

## TPOS 261 Comparative Ethnicity

Professor: Victor Asal

**TTH 08:45\_AM-10:05\_AM BB 121**

**Professor:** Victor Asal

**Email:** [vasal@albany.edu](mailto:vasal@albany.edu)

Office Hours

Uptown Campus Basement of Humanities 016: Tuesday 11:40-1:40

Downtown Campus, Milne 300B: Tuesday 4:30-5:30

by appointment 518 591 8729

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### Course Description

This Class will explore the issues of Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflicts and their management through an investigation of 1) the theories that are used to explain the phenomena, 2) an in-depth use of case studies, 3) the use of simulations and 4) research on the topic both as a class and as individual students. Several of the simulations used will be online and the class research will examine amongst other things the use of the web for ethnic mobilization.

In this course, in addition to studying the theories that have been developed to explain the politics and history of Ethnicity and Ethnic Conflicts, students will have an opportunity to participate in simulation exercises designed to sharpen their analytic skills in the subject area. Students will take on the roles of policy makers in several simulations. These simulations and their analysis are critical to the course, and your participation will play a large part in how well you do in the course. Because so much time will be devoted to simulations reading is fairly light some weeks, with some weeks having no reading at all and some weeks will have very heavy reading. The reading that is assigned is required, and **you need to read it and read it carefully in order to do well in the class and on quizzes and the final. If you do not want to put in this effort-**

# DO NOT TAKE THIS CLASS. – REALLY

**On the other hand if you are willing to put in the effort for a challenging class we will put in the effort to make sure that it is worth your time.**

**Objectives of the Course By the end of the course students should have:**

1. A basic understanding of theories related to ethnicity, ethnic conflict and ethnic conflict management.
2. An overview of several cases of ethnicity, ethnic conflict and ethnic conflict management.
3. In depth knowledge of at least three ethnic group and their relation to authority.

### Student profiles

In order for us to get to know you better and be able to interact with you quicker you are required to send a word document to [tpos261@gmail.com](mailto:tpos261@gmail.com) that includes the following:

- 1) your first and last name as you would like to be used in class
- 2) a picture of you where we can actually see your face
- 3) an email that you would prefer we use to contact you

- 4) one interesting thing people might not expect about you
- 5) what your major (or intended major) is
- 6) your favorite movie
- 7) your least favorite movie
- 8) your favorite song
- 9) your least favorite song

**General Education Social Sciences** [http://www.albany.edu/gened/dp\\_socsci.shtml](http://www.albany.edu/gened/dp_socsci.shtml)

1. an understanding that human conduct and behavior more generally are subject to scientific inquiry
2. an understanding of the difference between rigorous and systematic thinking and uncritical thinking about social phenomena
3. an understanding of the kinds of questions social scientists ask and the ways they go about answering these questions
4. knowledge of the major concepts, models and issues of at least one discipline in the social sciences
5. an understanding of the methods social scientists use to explore social phenomena, such as observation, hypothesis development, measurement and data collection, experimentation, evaluation of evidence, employment of mathematical analysis, employment of interpretive analysis

**Evaluation of Students** Each student will be evaluated using four criteria.

1) **Classroom participation in class discussions and exercises will count for 30% of your grade.** Participation is more than attendance, it includes **active and thoughtful participation in discussions in class as well as in all the exercises, games and simulations and home assignments** that are part of the course. Home assignments will be one to 2 page reaction **or preparation papers (that could be up to 5 pages) for simulations** that will count as part of your participation grade. Active and thoughtful participation is dependent on a **thorough reading** of the material as well as preparation for exercises and games to be conducted in class as well as debriefing or analysis reports. I try very hard not to assign reading for the sake of reading. **There are classes with NO READING. For you to perform well in these classes you need to do the reading when it is assigned.**

NOTE: Each class will have question you need to be prepared to answer (QTBPA). In addition to the questions listed, for every class you need to be prepared to answer the following questions:

- Does the author make a compelling argument?
- What are its strong points?
- What are its weaknesses?
- What is missing?

**More than one unexcused absence will affect this portion of the grade. Additionally, if you miss class three times or more without an approved excuse you will automatically have your grade reduced to a C+ at best. Consistent lateness will also affect your grade.**

Given the importance of the participation grade I will give you feedback on your participation level throughout the semester. If you are unsure of what your participation grade is at any point in the semester please come and talk to me. **If you are sick** in order to make up an exam or to remove an absence please bring in a note from the **dean of undergraduate studies** who is responsible for excused absence certification. Without such a note any absence from class or missed exams will count against you.

2) **4-20 Quizzes (80% of which -rounding up - will count towards your final grade) will be worth a total of 30%** of your grade. All Quizzes will be unannounced and will focus on readings and past analysis. Quizzes will vary from short answer to short essay style. Some of these quizzes may be take home.

3) **A data collection assignment (worth 20% of your grade)** where you will be asked to find out information about genocide and politicides.

4) **A final, which will cover all the material in the class will be worth 20%** of your grade.

FINAL EXAM 261 Friday Dec. 18th 10:30am – 12 :30pm

**Grades**

Grades will be given according to effort and accomplishments. There is no curve and if you deserve an A, you will get one. A level work means exceptional effort and results. Similarly, average work will receive a C and so on.

**One caution - anyone caught cheating will fail. On this particular issue, there will be no second chances. It is assumed that all students understand the requirements of Academic Integrity. If you are unclear on what this entails you should read the following web page:**

[http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate\\_bulletin/regulations.html](http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html)

### Grading Rubric

Start of grade range	0	60	63	67	70	73	77	80	83	87	90	93
Letter	E	D-	D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A

### Questions

Education is about learning. This class is about material you have probably not covered before in this context. If you have questions or things are unclear – ask questions. Ask them in lecture and feel free to email the TA’s or call (if I am in my office at 10pm I will answer the phone) or email the instructor whenever to ask for further clarification. This includes any problems you might have about material on BlackBoard or any other technical aspect of the course.

### Email

- Please include your name – I don’t know who sr46723@albany.edu is
- Please send me your phone number – I will call you back and whatever question you have will probably be resolved more quickly
- DO NOT EMAIL ME THROUGH BLACKBOARD – IT DOES NOT GIVE ME A WAY TO EMAIL YOU BACK.

### Accommodations:

Reasonable accommodations will be provided for students with documented physical, sensory, systemic, cognitive, learning and psychiatric disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation in this class, please go here <http://www.albany.edu/disability/current.shtml> and arrange for an academic accommodation letter to be sent to me. If you wish to discuss academic accommodations for this course please also inform me as soon as possible. I will also make every effort to accommodate difficulties arising from religious observance or sickness. You are asked to bring any possible conflicts to my attention as soon as possible. Students should not expect that, if they do poorly on an exam or other assignment, to claim, at that time, the need of an accommodation. This statement is to preclude that problem, and allow people with a need for accommodations to be treated fairly and appropriately.

### Plagiarism

Please familiarize yourself with the description in the undergraduate bulletin

[http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate\\_bulletin/regulations.html](http://www.albany.edu/undergraduate_bulletin/regulations.html) if you are involved in plagiarism the penalty will be failure in the course and you will be reported to judicial affairs. **In this one regard there are no second chances.** If you are not sure if something violates standards – ask. If you are not sure whether to cite or not to cite – cite. Every Student is expected to go through the following tutorial <http://library.albany.edu/usered/plagiarism/index.html>

### Late Assignments.

Unless you have gotten prior approval from me through email or have a note from the undergraduate dean, all late work will be penalized. All grade appeals should be made in email and should explain exactly why you think the grading was mistaken.

**Office hours** Office hours are your opportunity to get personalized guidance for assignments as well as help better understanding the course material. Take advantage of it. If office hour times are not good then please email me your phone number and we will call you to set up a time that works in order to meet.

**Ombudsperson** “A government official, especially in Scandinavian countries, who investigates citizens’ complaints against the government or its functionaries ([www.answers.com](http://www.answers.com)).” One student will be asked to volunteer to act as an ombudsperson and will meet with me on a regular basis to offer feedback from students in terms of the direction the course is going and bring to my attention any problems with reading, assignments or other material.

### Reading: All Reading not in books will be on blackboard

**Text Books** (Readings in the syllabus are due the day of the reading)

Smith and Hutchinson 1996 *Ethnicity* Oxford University Press USA  
Scott-Bauman Crisis In The Middle East Oxford

Sign up for the <http://www.al-monitor.com> newsletter here <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/newsletter-signup> and read articles about the Middle East Region

- **WARNING: NOTE SOME OF THE MATERIAL (ESPECIALLY THE VIDEOS) IS DISTURBING (KILLING AND MURDER CAPTURED ON FILM AS WELL AS STRONG EXPRESSIONS OF BIGOTRY) AND SOME OF IT IS THE PRODUCT OF BIGOTS- IF THIS IS AN ISSUE FOR YOU COME AND TALK TO ME AND WE CAN DISCUSS HOW TO DEAL WITH THIS ISSUE**

## Schedule

Date	Topic	Reading	Exercise
1. Thursday Aug 27	Introduction	<a href="#">how to read</a>	Hobbes, Hobbes w/ power
2. Tuesday Sept 1	Theories of Comparative Politics	<b>Lim</b> , Chp. 3 QTBPA: What are the main theories of comparative politics, and what are the key concepts associated with them? Think of a possible application for each one. Which theory is most appealing to you, and why?	Playing Games with Comparative Politics
3. Thursday Sept 3	Coding training	Codebook	Coding training
4. Tuesday Sept 8 Sep 9 Last day to drop course without a "W"	<i>What is ethnicity? the modernization primordialism debate</i>	H & S introduction Chps. 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 QTBPA: Explain dominant and subordinate societal groups, and how these relate to concepts of ethnicity. What sorts of boundary markers do ethnic groups utilize? How should we consider the correlation between ethnicity and class? Consider the origins of ethnicity, including the theory of primordialism. Is primordialism as ineffable as its proponents claim? All things considered, how likely, or in what ways, are we to transcend ethnicity and ethnic conflicts? <i>*Come into class prepared to defend either primordialism or modernization.*</i>	
5. Thursday Sept 10	Dimensions of ethnicity	H & S Chps. 31 40 <a href="#">The Question Light-Skinned Black Women Are Always Asked</a> <a href="#">The N-Word "Double Standard"</a> QTBPA: Explain the <i>myth of ethnic election</i> , and how this accounts for ethnic survival. How do religious and ethnic homogeneity correlate with each other? How does the case of China explain the distinction between race and class? Consider the impact asking "what are you?" might have on one's psyche. What sorts of stereotypes surround the n-word? Have you ever found yourself on either side of these stereotypes?	Identity Exercise Knapsack exercise
Tuesday Sept 15 no class			
6. Thursday Sept 17	Religion, ethnicity and ancient texts	<a href="#">The Book of Joshua</a> Chapters 1-11 Religion and Nationalism: Four Approaches QTBPA: What relationship might there be between these theories and the books of Joshua? Where does nationalism fit in here? Is the book of Joshua Nationalistic? Which of Brubaker's four approaches do you think best explains the first Book of Joshua? How might a critic of this position respond? <b>Recommended</b>	

		Samuel 1 &2 bible and nationalism	
7. Tuesday Sept 22	What drives ethnic group creation?	H &S Chps. 10, 11, 14, 15 Who Gets to be French <a href="#">11 ways race isn't real</a> QTBPA: Distinguish between ethnicity as “being” and ethnicity as “doing.” In what ways does ethnicity correspond with the existence of nations? How can we use rational choice theory to make predictions about ethnic conflict? To what extent is race ‘real’? How might different communities determine race? Does the reality of race affect exclusionary or racist attitudes?	E-Hobbes
Thursday Sept 24 no class			
8. Tuesday Sept 29	1941 game	<a href="#">10 Shocking Ways the Second World War Could Have Ended Differently</a> QTBPA: What factors might have helped Nazi Germany win the war, and what factors worked against it? Where do theories of comparative politics fit here?	1941 game
9. Thursday Oct 1	Why discriminate?	H &S Chps 45, , 47 The salience of skin tone Roots of racism <a href="#">White People</a> <a href="#">Inside the AC360 doll study</a> QTBPA: Explain the concept of internal colonialism. In what ways does racism manifest itself? How does this manifestation differ among races? Would you have predicted the results of the doll study before watching the videos? Consider what implications these findings might have on racial tensions later on in life. What does the film “White People” tell us about the power of discrimination?	Running game with glasses
10. Tuesday Oct 6	What does discrimination feel like?	<a href="#">Project Implicit- take the race test and at least one other</a> Experiences of discrimination among <a href="#">Lowest Difficulty Setting There Is</a> <a href="#">Top 10 Racist Cartoon Moments</a> <a href="#">Activists on "The Talk"</a> <a href="#">Anti-Muslim Harassment by a "Patriot"</a> <a href="#">12-Year-Olds Talking About Racial Identity</a> QTBPA: How do students and others experience and report on discrimination? Imagine being in their shoes – or think back to a time when you <i>were</i> in their shoes. How would you go about reporting on this? Why might it be important to start “the talk” on these issues, and how might you go about doing this effectively? Recommended Follow up posts <a href="#">here</a> and <a href="#">here</a>	Guest speaker Serae Lafache-Brazier Nakissa Jahanbani Discussion of impact of ethnicity on student lives
11. Thursday Oct 8	Slavery & discrimination	Anthony Marx Making Race and Nation Slavery, History of <a href="#">Strange Fruit</a> – Listen to the radio story H &S Chp 25 QTBPA: In what ways does the development of nation-states racism is expressed? How has this development played out historically, and how do creative pieces such as “Strange Fruit” capture these racial tensions?	

12. Tuesday Oct 13	Demonization	<a href="#">Terror mandated by God</a> Othering Obama: Racial Attitudes Prioress tale <a href="#">If Hitler won</a> <a href="#">Obama The BEAST</a> (at least 6 minutes) QTBPA: How does religion act as a medium through which ethnic conflict can be exhibited? Does ethnic violence thus become a performance art? What are the different symbolic and traditional ways of demonstrating racist attitudes?	
13. Thursday Oct 15	Coding review	Harff and Gurr 1988	
14. Tuesday Oct 20	Genocide	H &S Chps. 44, Genocide and ethnic conflict Watch <i>Night and Fog</i> (note this is a DISTURBING film) <a href="#">Watch it here for free</a> if this link does not work watch it on <a href="#">Amazon</a> will cost 1.99 or <a href="#">Hulu</a> QTBPA: Do we have a clear understanding of genocide and its implications? Why might our understanding be murkier than expected? To what extent do films such as <i>Night and Fog</i> , as well as analyses of occurrences such as the Final Solution and the Armenian Massacre, help us grasp the gravity of and causes behind genocide? <b>recommended</b> <a href="#">family separation</a>	
15. Thursday Oct 22	Why ethnic conflict	Structure and Strategy in Ethnic Conflict QTBPA: To what extent might maximal inclusiveness be seen as a disfavored outcome? Why is this? How might this account for ethnic conflict in general?	
16. Tuesday Oct 27	Why ethnic conflict II	The Security Dilemma and Ethnic Conflict Symbolic Politics or Rational Choice QTBPA: How do symbolic theories differ from theories of rationality? Which sort of theory better explains ethnic conflict, and why? What sorts of examples (historical or personal) would you use to support your claim?	Prisoner's dilemma with a twist
17. Thursday Oct 29	Resolving ethnic conflict	H &S Chps. 55, 56, 58 <a href="#">The Case for Reparations</a> QTBPA: What different options of quelling communal conflicts exist, and how effective is each? What are some contemporary problems associated with secession? How does the case of English Canada demonstrate the extent to which transcending ethnicity is possible? How does Coates make his case for reparations? Is it compelling? Is this line of thinking likely to quell racial tensions? Is this a subjectively right or wrong way of handling the issue?	
18. Tuesday Nov 3	Negotiation	<a href="#">Positive and zero sum situations</a> <a href="#">Interest based approach</a> <a href="#">Position based approach</a>	Real Estate Game

		<p>QTBPA: Distinguish between positive-, zero-, and negative-sum bargaining, as well as integrative and positional bargaining. Which strategy do you think would be most effective? Describe how you might use it in practice, considering how a person using a different strategy might respond.</p>	Oren-Jf'a Separation Talks
19. Thursday Nov 5 Nov 9 Last day for students to drop - "W"	Dacia simulation		
20. Tuesday Nov 10	Dacia simulation and the challenge of discussing the Israeli Palestinian Conflict	<p>Crisis in the Middle East 1-30, 35-60 (this reading will be discussed starting Nov. 19)  QTBPA: Begin considering the Arab-Israeli conflict, including the historical roots of the tension. What role have actors such as Great Britain played in the manifestation of the conflict? Have you noticed any recurring trends in the conflict?</p>	
21. Thursday Nov 12	<b><u>Palestinian &amp; Jewish scars</u></b>	<p><a href="#">Angry Egyptian</a>  <a href="#">The Checkpoint</a>  <a href="#">Scene from Budrus</a>  <a href="#">Bat Chen Poems</a>  <i>Israeli Sketchbook</i>  <a href="#">Dolphin disco</a>  QTBPA: How do theories of nationalism relate to Shehadeh's story- from the Palestinian and Israeli perspective? Does fairness fit into the resolution of conflict? What might an Israeli response be?  QTBPA: What might explain the long history of anti-Semitism? Is there still anti-Semitism- and why is this an argument? How do theories of nationalism relate to this material? Theories of comparative politics? What might a Palestinian response be?  <b>Recommended</b>  <a href="#">Budrus</a>  <a href="#">Corey Gil-Shuster</a></p>	
22. Tuesday Nov 17	Ethnic protest violence simulation	<p><a href="#">Blaming the Victim</a>  <a href="#">One-Note History: A Response to Yousef Munayyer</a>  <a href="#">We gave peace a chance</a>  <a href="#">Daniel Gordis and cognitive dissonance</a>  Rashomon in the Middle East  QTBPA: What are some of the different narratives surrounding the Arab-Israeli conflict? Has either side relied on blaming the victim, or have they been acting more pragmatically? Why does Gordis claim that Israel is experiencing cognitive dissonance, and how does Hauser respond? Consider Hauser's self-description as both a Zionist and a pro-Palestinian activist. What role does the construction of narratives play here?</p>	ethnic protest violence simulation
23. Thursday Nov 19	<b><u>Israeli Palestinian Conflict: the history</u></b>	<p>Crisis in the Middle East 76-90, 91-110 (this reading will be discussed in this class and the next 2 subsequent classes)  QTBPA: Revisit your response to the QTBPA from Tues Nov 10. Stemming from the classes and readings since then, would you respond differently now? What are your thoughts, in general, on the direction in which the Arab-Israeli conflict seems to be headed?  <b>recommended</b>  50 year war</p>	

		<a href="#">Part 1</a> <a href="#">Part 2</a>	
24. Tuesday Nov 24	<b><u>Israeli Palestinian simulation prep</u></b>	<a href="http://www.ispeacepossible.com/Shattered_Dreams_Of_Peace">http://www.ispeacepossible.com/ Shattered Dreams Of Peace</a> QTBPA: Describe your experience with the interactive maps. Did you find drawing borders to be a difficult process? What factors did you need to consider? Do you think this coincides with the thought processes of Israeli and Palestinian negotiators? Considering all of this will be useful in preparing for our class simulation beginning Tues Dec 1.	
Thursday Nov 26	No class		
25. Tuesday Dec 1	<b><u>Israeli Palestinian simulation</u></b>	<b><u>Simulation</u></b>	<b><u>simulation</u></b>
26. Thursday Dec 3	<b><u>Israeli Palestinian simulation</u></b>	<b><u>Simulation</u></b>	<b><u>simulation</u></b>
27. Tuesday Dec 8	Summary discussion		
FINAL EXAM 261 Friday Dec. 18th 10:30am – 12:30pm			