

Graduate Workshop in Ethnic Politics 2006-7
NYU Department of Politics

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1. Description of Course Sequence

This is the first part of a two-semester graduate course sequence restricted to Ph.D students. Students can take the first semester course without taking the second semester. But the first semester course, or its equivalent, is a prerequisite for the second semester. Those who seek only an introduction to the field of ethnic politics may take only the first semester of the course. Those who plan to do advanced research in ethnic politics should take both semesters.

The first semester (Fall) introduces students to the principal concepts, questions and answers in the subfield of ethnic politics. The second semester (Spring) helps students to produce original research, based on primary data, on questions that have not yet been addressed, or addressed inadequately. The end product for students who take the course in both semesters should be a publishable paper, which can also be used to satisfy departmental requirements for a Masters or a Qualifying Paper. Students who take the course in both semesters will be encouraged to present at a conference on contemporary research on ethnic politics at NYU at the end of the academic year.

2. Description of Fall Course

Four sorts of questions define the field of ethnic politics -- (1) Questions of conceptualization (what is ethnic identity and how should we measure it)? (2) Questions of ethnogenesis and ethnic identity change (why do ethnic groups form and why do ethnic group identities change?) (3) Questions about the determinants of ethnically defined outcomes (e.g. Why do ethnic riots occur? Why do some ethnic groups vote cohesively but not others?) (4) Questions about the relationship between ethnic identity (and related concepts) and some outcome (e.g. How does ethnic identity affect economic growth? Why does ethnic identity destabilize democracy? How does ethnic identity affect the onset or dynamics of inter-state war?) The course is divided into four parts, mirroring this organization of the field.

The goal of the Fall semester course is to build foundational knowledge on ethnic politics – that is, a deep understanding of the concepts related to ethnic politics, the main questions that have been asked so far of ethnic politics, and the answers that are offered -- and to do so by linking theoretical instruction with hands on experience in empirical application. Consequently, the course requires students to divide their time between the interpretation of theoretical texts and completing assigned “laboratory exercises.” Further, we will pursue the integration of theory and empirics from a micro-perspective, by paying close attention to individual-level ethnic processes within single countries. Finally, we will draw as far as possible on work on ethnic identity across subfields and across disciplines.

3. Requirements (Fall)

i. Familiarity with ethnic processes in a single country.

The course requires you to develop a deep knowledge of individual-level ethnic processes within a single country. You will be asked by the end of the second meeting of the course to choose a country you would like to specialize in. No changes will be permitted after the second class meeting. The assignments for this course will often require you to draw upon your expertise on these countries.

ii. Familiarity with cross-national datasets

A broad knowledge of cross-national patterns in ethnic processes complements and deepens a deep knowledge of individual-level ethnic processes in a single country. Consequently, you will also be asked to familiarize yourself with the principal cross-national datasets on ethnic identity. We will devote one meeting of the course to introduce you to these datasets. But as in the case of the individual countries, you should begin learning about these datasets early in the course.

iii. Reading

Students are required to complete all the reading. I do not require you to read a large number of works as is common in a traditional survey course. Only one or two key works are assigned each week, and I will cover a lot of the material that you will not read through lecture. The reason to assign a small number of pages is so that you can read – and reread -- a small amount of material carefully, and concentrate at the same time on the periodic exercises. However, there is no substitute for reading widely on your own, and you should also read outside of the syllabus on the questions that interest you.

iv. Laboratory Exercises

Students are also required to complete all laboratory exercises and other assignments, and will be graded on each one individually.

v. Final Paper

At the end of the semester, students will be expected to turn in a research paper based on original data. The paper must ask a question concerned with ethnic identity as an independent or dependent variable, and must integrate an individual-level ethnic process within a single country with cross-national data analysis. The laboratory exercises throughout the course are designed to help you work throughout this final product. A proposal describing the final paper is due no later than the fifth week of class. We will have a mini conference on draft papers on the last week of class.

4. Important Deadlines

September 13: Choose the country you would like to focus on.

September 20: Final date for change in the country of focus.

October 4: Submit a paper proposal

December 13: Conference on Draft Papers.

December 22: Final Paper Due

5. Reading and Organization

September 6: Introduction

Part 1: Concepts and Measures

September 13: What is Ethnic Identity and Why Does it Matter?

Kanchan Chandra, "What is Ethnic Identity and Does it Matter?" Annual Review of Political Science 2006. http://www.nyu.edu/gsas/dept/politics/faculty/chandra/chandra_home.html

Exercise: Coding Ethnic Identities (Due on email by morning of September 20)

Construct a measure of "ethnic diversity," or some other concept related to ethnic identity that interests you and code this measure for the country you have chosen. Submit a memo that introduces and justifies the measure, identifies the guidelines and sources used for the coding and reports the patterns in the data. Also submit the sources that you have used for the coding.

September 20: How Ethnic Identities Change

Kanchan Chandra, Chapter 3, Ethnicity, Politics and Economics

Exercise: Coding Change in Ethnic Identities (Due on email by morning of September 27)

By extending the protocol and source materials provided in the previous week, code the change in the pattern of ethnic diversity (or another concept related to ethnic identity) in your chosen country over a thirty year period. Write a memo describing the patterns. To what extent can you say that ethnic identities changed over time based on these data?

September 27: A Language for Thinking About Ethnic Identity Change

Kanchan Chandra and Cilanne Boulet, Chapter 4, Ethnicity, Politics and Economics

Laboratory Exercise: The ELF Index. (Due on email by morning of October 4)

Develop a measure of ethnic diversity for your chosen country. Compare this measure theoretically with the ELF index. Then compare the degree of ethnic diversity for your country in question measured by the ELF index with your own measure. Write a memo justifying the better measure.

October 4: Introduction to Cross-National Datasets on Ethnic Diversity and Related Concepts

Atlas Narodov Mira (1964). Moscow: Miklukho-Maklai Ethnological Institute of the Department of Geodesy and Cartography of the State Geological Committee of the Soviet Union.

Alberto Alesina, Arnaud Devleeschauwer, William Easterly, Sergio Kurlat, and Romain Wacziarg. (2003). "Fractionalization" Journal of Economic Growth. 8.2: 55-94. Download, along with data from <http://www.stanford.edu/~wacziarg/papersum.html>

Fearon, James (2003). "Ethnic Structure and Cultural Diversity by Country" Journal of Economic Growth 8.2: 195-222. Download data from <http://www.stanford.edu/~jfearon/>

Minorities at Risk Database (<http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/inscr/mar/>)

Kanchan Chandra, "A Constructivist Dataset on Ethnicity and Institutions" in Abdelal et al eds. *Measuring Identity*.

Laboratory Exercise (Due on email by morning of October 11)

Identify the research question that takes a concept related to ethnic identity as an independent or a dependent variable that you would like to examine in your research paper for this class. Identify the variables most relevant for this question from the datasets above and their pros and cons. Write a memo describing how you might modify or replace these variables in order to answer the question.

Part 2: Why do Ethnic Identities Form and Change?

This part of the course surveys some important propositions explaining why ethnic identities form and why they change. Many of the works we will read here are interdisciplinary classics. But you should read them, not to soak up general words of wisdom, but to identify as precisely as possible the propositions that they advance explaining ethnic identity formation and change. There will be one laboratory exercise for this part of the course. Although due at the end of this part, you should start working on it from the beginning.

October 11: How do Institutions of Cognition Affect Ethnic Identity Formation and Change?

Benedict Andersen, "Census, Map, Museum" in *Imagined Communities* (London: Verso, 1983).

Virginia Dominguez, Chapters 1, 2, 4 in *White by Definition* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press 1986).

October 18: How Do Institutions of Competition Affect Ethnic Identity Formation and Change?

Daniel Posner, Chapters 5 and 8 in *Institutions and Ethnic Politics in Africa* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2005).

October 25: How Does the Economic Competition Affect Ethnic Identity Formation and Change?

Ernest Gellner, Chapter 6, "Social Entropy and Equality in Industrial Society," in *Nations and Nationalism* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1983).

Mary Waters, Chapters 3 and 8 in *Black Identities* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation 1999).

November 1: How Does Violence Affect Ethnic Identity Formation and Change

Paul Brass, Chapters, 1, 2, 4 in *Theft of an Idol* (Calcutta: Seagull Press 1998).

Exercise: Due by email on the morning of November 8

Distil the main propositions explaining ethnic identity change in the readings above, and test them against each other for the country that you have chosen. Which proposition(s) best explain the

pattern of identity change you observe in your chosen country? Is there a new proposition that better accounts for this pattern?

Part 3: Explaining Ethnically Defined Outcomes: Ethnic Voting and Participation.

November 8: What are the determinants of ethnic voting?

Leonard Wantchekon, "Clientelism and Voting Behaviour: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Benin." *World Politics*, April 2003

Claudine Gay, "The Effect of Black Political Representation on Political Participation" *American Political Science Review*, Volume 95, No. 3, September 2001.

November 15: What are the determinants of ethnic violence?

Steven Wilkinson, *Votes and Violence* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004)

Ashutosh Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civic Life* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002)

Part 4: How and Why Do Ethnic Identities Affect Outcomes?

November 29: How and Why Does Ethnic Diversity Affect War?

James Fearon and David Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War" *American Political Science Review* 97, 1 (February 2003): 75- 90.

Jack Snyder and Edward Mansfield, *Electing to Fight* (Cambridge: MIT Press 2005)

Stathis Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (New York: Cambridge University Press 2006).

December 6: How does Ethnic Diversity Affect Democratic Consolidation?

Adam Przeworski, et al, *Democracy and Development*, Chapter 2.

Exercise: Due by email on the morning of December 6 at the latest. Can be turned in before. Take one of the dependent variables identified in Parts 3 and 4 of the course. Identify the value of this dependent variable for your chosen country and locate it within the cross-national patterns identified by previous studies. What explains the value on the dependent variable for your country?

December 13: Conference on Draft Papers

Reading: All Draft Papers for the Class

December 22: Final Paper Due