MS 614 Ethnicity, Race, and the Church

Steven Ybarrola

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Course: MS614 W1 (SP 2009)
Title: Ethnicity, Race, and the Church
Hours: 3.00
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Prerequisites:

None

Department: Christian Mission
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Meetings:

During 02/09/2009 to 05/22/2009 on Tuesday from 2:30p to 5:15p in M302.

Maximum Registration: 30
Catalog Description: This course is a cross-cultural, comparative study of the causes of both ethnic/racial conflict and cooperation. Various theories of ethnic conflict/cooperation will be examined using case studies from different parts of the world. A key focus of the course will be on how the complex issues related to ethnicity and race should be considered in the context of missions, evangelism, and the global church. Meets with MB745 on the Kentucky Campus.

Objectives:

ETHNICITY, RACE, AND THE CHURCH
MS 614/MB 745
Spring 2009

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Office Hours: Tuesday 10:00-11:00, 1:00-2:00; Wed. 10:00-11:30; or by appointment

Course Description:
This course is a cross-cultural, comparative study of the causes of both ethnic/racial conflict and cooperation. Various social scientific and theological theories of ethnic conflict/cooperation will be examined using case studies from different parts of the world. A key focus of the course will be on how the complex issues related to ethnicity and race should be considered in the context of missions, evangelism, and the church.

Objectives:
1. To gain an understanding of the main terms and concepts dealing with the complex issue of inter-ethnic/race relations.
2. To be exposed to some of the classic as well as more contemporary statements and studies of ethnicity and ethnic nationalism.
3. To gain an understanding of the causes of ethnic conflict in different parts of the world, as well as possible solutions to these conflicts.
4. To understand the role ethnicity and race play in missions, evangelism, and the church.
5. To conduct an in depth analysis of a particular case.
6. To further develop written and oral communication skills, critical reading and thinking skills, and leadership and group interaction skills.

Required Texts:
Chacour, Elias  

Eriksen, Thomas Hyland  

Hays, J. Daniel  

Hutchinson, John and Anthony D. Smith  

Volf, Miroslav  

Grading:
Attendance/Participation 20%
Moodle Discussion/Activities 30%
Presentation 15%
Term paper 35%

90-100 = A+/-, 80-89 = B+/-, 70-79 = C+/-, 60-69 = D+/-, Below 60 = F

Grade meaning:
Following the guidelines set out in the Asbury Seminary catalog, I define the grades in the following manner:
A Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives.
A-, B+ Very good work. Very strong, significant achievement of course objectives.
B                      Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives.
B-, C+             Above acceptable work.
C                     Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives.
C-, D+             Below acceptable work.
D                     Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives.
D-, F               Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives

Incomplete Work (from the Asbury Seminary Catalog):
The official end of each term is 4:00 p.m. on the last day of the examination schedule. This hour is the deadline for handing in all course work. Each instructor may set an earlier deadline for submission of any or all course work. The student must petition the faculty person involved and the student’s advisor for permission to receive an “I” at the end of a semester.

A grade of “I” denotes that the work of a course has not been completed due to an unavoidable emergency, which does not include delinquency or attending to church work or other employment. If the work of a course is incomplete at the end of a term without an emergency, a letter grade will be given based on the grades of work done, with incomplete work counted as “F.”

COURSE OVERVIEW

Ethnic conflict is one of the defining characteristics of our age. On every continent and in almost every state, ethnic identity has become the quintessential means of group formation and mobilization. In the post-Cold War era ethnic conflict has become the greatest challenge to international stability and the utopian vision of a “New World Order.” Indeed, former president Bill Clinton came to realize that ethnic hatred was “the most important issue in the whole world today,” and echoing this from a Christian perspective, Billy Graham has said, “Racial and ethnic hostility is the foremost social problem facing our world today” (http://www.intervarsity.org/news/the-presidents-page-648).

In this course we will try to make sense out of this complex, and often misunderstood, phenomenon using the following means:

1) Reading a general anthropological text (Eriksen) to give us an overview of the terms, concepts, and theories used by social scientists in analyzing ethnicity, race, and nationalism.
2) Reading articles (Hutchinson and Smith) that supplement the text and present examples or a more in-depth analysis of different aspects of ethnicity and race.
3) Reading other texts (Chacour, Hays, Volf) that examine the issues from an explicitly Christian perspective.
4) Participating in Moodle discussions with a group of fellow students where you will “process” the course materials ahead of class sessions.
5) Participating in class discussions. As a graduate-level course, this is set up to emphasize student participation and de-emphasize lecturing. I expect that you will a) have read the material for the day, b) have done the activity associated with the reading(s), and c) come to class prepared to discuss the material.
6) Examining certain cases of ethnicity, nationalism, and the church. We will look in some detail at the case of the Basques in Spain, as well as the situation in Rwanda, Wales, Israel/Palestine, and the former Yugoslavia.
7) Researching a particular case of ethnicity/race and the church somewhere in the world to study and analyze it in more detail, incorporating the concepts, issues, theories, and approaches from the class.
8) Giving a conference-style presentation on your research project. By this, I mean that the presentation must be a maximum of 15 minutes in length, and will be peer reviewed and responded to by a selected “panel,” as well as by the professor.
9) **MB 745 students:** You will write a longer, more in-depth research paper and you will be responsible for **leading at least one class session.**

**Activities:**

Every week you will participate in **Moodle discussion groups.** You will be placed in a group with others from the class, which will constitute your discussion group for the first half of the semester; you will be placed in a different group for the second half. You’ll post responses to the readings, and respond to what others in your group have posted. Each **week one person in your group will be selected to lead the discussion, and the others will respond to the leader’s post.** For more details on discussion groups see page 4. The activities constitute **30% of your grade.**

**Paper:**

There won’t be a midterm exam as you will be doing weekly Moodle discussions on the material covered. For the final project you will write a research paper on a particular case of inter-ethnic/race relations as it relates to the church. An important component of this paper will be applying the concepts and theories we’ve discussed to your analysis. The paper should demonstrate to me that you have 1) a good understanding of the course concepts/theories, 2) the critical and analytical ability to use these to frame your analysis, and 3) a good grasp of the issues related to the particular case you are examining.

As part of the term paper you will submit various stages of the research process throughout the **second half of the course.** These include:

1) **Research proposal (due March 24).**
   a. This should include the case you’ve selected, reasons why you chose this case, and a brief statement on the social/cultural context of the site. You should also conduct a quick review of our library resources to make sure there is enough information available for you to adequately research the case.

2) **Bibliography (due April 7).**
   a. List the bibliographic sources that seem the most relevant for your research. You may need to use library loan to obtain some of these sources.

3) **Outline (due April 21).**
   a. Submit an outline of your research paper. This will help you think through the structure of your analysis.

4) **Annotated bibliography (due May 5).**
   a. Write up a brief summary of each book/article you’ve used for your research.

The paper length requirement is:

**MS 650:** 15-20 page final paper.
**MB 740:** 20-25 page final paper.

The paper constitutes **25% of your grade,** and the “stages” constitute **10%.** See page 5 for the criteria used to evaluate your final paper.

**Presentation:**

You will give a professional conference-style presentation on your research at the end of the semester. You are encouraged to use PowerPoint, as well as other technology, but you **MUST keep the presentation to 15 minutes.** Some of your fellow classmates will evaluate your presentation, and ask questions at the end of your presentation. At the end of all presentations for the day the rest of the class will be invited to ask questions or make comments related to the presentations. The presentation constitutes **15% of your grade.**

**Plagiarism and Other Academic Dishonesty:**

Plagiarism, defined in the Faculty Handbook (p. 83) as “the presenting of another’s ideas or writings as one’s own,” and cheating of any form is a serious offense and will result in an “F” for the assignment or the course.
GUIDELINES FOR MOODLE GROUP DISCUSSIONS

Each week a member of your discussion group will be selected to lead the discussion on the reading materials for the week. **The leader will submit his or her response on Moodle by 3:00 p.m. the Saturday before the next class session (late submissions will have points deducted).** The other members of the group will then respond to the leader’s post based on their understanding of the readings. These activities are meant to spark discussion of the materials prior to class in order to help you think through the material as well as prepare you for the class discussion. **All members of the group MUST post at least one response prior to the next class session.** Since this is a discussion, **individuals in the group should respond to posts multiple times,** and will be rewarded for doing so. As a general rule, if you respond with one significant posting, you can expect to receive between an 7 and 7.5 out of 10. Multiple significant responses will earn more points.

As a **leader** you should cover the following:

1) What were **your major learnings** from the materials for that week?
2) **What are key questions you have** that come out of the reading(s) that you would like others to address in their responses on Moodle? (Try to come up with at least 2 or 3).
3) What are some of the **mission implications** of the material?

All 3 components should be addressed in the leader’s post. The other students in the discussion group will respond to the leader’s post and will include other key points the leader may have left out.

**I will read all the posts and submit comments occasionally.** You will be evaluated according to the criteria listed below. In general, I am less concerned that you “correctly” understand the material than I am with the amount of thought and effort you demonstrate in your posts.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING GROUP DISCUSSION

9-10 = Demonstrated excellent effort in the discussion. Very well thought out and clearly articulated ideas. Demonstrated insightfulness and an excellent understanding of course materials.
8-8.5 = Demonstrated very good effort in the discussion. Well thought out and clearly articulated ideas. Demonstrated insightfulness and a very good understanding of course materials.
7-7.5 = Demonstrated good effort. Ideas are, in general, well articulated. Demonstrated a good understanding of the course materials.
5-6.5 = Demonstrated a minimal amount of effort. Ideas are, in general, not well developed or articulated. Does not demonstrate a very good understanding of course materials.
Below 5 = Demonstrated little or no effort or understanding of the material.

CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING YOUR RESEARCH PAPER

1. Mechanics:
   - The paper is free of typos.
   - The paper contains no formatting errors (e.g., margins, spacing).
   - The paper has met the specifics for length and pages are numbered.

2. Execution:
   - The introduction lets the reader know where the paper is going by clearly stating a thesis and the main points to be covered.
   - The body has well-developed paragraphs that relate back to the thesis.
   - The body stays “on track” and holds the reader’s attention.
The conclusion pulls the essay together by drawing reasonable and well-stated conclusions based on the evidence presented in the essay.

3. Discretion:
   Statements made by the author are supported by good evidence and argumentation.
   Sources of information are cited in the text.
   There are adequate sources consulted to do justice to the subject matter.

4. Analysis:
   The paper demonstrates significant insight into the collection and analysis of data.
   There is a good balance between description and analysis.
   There is enough information presented to adequately analyze the case being presented.

5. Synthesis:
   The author demonstrates a significant understanding of concepts from the course.
   The author demonstrates a significant ability to apply the concepts from the course to a particular case.

USING MOODLE

1. The Course Information Center, in the center of your screen, contains many features to be used throughout the semester, including:
   a) Course News and Announcements, where I will post items important for the entire class;
   b) Syllabus, where a copy of the syllabus is provided;
   c) To Professor, which is a way for you to post a message directly to me and we can discuss an issue privately;
   d) Course Questions, which is a public forum where you can publicly post any questions you have regarding the course so others may see your message and respond. Anytime you have a question or comment about the course, the schedule, the assignments, or anything else that may be of interest to other participants and me you should post it to the Course Questions Forum;
   e) Prayer Forum, which is a public forum where you can post prayer concerns and praises for all to see. This is a way for us to build community;
   f) Open Forum, which is a public forum where you can post anything that is not course-related for all to see. Examples include someone getting married, an upcoming birthday, discussions on topics not course-related, etc. This is a way for us to build community.

2. Modules, which are located below the Course Information Center, will contain forums where group discussions will take place, documents or other files to download, and assignment links where you will post your assignments to me. Modules will be clearly labeled so you can follow along during the semester.

3. Resources, a section located on the left side, provides links to items you will want to use often in the semester.

EDUCATIONAL ASSUMPTIONS

The Christian faith rests on the personal self-revelation of God in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the philosophy of education at Asbury begins with the Christian faith, which centers in God, as revealed in the person of the Lord Jesus Christ and as witnessed in the Holy Scriptures by the Holy Spirit.

Asbury Seminary, founded upon and committed to a vital evangelical Christian faith, finds its roots in the Wesleyan-Arminian theological tradition, which is summarized in the Articles of Incorporation and in the Statement of Faith. The trustees, officers of administration and faculty members are committed to a style of
education in which this faith will permeate all the work and instruction of the Seminary. The theological, ethical and social commitments of the Seminary provide the foundation for its instruction and life. The institution purposes to assist students to grow intellectually, emotionally, physically and spiritually in their lifetime quest of becoming and doing all that God intends.

In general, a theological seminary is an institution of higher learning composed of scholarly teachers, leaders and students dedicated to truth. In the search for truth, the faculty at Asbury Seminary affirms the following guidelines: Scripture, reason, experience and tradition. Learning and growth take place in an atmosphere of love, caring, faith and obedience to God. In this sense, the seminary is the Church at work in the education of its clergy and leaders. The theological seminary serves the same Lord as other parts of the Church, and it makes the same general commitments as any other part of the Body of Christ. The theological seminary, however, seeks to make its central contributions in keeping with its character as an educational institution.

While Asbury Seminary stands within the Wesleyan tradition and holds to a clearly defined statement of faith, the faculty is committed to academic freedom. Central to all academic work at the Seminary are two commitments: the first to Jesus Christ as sovereign Lord and the second to the pursuit of truth as a corporate and personal vocation. Faculty members and students are encouraged to carry on research, lecturing and publishing that reflect a growing knowledge of God and a widening awareness of truth. The faculty members are committed to the objective study and discussion of all theological opinions, and the Seminary regards liberty of conscience as an important dimension of theological and personal integrity.

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND ACTIVITIES
(Note: Readings and activities should be done in the order listed)

Week 1—Feb. 10: TOPICS: COURSE INTRODUCTION; BASIC CONCEPTS

***READ AND DO BEFORE FIRST CLASS SESSION***:
Reading: Eriksen (E) Chapter 1: “What is Ethnicity,” & Hutchinson and Smith (HS) Chapters 1 & 3.
Activity: Come to class with a list of some of the key concepts from the readings related to interethnic relations. What are some concepts you want to discuss, or that need further clarification?

Week 2—Feb. 17: TOPICS: CULTURAL VALUES, STEREOTYPES, PREJUDICE AND THE SOCIAL ORGANIZATION OF CULTURAL DISTINCTIVENESS

E Chapter 3: “The Social Organization of Cultural Distinctiveness,” & HS Chapters 13 & 32;
-Primordialism & Instrumentalism: HS Chapters 6, 7, 8, & 11;
-Ethnic Boundary Formation: HS Chapters 12, 23, 24, 35, & 36.
Activity: Moodle Discussion.
Devotion: Group 1 will lead a 10 minute devotion.

Week 3—Feb. 24: TOPICS: IDENTITY, IDEOLOGY, AND ETHNOGENESIS

Reading: E Chapter 4: “Ethnic Identity and Ideology,” & HS Chapters 10 & 14;
E Chapter 5: “Ethnicity in History,” & HS Chapters 2, 5, 18, & 21.
Activity: Moodle Discussion.
Devotion: Group 2 will lead 10 minute devotion.

Week 4—March 3: TOPICS: NATIONALISM; MINORITIES AND THE STATE

Reading: E Chapter 6: “Nationalism,” & HS Chapters 47, 49, & 51;
E Chapter 7: “Minorities and the State,” & HS Chapters 29, 39, 40, & 48;
Activity: Moodle Discussion.
Devotion: Group 3 will lead 10 minute devotion.

Week 5—March 10: TOPICS: IDENTITY POLITICS; DIFFERENT THEORIES OF ETHNIC/RACIAL GROUP FORMATION AND MOBILIZATION
Reading: E Chapter 8: “Identity Politics, Culture and Rights;”
Other Theories: HS Chapters 14, 15, 16, 37, 38, 45, 61, & 62.
Activity: Moodle Discussion.
Devotion: Group 4 will lead 10 minute devotion.

Week 6—March 17: TOPIC: A BIBLICAL THEOLOGY OF RACE AND ETHNICITY
Activity: Moodle Discussion.
Devotion: Group 5 will lead 10 minute devotion.

Week 7—March 24: TOPICS: THE NON-ETHNIC; SUMMARY
Reading: E Chapter 9: “The Non-Ethnic;”
Summary: Hicks, “Introduction: Problems in the Study of Ethnicity” (on Moodle).
Activity: Proposal Due;
Moodle Discussion.
Devotion: Group 1 will lead 10 minute devotion.

Week 8—March 31: NO CLASS—READING WEEK

Week 9—April 7: TOPIC: CASE STUDY: RWANDA
Reading: Newbury, “Ethnicity and the Politics of History in Rwanda;”
Clapham, “Rwanda: The Perils of Peacemaking”
Activity: Bibliography due;
Moodle Discussion.
Devotion: Group 2 will lead 10 minute devotion.

Week 10—April 14: TOPIC: CASE STUDY—ISRAEL/PALESTINE
Reading: Sahliyeh, “Ethnicity and State-Building: The Case of the Palestinians in the Middle East” (on Moodle)
Chacour, Blood Brothers (entire book).
Activity: Moodle Discussion.
Devotion: Group 3 will lead 10 minute devotion.

Week 11—April 21: TOPIC: IDENTITY, OTHERNESS, AND RECONCILIATION
Reading: Volf, Exclusion and Embrace (entire book);
Pachau, “Christian Mission amidst Ethnic Pandemonium: Toward a Missional Theology of Reconciliation” (on Moodle)
Activity: Outline due;
Moodle Discussion.
Devotion: Group 4 will lead 10 minute devotion.

Week 12—April 28: TOPICS: CASE STUDY—BASQUE IDENTITY, CULTURE, AND THE EVANGELICAL CHURCH
Reading: Kurlansky, The Basque History of the World, Chapters 1 & 2 (on Moodle);
Zulaika, “The Tragedy of Carlos” (on Moodle);
Activity: Moodle Discussion.
Devotion: Group 5 will lead 10 minute devotion.

Week 13—May 5: TOPIC: PRESENTATIONS
Activity: Annotated bibliography due;
Work on your presentation/research project.
Devotion: Group 1 will lead 10 minute devotion.

Week 14—May 12: TOPIC: PRESENTATIONS
Activity: Work on your presentation/research project.
Devotion: Group 2 will lead 10 minute devotion.

Week 15—May 18-22: FINALS WEEK: WE WILL MEET DURING THE FINAL EXAM PERIOD
***PAPER DUE BY 5:00 P.M. ON THE DAY OF THE FINAL***