

Sociology 142
War and Genocide
Syllabus
Fall 2019

Introduction

This course was official listed as “War and Conflict” and we certainly will address both of these topics. However, we will be particular interested in five specific sociological areas of enquiry: (1) the origins of violent thoughts and behavior; (2) the psychological and social prerequisites for killing and murder; (3) the ante and experiential influences of behavior during War; (4) the necessary conditions for human slaughter; and (5) the social, political and psychological conditions for genocide. These are difficult subjects that carry a great deal of emotional energy with them. Our job is not to lose that emotional energy but to use it as a stimulant to analyze and understand the dynamics that precipitate and fuel these behaviors. However, we will be continually reminded that our topic involves the loss of someone’s physical or emotional life, a condition that cannot be rectified easily, or at all, and thus demands both our deference and empathy. There are three books ordered for the course and they are: Robert Gellately and Ben Kiernan, eds., *The Specter of Genocide*; Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*; and Martín Sánchez-Jankowski, *Burning Dislike*. You will need to have access to them all because the exams will utilize each in their entirety.

Requirements for the Course

There are three requirements for this course. First, a number of books have been order for the course. You will need to have access to them—buying, renting, or borrowing—and you will be required to read each with a keen eye to the overall argument that they advance as well as the evidentiary basis for their conclusions. Second, there will be two in-class exams and one final exam. Each will count equally toward your final grade. These exams will have 3 Essay-answer questions. Completion of all the exams is required. If for reasons of illness or a death to a member of the immediate family the student is not able to take the exam, then a make-up exam will be offered. For an illness, a doctor’s note telling me that it was impossible for you to perform the tasks on the exam is required. For a death in the immediate family, a note from a family member with a phone number to call for verification is required. If students do not have either of these verifications, they will not be excused and will receive an “F.” Third, classroom participation is required. This will be done in the following way: each student will be assigned to a group and each group will be responsible for making an in-class oral multi-media presentation on the issues assigned for study that week. Each student in the group will be responsible for contributing to the group’s presentation as well as orally taking the class through their assigned aspect of the topic. This will count as everyone’s classroom participation. If the presentations are judged to be done “satisfactorily,” the students in that group will be given a “satisfactory grade” for classroom participation.

This “satisfactory” classroom participation evaluation will be applied to the student’s final grade in the following way: After calculating the final mean grade from the exams and placing that score on the grading scale provided at the bottom this syllabus, the student will be given the next higher half-grade on that scale for a final grade. For example if the student earned a mean test score grade of 88 which corresponds to a “B+” grade they will be given an “A-” grade as result of their class participation for a final grade in the course.

EXAM DATES: October 7th for Exam # 1, November 11th for Exam # 2, and the Final Exam in December will be announced.

GRADING: The instructor has developed all the exams for the course. In this regard, the instructor has written the questions and the answers to these questions for the Course Exam Reader to follow. Thus, students know that there is an answer for each of these questions and this answer is consistently applied to each student on each question. For the first two exams, there are 5 multiple-choice questions on each exam that are worth 2 points each (total of 10 points) and 2 Essay questions on each exam that are worth 45 points each (total of 90 points). Since the final exam has twice as much time, there will be 4 Essay Questions. Each exam is of equal weight, i.e. 1/3 of the final grade. For each exam, the student will be given the total points received. The formula to determine your final grade is based on adding up the scores of your three exams, dividing by three to determine your mean score, and placing that score on the following scale: A+= 100-96; A= 95-92; A-= 91-90; B+= 89-87; B= 86-83; B-= 82-80; C+= 79-77; C= 76-73; C-= 72-70; D+= 69-67; D= 66-63; D-= 62-60; F= 59-0. Finally, for those students who are taking the course on a pass/no pass basis, you must receive a C- or better on each of the exams to receive a “pass” grade. If any one of your exams falls below the C- level you will be given a “no pass” grade. This is because the Final Exam includes new material from the final third of the course (as well as material from the first two thirds) and in order for me to “officially” say that you passed all the material in the course you will need to pass each exam with 70 points (C-) or above, including the final, where there is new material.

Readings

Week 1, Sept. 9: Introduction to Course

Week 2, Sept. 16: Psychological Origins of Killing

READING: Gellately and Kiernan, *The Specter of Genocide*, Chapters 2,3,4,5

Week 3, Sept. 23: Sociological Origins of Killing

READING: Sánchez-Jankowski, *Burning Dislike*, Chapters Intro, 1, 2, 3

Week 4, Sept. 30: Psycho-Social Dynamic of Aggression

READING: Sánchez-Jankowski, *Burning Dislike*, Chapters 4, 5, 6, 7, Conclusion

Week 5, Oct. 7: **EXAM # 1**

Week 6, Oct. 14: Economics, Killing and Murder

READING: Gellately and Kiernan, *The Specter of Genocide*, Chapters 7, 8

Week 7, Oct. 21: War, Killing and Murder

Viewing: *The Pacific: Mini Series*, Episodes 1-10

Week 8, Oct. 28: War, Killing and Murder Continued

READING: Chang, *The Rape of Nanking* (The entire book)

Week 9, Nov. 4: War and Genocide

READING: Gellately and Kiernan, *The Specter of Genocide*, Chapters 9, 11

Week 10, Nov. 11: **EXAM # 2**

Week 11, Nov. 18: Politics, Mass Murder and Genocide

READING: Gellately and Kiernan, *The Specter of Genocide*, Chapters 10, 13, 14

Week 12, Nov. 25: Politics, Mass Murder and Genocide Continued

READING: Gellately and Kiernan, *The Specter of Genocide*, Chapters 15, 16, 17

Week: 13, Dec. 2: Review

TIME AND PLACE OF THE FINAL EXAM IN DECEMBER WILL BE ANNOUNCED