



**Course Syllabus 223G
Summer 2018, Vesalius College**

ETHNIC CONFLICT, TRANSITIONAL JUSTICE AND POST-CONFLICT RECONSTRUCTION

Number of ECTS Credits: 6

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Course Description

This interdisciplinary course is aimed at students interested in the study of international relations, political science, international law, and history. It combines a discussion of several cases studies and special issues with a theoretical discussion on ethnic conflict and post-conflict reconstruction.

In this course, we will discuss what ethnic conflict is, what causes it, and what its consequences for domestic and international peace are. Also, we will examine how one envisions security in a post-conflict environment, as well as the challenges surrounding the implementation of lasting democratic reforms and adequate economic policies. A final element of major significance is the impact of the intervention of international organizations as well as transnational advocacy networks during and immediate after the cessation of the conflict. Theoretically, the course will assist the students in identifying and analyzing the causes of conflict, while engaging in theoretical discussions on security, economic development, transitional justice, and post-conflict reconstruction.

In the final part of the course, we will examine these theoretical arguments in more detail by looking at a number of case studies, including questions of justice and post-conflict reconstruction in Northern Ireland, Kosovo, Afghanistan, and Iraq. Additionally, we will address questions related to the plight of women and children in armed conflict and post-conflict zones.

Learning Objectives

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

- Show a greater understanding of how conflict and post-conflict dynamics have shaped the social, political, economic, and cultural fabric of the modern international system;
- Demonstrate a grasp of the literature on ethnic conflict, justice, post-conflict reconstruction, and peacebuilding and reconciliation.

- Analyze and address issues related to important past and existing international and civil conflicts.

Course Prerequisites

At least one politics/international affairs course - background knowledge in International Relations Theories is advantageous, but not required.

Recommended Readings/reference books:

Mason and Meernik (eds.) 2006. *Conflict Prevention and Peace-building in Post-War Societies*, Routledge Press

Paris, Roland. 2004. *At War's End: Building Peace after Civil Conflict*, New York, Cambridge University Press.

Richmond, Oliver P. (ed.) 2010. *Palgrave Advances in Peacebuilding*, Palgrave Press

Roht-Arriaza, Naomi, and Javier Mariezcurrena (eds.) 2006. *Transitional Justice in the Twenty-First Century: Beyond Truth Versus Justice*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Grading and Assignments

1. Class participation (20% of the final grade). The class participation grade will be based on participation in the discussion during each session, the preparation of discussion questions for guest speakers, and participating in the class visit at The Hague.

3. A research paper (40% of the final grade), 12-15 pages double-spaced.

4. One take home final exam (40% of the final grade). The exam, which will be cumulative, must be taken on the date specified. They will be accessed online and submitted electronically to the instructor by the end of the assigned time for the course.

5. Extra-credit assignment (up to 5% of the final grade). Students are encouraged to attend and/or visit special events hosted by one of the European institutions in Brussels. Following their visit, the student should submit a 3-page, double-spaced written report reflecting on themes relevant to the course.

Grading Scale of Vesalius College

Vesalius College grading policy, in line with the Flemish Educational norms, is now as stated follows:

Letter grade	Scale of 20	Scale of 100
A	17.0-20.0	85-100

A-	16.1-16.9	81-84
B+	15.3-16.0	77-80
B	14.5-15.2	73-76
B-	13.7-14.4	69-72
C+	13.1-13.6	66-68
C	12.3-13.0	62-65
C-	11.5-12.2	58-61
D+	10.7-11.4	54-57
D	10.0-10.6	50-53
F	0-9.9	0-49

Grading Form for Written Assignments

For the research paper, you will need to select one of the case studies discussed in class or others related to them and propose a policy recommendation. Specifically, your paper will:

1) present a clear analysis of the problem, including an examination of the major actors that shape this issue and their goals;

2) analyze efforts made to date to address your problem (if any) and explain why these have been insufficient;

3) present a plan whereby the problem might be/have been solved or reduced, either by changing (an) existing arrangement(s) or creating new ones;

4) explain why this new or reformed proposal will have the capacity--the resources, mandate and organizational design--necessary to solve the problem where actors previously could not;

5) explain why the proposed institution or reform will be viable politically and will attract the political support necessary from crucial actors.

These last three tasks are particularly important. Good policy making involves devising plans to make things better. Describe why your recommendation for change is the right one to address the problem both technically and politically. If you are uncertain about the suitability of your proposal, check with the professor before you start.

Good papers will be well-informed and clearly argued. This is an exercise in critical thinking and problem-solving. Students will be evaluated on how clearly they have thought through the logic of their chosen problem and whether their proposed solution plausibly remedies or at least ameliorates the problem. Brevity is a virtue, particularly in the policy world. The 15 page limit (double spaced, standard margins) is firm. Extra pages will not help you.

Papers should be written in clear, correct prose. All sources must be properly cited in one consistent, recognized format. Proper formats for footnotes or endnotes and bibliography are discussed in *The Chicago Manual of Style*, the *MLA Handbook*, and Kate L. Turabian, *Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. **Note that web materials also require full and correct citation.** One example of correct web source citation is the APA's at: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/10/>.

All papers must be submitted with a coversheet stating the following and signed by you: "I understand the Vesalius College's Code of Academic Integrity and have completed this paper according to its guidelines. The work herein is mine alone."

Be sure to check the grading rubric before you turn in your paper. Have you met the criteria it sets out?

Additional Course Policies

Missed classes: It is the student's responsibility to be informed of any changes in reading requirements and to obtain notes from other students from any missed classes.

Missed exams, late papers, and medical excuses: Make up exams or deadline extensions for the paper require a written medical excuse stating the dates on which the student was incapacitated. Students requesting medical accommodations are expected contact the professor as soon as health allows and provide documentation promptly. Unexcused late papers will be penalized 5 points per calendar day, calculated from the beginning of class on the due date. Unexcused missed exams are marked as zero.

Academic Honesty Statement

Academic dishonesty is NOT tolerated in this course.

Academic honesty is not only an ethical issue but also the foundation of scholarship. Cheating and plagiarism are therefore serious breaches of academic integrity.

Following the College policy, cheating and plagiarism cases will be communicated in writing to the Associate Dean for Students and submitted to the Student Conduct Committee for disciplinary action.

If you refer to someone else's work, appropriate references and citations must be provided. Grammar, spelling and punctuation count, so use the tools necessary to correct before handing in assignments.

Use of Electronic Devices

Electronics are increasingly an important component in learning. Therefore, laptop use is permitted as long as it does not disrupt the learning experience of other students.

Disruptive behavior will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis and may result in the suspension of laptop privileges.

Please note that all cellphones, music players, and other electronic gadgets should be turned off during class.

Recording of lectures is NOT permitted.