, southern Africa, India, and Sudan.

Course Requirements

This is a seminar course. Student preparation and participation is vital to the success of the course. Students are expected to attend all classes, to have carefully read the assignment, and to come prepared to discuss the readings in each and every meeting. Grading for PSC/IR 252 will be based on the following requirements:

Participation: 20%
In-class midterm based on Weeks 1-7 (given on March 3rd): 35%
Cumulative final exam during finals period: 45%

For requirements for graduate students taking PSC 553, see Professors Lacina and Meguid.

Readings

In this course, we will read books, book chapters and journal articles. Journal articles and chapters in edited volumes are available on-line through Blackboard. The books listed below have been ordered through the Bookstore. A copy of each book is also on reserve at Rush Rhees Library.


Part 1: What is ethnicity and when is it politically important?

Week One (1/13): Introduction to the course (7 pages)


Week Two (1/20): What is ethnicity and when does it matter in politics? (84 pages)


Week Three (1/27): Economic and institutional explanations of ethnic politics (152 pages)


Additional reading for graduate students:

Week Four (2/3): Governing institutions and the origins of ethnic politics (181 pages)


Additional reading for graduate students:

Week Five (2/10): Psychological explanations of ethnic politics (178 pages)


Part 2: How does ethnicity shape politics?

Week Six (2/17): Ethnicity and political parties (114 pages)


Week Seven (2/24): Party behavior and competition in the United States (178 pages)


Midterm (3/3): An in-class midterm covering weeks 1-7. There are no make-ups, so please make your spring break plans accordingly!

Week Eight (3/17): Ethnic politics and democracy (122 pages)


Birnir, Jóhanna Kristín. 2006. *Ethnicity and Electoral Politics*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1, 2, 6 (Available through e-reserve)

Additional reading for graduate students:

Week Nine (3/24): Ethnic violence (179 pages)


Additional reading for graduate students:

Week Ten (3/31): In-class film: Hotel Rwanda

Week Eleven (4/7): Hindu-Muslim riots in India (208 pages)


Week Twelve (4/14): Ethnic war in Sudan (198 pages)


Week Thirteen (4/21): Ethnic politics and economic growth and course wrap-up (98 pages)


Additional reading for graduate students:

Final: There will be a cumulative final during the registrar-appointed time. This is currently May 5,
12:30pm. However, the registrar's office can change the date and time at its own discretion. There are no make-ups, so please make your summer plans accordingly!