

MVZ208 Ethnic Conflicts in South Caucasus

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Course description:

- To clarify the relevant concepts and theories which provide the foundation for any study of ethnic conflict.
- Broaden student's knowledge about conflicts in one of the ethnically complex regions of the world – South Caucasus.



Course description:

- The region is located at a crossroad between Europe, Central Asia and the Middle East - it's a meeting place of different traditions and cultures: Christian and Islamic.
- This is a region, where regional and world great powers compete for political influence and for control over energy resources.
- Since the dissolution of the Soviet Union, there were created three independent states Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Geopolitical map of the Caucasus Region ©2001



Course description:

- In order to understand the logic of these conflicts, the first part of the course will be theoretical and will introduce with the terminology and major theoretical approaches of ethnic violence. There will be also discussed the conflict resolution theories.
- The second part will be concentrated on the explanation of the causes and results of ethnic conflicts in South Caucasus and the current situation.
- After obtaining a basic understanding of theoretical approaches of ethnic violence and conflict resolution from the first part of the course and relevant knowledge about the so called “frozen conflicts” of South Caucasus, students are expected to apply theoretical tools to analyze those conflicts and the possible ways of their resolution.

The aim of the course:

- To familiarize the students with actual conflicts in the South Caucasus with respect to factors that generates those conflicts.
- Explain the logic of major theories of ethnicity and ethnic conflict, illustrating and critiquing them with empirical examples in the region of South Caucasus.
- Explaining conflict resolution theories the strengths and weaknesses of each and to identify alternative policy tools available to outside parties for helping to resolve ethnic conflicts.

Requirements:

- The course is completed by an examination:
- to present presentations,
- to write a research paper and
- pass a written test.

Presentation:

- A good presentation involves both a summary of the reading and a critique; students are encouraged to situate the reading in the broader context of theory and/or empirics on the topic.
- Length : 10 minutes
- Presentation must be in PowerPoint and must be uploaded into the is.muni.cz on the day of the presentation.

Research paper:

- A group of 2 students have to write research paper on a particular ethnic conflict. The paper will analyze
- (a) the causes of the conflict,
- (b) the interests of all conflict parties and the reasons why individuals chose to engage in violent conflict and
- (c) the current situation - how the conflict ended (if the conflict is ongoing, explain why the conflict hasn't ended and what method would be most effective in resolving it).

Research paper:

- Finally, the paper should address the implications of this study for existing theories of ethnic conflict and/or conflict resolution. The last session of the course will be devoted to the discussion on research papers, where students should be able to present their argument and defend their points.
- Deadline : 15.5 2011.
- Length : 10 pages
- Submission : is.muni.cz (not accepted by email)

Written test:

- Written test will examine the students' understanding of different theories on the causes of intra state conflicts, conflict resolution theories and knowledge of actual conflicts in the South Caucasus. It will be based on the compulsory literature and the presented matter, with the success rate of 60% points.

Final Grading:

- A. 92 – 100,
- B. 84 – 91,
- C. 76 – 83,
- D. 68 – 75,
- E. 60 – 67.