

Course Submission Form

Instructions: All courses submitted for the Common Core must be liberal arts courses. Courses submitted to the Course Review Committee may be submitted for only one area of the Common Core and must be 3credits. STEM waiver courses do not need to be approved by the Course Review Committee. This form should not be used for STEM waiver courses.

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Course Revision & College	
Form Submission Initial Submission	College Queens College

Course Data		
Course ID 120947	Subject PSCI (PSCI - Political Science)	Catalog Nbr 241
Catalog Status Approved	Contact Hours 3	No. of Credits 3
CourseTitle Politics of Ethnic Cleansing and Genocide		
Course Description Political events of ethnic cleansing and genocide, while often assumed to be rare occurrences, have occurred in many continents, in budding democracies as well as authoritarian regimes. This course offers a systematic approach to the conditions under which ethnic cleansing and genocidal policies often occur, a typological examination of sample case studies, and an exploration of how experiences of genocide and ethnic cleansing affect political discourse.		
Department Political Science		
Pre-Requisites/Co-Requisites		

Course Syllabus [Attachment Filename(s)]
PSCI_241_ISSyllabus.pdf

Location(Required or Flexible) and Learning Outcomes	
REQUIRED	FLEXIBLE
English Composition	World Cultures & Global Issues
Math & Quantitative Reasoning	US Experience in its Diversity
Life and Physical Sciences	Creative Expression



Individual and Society

Scientific World

Learning Outcomes: Questions

Learning Outcomes: Responses

*** 1. Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view.**

In this course, we examine common scholarly approaches to ethnic cleansing and genocide and examine their contours with evidence. The first weeks of class address major debates in the study of ethnicity [Varshney reading, day 2] and race/racism [Smedley and Smedley; Bachrach, day 3]. Here, we unveil cultural difference arguments and pit them against constructive and instrumentalist interpretations of ethnic behavior. We also address theoretical views of race, arguments about its existence or nonexistence, and the implications of these for peoples' experiences of racism.

As we move toward ethnic cleansing and genocide, we take of Barnes [day 4], who offers a series of theoretical explanations for genocide, and then move to Kiernan [a core class text], who has a particular argument about why genocides develop that is different from that of Barnes. We refine our varied approach when we take up the Nazi Genocide, where we examine in turn several arguments about the emergence and perpetration of the Nazi Genocide. This pattern, developed in the front half of the class, permeates every text and lecture choice over the course of the semester.

This SLO is assessed by the Case Study Paper, which requires students to analyze a genocide according to the components introduced through the Barnes reading (Address on Day 4), and then gather other sources to interpret and assess that information. Students choose a case from an array of supplied cases, must incorporate the Barnes approach with specified chapters of class assigned textbooks (either the Powers or Kiernan text, depending on the chosen genocide), and then must find other source material on that case. Students must synthesize these various data points and arguments in order to complete an analytical examination of the selected genocide/ethnic cleansing event. Mostly this skill is analytical categorization per Barnes' categories, but students encounter other analytical arguments and emphases in the course of incorporating the class text material as well as any other sources that they find for the required additional source material.

The final assignment in the class, the Policy Paper requires students to write a memo to a U.S. State Department Official to articulate, based on the factors learned collectively through the semester, an argument as to how the U.S. should approach the problem of genocide, specifically regarding designing an intervention policy and its parameters. This requires students to sift points of view and to assess information.

*** 2. Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically.**

In class, we practice the skill of evaluating arguments with evidence. We introduce in the first half of the class structural, institutional, and agency based [hereafter: SIA] explanations for social behaviors in the political science context. In doing so, we contemplate the sorts of evidence that would support certain analytical conclusions versus others. This practice is integrated throughout the entire course and undergirds almost every single assessment and course topic. The skill of analysis is explicitly taught and practiced during the lecture materials, appears in in-class assignments such as watching films, incorporated into our discussions of particular readings. The reading assignments are selected with this purpose in mind, as well as the underlying substantive content on ethnicity/race, ethnic cleansing, and genocide.

This SLO is assessed in various course components. The Midterm Exam includes a required essay question that invites students to analyze either the Armenian Genocide or the Genocide of Native Americans in the U.S. by implementing either the Barnes categorial approach (which divides genocides into colonial, war-based, or ideological tools of the state) or through the SIA approach (structural components, institutional components, and agency-based components). In either case (students choose their approach), students must apply an analytical tool and examine evidence from course material in order to draw a conclusion about how best to understand the event.

Students practice this skill again with their Book Review assignment, where they read a scholarly or non-fiction book that analyzes topics that are course adjacent (there's an approved book list that includes books on specific genocides or ethnic cleansing events, but also investigations into perpetrator behavior ? essentially anything that interprets a course topic with data). Students must place this book into analytical context in addition to providing a thick description of main findings and evidentiary framework.

Students also practice this SLO in a class discussion (Day 22) where they consider major ethnicity theoretical approaches (introduced in Day 2 and 3) to the conduct of the Rwandan genocide, with evidence drawn from an assigned textbook (Gourevitch's book) and a documentary shown on Day 21. The class has an in-class exercise where they complete a blank table to consider data, but this assignment is not graded with the same veracity as other assessments.

*** 3. Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions.**

This SLO is assessed several times over the course of the semester.

The first writing assignment, the Case Study Paper requires that students draw from a scholarly article (the Barnes article, from Day 4) and apply its analytical structure to a specific case of genocide. In this case, students practice the skill of analytical categorization by uniting a theoretical argument with case study evidence. They do this in writing. The second writing assignment is an essay in the Midterm exam, where they choose an analytical approach to thinking on genocide (drawn either from the SIA technique or from another theoretical approach drawn from the reading) and apply it either to the Armenian Genocide or the Genocide of the Native Americans in the U.S. The final assignment in the class, the Policy Paper requires students to write a memo to a U.S. State Department Official to articulate, based on the factors learned collectively through the semester, an argument as to how the U.S. should approach the problem of genocide, specifically regarding designing an intervention policy and its parameters.

4. Identify and apply the fundamental concepts and methods of a discipline or interdisciplinary field exploring the relationship between the individual and society, including, but not limited to, anthropology, communications, cultural studies, history, journalism, philosophy, political science, psychology, public affairs, religion, and sociology.

The SIA approach to understanding human behavior is commonly used in the social sciences ? it is our analytical method in the course. We also routinely engage in fundamental political science topics of regime type, political institutions, political ideologies, coercion, cooptation, ethnicity, racism, ethnic cleansing and genocide. The thrust of this class is understanding power hierarchies in societies and how collectives can be used against other collectives and individuals, as well as the power hierarchies that ascribe that targeting.

This SLO is assessed through the Case Study Paper, which requires a facility with the concepts and methods of political science to assess and analytically categorize a selected genocide. The Midterm Exam also incorporates these elements, since it requires students to apply their understanding of our theoretical discussion of ethnicity and racism in political society (Days 2-3), discussions of common methods of understanding causal emphases in the social sciences (the SIA approach), and then the application of these to evidence offered in class materials. Students practice this skill again with the Book Review Paper, where to do well they need to have a sense of where the book falls within the larger disciplinary discussion of ethnicity cleansing or genocide, which touches on several of the listed disciplines ? we are deep in political science, but also have history, anthropology, sociology, and psychology represented on the accepted book list. The final assignment in the class, the Policy Paper requires students to write a memo to a U.S. State Department Official to articulate, based on the factors learned collectively through the semester, an argument as to how the U.S. should approach the problem of genocide, specifically regarding designing an intervention policy and its parameters. This assessment picks up the methods of public affairs.

<p>5. Examine how an individual's place in society affects experiences, values, or choices.</p>	<p>Individuals' places in society help contribute to their decisions to perpetrate genocide or ethnic cleansing; their individual empowerment or disempowerment in a regime may determine their ability or willingness to be or avoid being bystanders to repression. An individual's place in society may contribute to the likelihood that they will be a victim of genocide. We examine all of these in this class.</p> <p>This SLO is evaluated through all our main assessments, since a central course preoccupation is about how individuals' futures are affected by societies' assessment of their place in a racial or ethnic hierarchy and how a state can apply exterminatory policies in order to murder those people because of that ascribed place. The Case Study Paper asks students to examine a selected case of a group of people being targeted for extermination on the basis of their place in society and how that affects their experiences (of that targeting) and any choices that they have (although they generally have few in these circumstances). The Midterm asks about these similarly, and in particular requires students to showcase understanding of the theoretical material that showcases the structural, institutional and agency-based components of ethnic and racial identities and how political hierarchies can create contexts that undermine individual choice and identity and create experiences and outcomes that presume group affiliation. In particular, the Essay question in the exam requires students to examine in depth either the Armenian Genocide or the Genocide Against the U.S. Native Americans to track the parameters of how members of these groups came to be targeted based on their identity and its place in either Ottoman or early American society.</p>
<p>6. Articulate and assess ethical views and their underlying premises.</p>	
<p>7. Articulate ethical uses of data and other information resources to respond to problems and questions.</p>	

8. Identify and engage with local, national, or global trends or ideologies, and analyze their impact on individual or collective decision-making.

We identify and engage national/global trends of colonialism, racism, anti-Semitism and national self-determination, as well as ideologies of liberalism, communism and fascism. We consider how these trends and ideologies contribute to how states govern and the mechanisms by which they incorporate inclusive or exclusive cultural policies to achieve their state goals.

This SLO is addressed for the entire class through the Midterm Exam, which requires students to answer questions about political ideologies and their effects on the emergence of genocide and how those ideologies affect collective decision-making of state actors to murder particular groups of people. Some students also pick these themes up with their Book Review paper, depending on which book they choose ? we have many books on fascism and the Nazi Genocide, communism and its effects in Cambodia, the USSR, and China, all of which showcase the role of those ideologies in the perpetration of genocide. The Case Study paper often picks up themes with regard to colonialism (many of the cases students choose from are cases of colonial genocides, with the exception of one). Because students have some lee-way in choosing issues and cases that are of particular interest to them, it is possible that they choose cases and books that engage other elements of genocide (for example, genocide during wartime) that may not fall under the framework of "trends and ideologies." The Policy Paper is inspired, in part, by a global movement with regard to the intervention in the cases of genocide and the UN's Responsibility to Protect and how those considerations, as well as the UN Genocide Convention, should or should not affect U. S. foreign policy decision-making concerning instances of ethnic cleansing and genocide..

A. If there is a change to the course title, what is the new course title?

B. If there is a change to the course description, what is the new course description?

C. If there is a change to the pre-requisites and/or co-requisites, what are the new pre-requisites and/or co-requisites?

Chair (Approver) Comments

Comments The committee voted to approve this course on Feb 25, 2022.