

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN OSHKOSH
Department of Political Science

84: 373 – *Comparative Genocide* – Fall 2009
MWF, 10:20-11:20am – Nursing Education 222

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“The belief in a supernatural source of evil is not necessary;
men alone are quite capable of every wickedness.”
Joseph Conrad

Course Overview

Would we know genocide when we see it? In this course, we will examine the sad phenomenon of genocide from two distinct perspectives in our discipline: comparative politics and international relations. In the beginning of the course, we will look inside the state to get an idea of the social, economic and political situations that make a state more susceptible to genocide and see if there are indicators common to most genocides. The second part of the course will look at several genocides in detail. In the final section of the course, we will attempt to figure out why preventing and punishing genocide and other crimes against humanity is so difficult, and evaluate the methods used for prosecution and punishment to date. The course will culminate in a mock war crimes trial of the Sudan’s Omar al-Bashir.

I want to be clear that this course will NOT be a reflection on what happened in these various genocides; it will not be a tour of history’s sad events. Instead, it will be an honest look at the nature of states and the individuals who run them in order to determine why this particular event seems to happen with some regularity. If we know what makes genocide more likely to happen, why can’t we prevent it?

Course Prerequisites

Although I am willing to sign interested students from any discipline into this course, students who have completed Political Science 101 (Introduction to Comparative Politics), 115 (Introduction to International Relations) or 374/308 (International Law) may find that those courses provide a useful foundation for concepts and issues addressed in this course. I do not intend to cover material from these courses extensively here, so some knowledge will be assumed. Students who are struggling with the course because of the lack of background knowledge should see me for background readings and feel free to discuss them with me at any time.

It is my **strong preference** that political science majors complete their introductory courses before enrolling in upper-division courses I teach.

Textbooks

The following textbooks are available for purchase at the university bookstore or via online retailers:

Jones, Adam. 2006. *Genocide: A Comprehensive Introduction*. New York: Routledge.

Totten, Samuel & Paul R. Bartrop, eds. 2009. *The Genocide Studies Reader*. New York: Routledge.

Additional readings will be available on e-reserve from Polk Library or via one of Polk Library's many academic research databases (e.g., JSTOR, Academic Search Complete).

A Note on Course Format and Reading

This is an upper-division course in political science, and as such it will be taught in a seminar style as much as is practical. This means that lecturing will be minimal and that student input is required for the course to be successful (and fun). As such, I expect that students will attend class each week prepared to discuss the readings; completing the readings ahead of time is essential.

Assignments and Evaluation

Participation: 20% In an upper-division course, there's nothing worse than a roomful of students who won't say a word. You can participate by making quality contributions in class, injecting yourself into class discussions, asking questions, and stopping by office hours. If you show up for class every session but never say a word, you can expect, at maximum, a C for this portion of your grade. I do not formally take attendance in this course (or any of my courses); an exception to this is near the end of the semester, when attendance will be required for each day of the war crimes trial. Failure to attend any portion of the trial will result in a significant grade deduction.

Critical Essays (3): 30% At several points during the semester students will be given opportunities to write short (4-6 page) essays on questions, readings or films I assign. Each student will complete three of these essays. More details will be given in class.

War Crimes Trial¹: 30% Students will serve as prosecution and defense teams in the case of the Sudan's Omar al-Bashir. A third panel of students will serve as judges in the case. Students will be expected to work together and will receive individual grades from me, grades from other team members, and a group grade. Detailed instructions will be given in class.

Final Examination: 20% The final examination will be a take-home essay that students will receive December 9. Responses should be 6-8 pages in length and will be due on the final day of the semester, December 18.

Other Course Policies

Academic Dishonesty

I will not tolerate plagiarism of any kind. All students should familiarize themselves with the University's policies on academic dishonesty and know the consequences of plagiarism or cheating.

¹ Many thanks to Dr. Amy Eckert, Metropolitan State College of Denver, for inspiration and assistance.

In this course, plagiarism on any assignment will result in a grade of F for the course and the Dean of Students will be notified.

A Note to Political Science Majors

If you are currently a political science major or if you think you will be one of our majors in the future, it is important that you save your graded coursework from this class. Our Department Associate, Angelee Hammond, has a file for each major in Clow Faculty 427; you should deposit copies of your work with her. Seniors in our department are required to take Political Science 401, a seminar in which students' progress through the major is surveyed and a portfolio of their work is created. If you have questions, please see me after class.

Changes

I reserve the right to change any part of this syllabus at any time in order to accommodate the particular needs and pace of this group of students.

Schedule of Topics and Readings

Part I: Domestic Determinants of Genocide

Themes: Definitions of genocide and related crimes, domestic political structures and actors relevant to genocide studies, structural causes of state failure

September 9	Introduction to the class, readings, and assignments
September 11	A Very Messy Problem Indeed Lippman, Matthew. 2007. "Darfur: the politics of genocide denial syndrome." <i>Journal of Genocide Research</i> 9: 193-213.
September 14	The Origins of Genocide Jones, Chapter 1, pp. 3-38
September 16	Origins and "Intent" Totten and Bartrop, Articles 1.1 (Lemkin), 1.2 (LeBlanc) and 1.4 (UN) Lewy, Guenter. 2007. "Can there be genocide without the intent to commit genocide?" <i>Journal of Genocide Research</i> 9: 661-674.
September 18	More Definitions Totten and Bartrop, Articles 2.1 (Charny), 2.2 (Smith), and 2.3 (Fein)
September 21	Other Bad Ideas Totten and Bartrop, Articles 3.1 (Bell-Fialkoff), 3.2 (Mann), 3.3 (Harff), 3.4 (Schabas), and 3.5 (Semelin)
September 23	A Genocide By Any Other Name... Jones, Chapter 2, pp. 39-63
September 25	Mini-Case Study: Leopold's Belgian Congo

Hochschild, Adam. 1999. "A Reckoning." Chapter 15 in *King Leopold's Ghost: A Story of Greed, Terror, and Heroism in Colonial Africa*. New York: Mariner Books. [E-Reserve]
 Online documentary: "White King, Red Rubber, Black Death." Search this title on Google Videos; length is approximately 110 minutes. It is a BBC documentary.

- September 28 The Psychology of Genocide
 Totten and Bartrop, Article 4.1 (Staub)
 Jones, Chapter 10, pp. 261-287
- September 30 Sociological and Anthropological Approaches
 Jones, Chapter 11, pp. 288-306
- October 2 Genocide/Gendercide
 Jones, Chapter 13, pp. 325-337
- October 5 Genocide/Gendercide
 Totten and Bartrop, Article 5.3 (Sharlach)
 Eriksson Baaz, Maria, and Maria Stern. 2009. "Why Do Soldiers Rape? Masculinity, Violence and Sexuality in the Armed Forces in the Congo." *International Studies Quarterly* 53: 495ff. [D2L]
- October 7 Political Science and Genocide
 Jones, Chapter 12, pp. 307-324
 Totten and Bartrop, Article 4.2 (Harff) and 4.4 (Stanton)
- October 9 Weak, Failed, and Collapsed States
 Kasfir, Nelson. 2004. "Domestic Anarchy, Security Dilemmas, and Violent Predation." Chapter 2 in Rotberg, ed., *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. [E-reserve]

Part II: Case Studies of Genocide

- October 12 Indigenous People
 Jones, Chapter 3, pp. 67-100
- October 14 Armenia
 Jones, Chapter 4, pp. 101-123
 Totten and Bartrop, Article 6.3 (Melson)
- October 16 Guest Lecture: Richard Kalinoski
- October 19 The Holocaust
 Jones, Chapter 6, pp. 147-184
- October 21 The Holocaust
 Totten and Bartrop, Article 5.2 (Niewyk)

- October 23 Cambodia
Jones, Chapter 7, pp.185-211
- October 26 Bosnia and Kosovo
Jones, Chapter 8, pp. 212-227
Totten and Bartrop, Article 5
- October 28 Rwanda
Jones, Chapter 9, pp. 232-257
Totten and Bartrop, Article 6.3 (Levene)
- October 30 Darfur
Totten and Bartrop, Article 5 (Totten)

Part II: The International Repercussions of Genocide

Themes: Political forgiveness and reconciliation, war crimes tribunals (Nuremberg, ICTY, ICTR) and truth commissions, prosecution of genocide and crimes against humanity in international law, *jus cogens*, the International Criminal Court, memorialization, state apologies

- November 2 Humanitarian Intervention
Jones, Chapter 16, pp. 409
Totten and Bartrop, Article 7.4 (ICISS)
- November 4 Humanitarian Intervention
Totten and Bartrop, Articles 9.1 (Weiss and Collins) and 9.6 (Wheeler)
- November 6 Justice?
Jones, Chapter 15, pp. 362-387
- November 9 **No Class: Berlin Wall Anniversary Event in Reeve**
- November 11 The International Criminal Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY)
Totten and Bartrop, Articles 11.1 (Akhavan and Johnson) and 11.2 (“Krstic”)
- November 13 The International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda (ICTR)
Totten and Bartrop, Articles 12.2 (Ball), 12.3 (Lyon and Drumbl), and 12.4 (“Historic Judgment”)
- November 16 Film
Milosevic on Trial (2006)
- November 18 Film and Discussion
Milosevic on Trial (2006) – last small portion
We may also watch *The Reckoning*, a film about the ICC, if Polk Library’s copy arrives before this date.

November 20	The International Criminal Court (ICC) Totten and Bartrop, Chapter 14 (all articles)
November 23	Prevention Totten and Bartrop, Chapter 8 (all articles)
November 25	No Class: Thanksgiving Break
November 27	No Class: Thanksgiving Break
November 30	Political Forgiveness and Apology Jones, Chapter 14, pp. 345-361 Lind, Jennifer. 2009. "The Perils of Apology." <i>Foreign Affairs</i> 88 (May/June): 132.
December 2	Memory Readings TBA
December 4	War Crimes Trial: Preparations
December 7	War Crimes Trial – Reeve 220 Prosecution and Defense Papers DUE
December 9	War Crimes Trial – Reeve 220
December 11	War Crimes Trial – Reeve 220
December 14	War Crimes Trial: Debriefing Judges' Papers DUE
December 16	Free day: work on exams
December 18	Final Examinations DUE