



**Department of International Relations  
and European Studies**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL STUDIES**

**MASARYK UNIVERSITY**

**Joštova 10, CZ-602 00 Brno, Czech Republic**

tel: 00 420 - 549 495 224, fax: 00 420 - 549 491 920

## **MVZ208 Ethnic Conflicts in South Caucasus**

Syllabus

**Lecturer: Mgr. Zinaida Shevchuk**

### **Course description:**

The course is created to broaden student's knowledge about conflicts in one of the ethnically complex regions of the world – South Caucasus. 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, which went through turmoil and armed conflicts. The current situation in the South Caucasus highlights the troubled legacy of the former Soviet Union and ongoing process of multilayered political, economic, territorial and social reconfiguration.

In order to understand the logic of these conflicts, the first part of the course presents a conceptual and theoretical framework how to study ethnic conflict. Such framework will include three main levels of analysis: the systemic level, the domestic level and the perceptual level.

The second part will be concentrated on the explanation of the causes and results of ethnic conflicts in South Caucasus and the current situation. In this part students are expected to apply theory to practice and explore the nature and context of the conflict and its changing characteristic features.

### **The aim of the course:**

To examine the nature of conflicts in the South Caucasus with respect to factors that generates those conflicts and their change in time.

To explore theoretical perspective on ethnic conflict

Develop students' skills in conflict analysis

### **Requirements:**

The course is completed by an examination. There will be two exams in this course: a midterm exam and a final exam.

Grades in this course will be determined by the following:

Reading and Class Participation (10%)

Midterm 30% (covering the material in the first half of the course)

Final 60%

Written test will examine the students' understanding of systemic, domestic and perceptual

causes of the origins of conflict, the causes and consequence of the conflicts considered and ability to apply these conceptual tools to contemporary conflicts in the South Caucasus. Final test 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

## **Class Schedule:**

### **Week 1: Introduction**

### **Week 2: What Is Conflict – Concepts of Ethnicity and Theoretical Framework**

Greetsz, C. (1996): “Primordial Ties”, in Hutchinson J., Smith, A.(ed.): “Ethnicity”, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, pp. 40-45. *(5 pages)*.

Lake, D., Rothchild, D. (1998): “Spreading Fear: The Genesis of Transnational Ethnic Conflict”, chapter 1 in Lake, D., Rothchild, D. (ed.): “ The International Spread of Ethnic Conflict”, Princeton University Press, Princeton, New Jersey, pp.: 3-32. *(pages 29)*.

Nash, M. (1996): “The Core Elements of Ethnicity”, in Hutchinson J., Smith, A.(ed.): “Ethnicity”, Oxford University Press, Oxford, New York, pp. 24-28. *(4pages)*.

### **Week 3: Ethnic Conflict in IR**

Lobell, S., Maucer, P. (2004): “Ethnic conflict and International Politics: Explaining Diffusion and Escalation”, Palgrave Macmillan, New York, pp. 1-24. *(23pages)*.

Saideman, S. (1997): “Explaining the International Relations of Secessionist Conflicts”, International Organization, Vol.51, No 4., pp: 721-753. *(32pages)*.

### **Week 4. Domestic Politics and Ethnic Conflict**

Horowitz, D.(1994): “Democracy in Divided Societies”, chapter 3 in Diamond, L., Plattner, M. (ed.): “Nationalism, Ethnic Conflict and Democracy”, The John Hopkins University Press , Baltimore, London, pp.: 35-55. *(20 pages)*.

Saideman, S., Lanoue, D., Campenni, M., Stanton, S. (2002): “Democratization, Political institutions, and Ethnic Conflict. A pooled-Time Series Analysis, 1985-1998”, Comparative Political Studies, Vol. 35, No 1., pp: 103-129. *(26 pages)*.

### **Week 5. Ethnicity and Ethnic conflict**

Cederman, L., Wimmer, A., Min, B. (2010): “Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis”, *World Politics*, Vol. 62, No. 1., pp.: 87-119. (32 pages).

Kaufman, S. (2010): “Ethnicity as a Generator of Conflict, chapter 8 in Cordell, K., Wolff, S.: “Routledge Handbook of Ethnic Conflict”, Routledge, pp. 91-102. (11pages).

### **Week 6. The Role of Myths and History in Ethnic Conflict**

#### **Midterm Exam**

Kaufman, S. (2006): “The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War” chapter 2 in Kaufman, J. (2001): “Modern Hatreds. The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War”, Cornell University Press, Ithaca, London, pp.: 15-39. (24 pages).

### **Week 7. Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh**

Cornell, S. (2001): “The Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh”, chapter 3 in Cornell, S.: “Small Nations and Great Powers. A Study of Ethnopolitical Conflict in the Caucasus”, Routledge Curzon, London, New York, pp. 47- 95. (42pages).

### **Week 8. Georgian Conflicts - Abkhazia**

Nodia, G. (1997): “Causes and Visions of Conflicts in Abkhazia”, University of California, Berkley, pp. 2-52. (50 pages).

### **Week 9. Georgian Conflicts - South Ossetia**

International Crisis Group, Europe Report No. 159 (2204): “Georgia: Avoiding War in South Ossetia”, Tbilisi, Brussels, pp.: 1-29. (28 pages).

### **Week 10. Russian-Georgian Armed Conflict**

Felgenhauer, P. (2009): “After August 7: The Escalation of the Russia-Georgia War”, chapter 9 in Cornell, S. E., Starr, S. F.: “The Guns of August 2008 Russia’s War in Georgia”, M. E. Sharpe, Armonk, New York. pp. 162-180. (18pages).

Illarionov, A. (2009): “The Russian Leadership’s Preparation for War, 1999 – 2008”, chapter 4

in Cornell, S. E., Starr, S. F.: “The Guns of August 2008 Russia’s War in Georgia”, M. E. Sharpe, Armonk, New York. pp. 49-84. *(35pages)*.

### **Week 11. Russian Policy towards the South Caucasus**

Mankoff, J. (2009): “Back to the Offensive? The Former Soviet Union”, in Mankoff, J.: “Russian Foreign Policy. The Return of Great Power Politics”, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, Lanham, Boulder, New York, Toronto, Plymouth, UK., pp.: 241-246, 255-264, 280-282. *(16pages)*.

### **Week 12. The Great Game in a Small Space**

Jolicoeur, P., Labarre, F. (2011): “NATO’s Engagement in the South Caucasus: Looking for Energy Security or Expanding Norms and Values?”, chapter 10 in Jafalian, A. (ed.): “Reassessing Security in the South Caucasus. Regional Conflict and Transformation, Ashgate, Burlington, pp.: 157-176. *(19 pages)*.

Papkova, I. (2011): “Great Power Misalignment: The United States and the Russo-Georgian Conflict”, chapter 3 in Astrov, A. (ed.): “The Great Power (mis) Management. Russian-Georgian War and its Implications for Global Political Order, Ashgate, pp.: 43-58. *(15 pages)*.

### **Week 13. Discussion, final remarks**

## **Bibliography:**

- Cederman, L., Wimmer, A., Min, B. (2010): "Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis", *World Politics*, Vol. 62, No. 1., pp.: 87-119.
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- Felgenhauer, P. (2009): "After August 7: The Escalation of the Russia-Georgia War", chapter 9 in Cornell, S. E., Starr, S. F.: "The Guns of August 2008 Russia's War in Georgia", M. E. Sharpe, Armonk, New York. pp. 162-180.
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- Illarionov, A. (2009): "The Russian Leadership's Preparation for War, 1999 – 2008", chapter 4 in Cornell, S. E., Starr, S. F.: "The Guns of August 2008 Russia's War in Georgia", M. E. Sharpe, Armonk, New York. pp. 49-84.
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- Kaufman, S. (2006): "The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War" chapter 2 in Kaufman, J. (2001): "Modern Hatreds. The Symbolic Politics of Ethnic War", Cornell University Press, Ithaca, London, pp.: 15-39.
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