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 Caucasian 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:**

Class Schedule:

**Week 1: Introduction**

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


**Week 3: Ethnic Conflict in IR**


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


**Week 5. Ethnicity and Ethnic conflict**
Week 6. The Role of Myths and History in Ethnic Conflict

Midterm Exam


Week 7. Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh


Week 8. Georgian Conflicts - Abkhazia


Week 9. Georgian Conflicts - South Ossetia


Week 10. Russian-Georgian Armed Conflict


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


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


**Week 13. Discussion, final remarks**
Bibliography:


