POL378H1:
Topics in Comparative Politics I – Genocide in Comparative Perspectives
Department of Political Science
University of Toronto

Administrative Details:

Term: Summer 2021, 2nd sub-session
Time: Tues & Thurs, 4-6PM EST
Room: ONLINE
Office: ONLINE
Office Hours: By appointment
Email: cheng.xu@mail.utoronto.ca

Course Overview:

This course provides students with the intellectual framework for understanding the numerous, complex, and often emotional issues related genocide for political science. Over the duration of the course, we will explore the theoretical, social, legal, and political basis for the understanding of genocide as a distinct analytical concept. Examination of several major cases of genocide throughout the modern era to contemporary times will provide the foundation for comparative analysis, as well as the exploration of selected broad themes. This course also provides a structured forum for analyzing universal questions relating to human rights and their gross violation. The core aims of the course include the following:

- The development and meaning of term genocide and its legal, political, and scholarly implications.
- The background, sources, causes and effects of genocide.
- How to recognize, define and predict genocide.
- The Gendered dimensions of genocide.
- Genocide denial.
- Methods and strategies to help prevent genocide.

Requirements:

Grading criteria for the course will be in the following areas:

1. **Participation and in class discussions (20%)**: student-led discussion is critical to the success of a seminar course. To those ends, students will be assessed on their attendance, their level of participation, and their degree of preparation for class discussions.

2. **Critical response papers based on assigned readings (15% x 2 = 30%)**: two 1000-word, double-spaced papers that critically engage with the required readings. Note that these papers should not be summaries of the week’s assigned readings; rather, they should develop theoretical, empirical, or methodological critiques of one or more articles and/or highlight new directions for future research on the week’s topic. Students will be assigned sessions during the first class, with the expectation that they will review one session in the conceptual portion of the
course, and one session in the case study portion of the course. Papers must be uploaded onto Quercus before midnight the day prior to class for each session that is reviewed.

3. **Major research paper (50%)**: an 8,000-10,000 word, double-spaced paper that addresses a major question in the study of genocide or engage in a novel comparative analysis of several case studies. The paper should be written in the form of a first draft of a paper intended for publication, meaning it should include a brief literature review, a theoretical argument, and an empirical test of the theory. Paper topics must be approved in advance; a one-page proposal will be due prior to class on **Week 3, Session 2**. The final papers will be due before the beginning of class on the **final seminar session**.

**Policies:**

**Late or missed papers**: Late papers will be penalized 10% per calendar day, excepting only extraordinary personal emergencies. If you find yourself in such a situation, please email me as soon as possible to inform me. Substantiating documentation will be required and must be submitted within one week of the missed due date. Note that assignments or tests from other courses scheduled for the same day do not constitute acceptable reasons—please plan accordingly. In the absence of substantiating documentation, late or missed assignments will receive a mark of zero.

**Accessibility**: The University of Toronto is committed to accessibility. If you require accessibility accommodations of any kind, please contact Accessibility Services at accessibility.services@utoronto.ca as soon as possible.

**Academic Honesty**: Plagiarism is a major academic offense and will be treated accordingly. Students are required to familiarize themselves with and conform to the University of Toronto’s policies on Academic Honesty, available at http://www.artsci.utoronto.ca/newstudents/transition/academic/plagiarism. In addition, students should consult Margaret Proctor's guide on "How Not to Plagiarize," available at http://advice.writing.utoronto.ca/using-sources/how-not-to-plagiarize.

**Turnitin**: Quercus automatically checks essay uploads with Turnitin. Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University's use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com web site.

**Mental Health**: This course deals with topics and themes that can be upsetting or emotionally distressing. Many of the readings include documented cases of trauma and atrocities, including physical and sexual violence. If you find yourself becoming triggered or emotionally distressed at
any time throughout the course, please do not hesitate to reach out to the instructor for help accessing mental health services. Additionally, a list of mental health resources will be posted for students on Quercus should they choose to access them confidentially.

**Required Reading:**

Quercus will be used to manage the course and readings. Specific and additional readings will be noted on the semester-specific schedules posted to Quercus.

**Week 1, Session 1: Developing the Concept of Genocide**


**Week 1, Session 2: Theories of Genocide**


**Week 2, Session 1: The Armenian Genocide**


Week 2, Session 2: The Holocaust


Week 3, Session 1: The Cambodian Genocide


Week 3, Session 2: The Rwandan Genocide


Week 4, Session 1: Indigenous Genocide in North America


Andrew Woolford, “Introduction” and “Settler Colonial Genocide in North America” in This Benevolent Experiment: Indigenous Boarding Schools, Genocide, and Redress in Canada and the United States (University of Manitoba and University of Nebraska Presses, 2015).


Week 4, Session 2: 21st Century/Ongoing Genocides


Week 5, Session 1: The Gendered Dimensions of Genocide


**Week 5, Session 2: Genocide Denial**


**Week 6, Session 1: Genocide Prevention**


**Week 6, Session 2: The Future of Genocide as an Analytical Category**


