

## Gov't 403/COLL 400: Sources of and Remedies for Conflict in Eurasia

Fall 2021

Instructor: Paula M. Pickering

Chancellors 343, [pmpick@wm.edu](mailto:pmpick@wm.edu), 221-3038

Office Hours: Wed.: 11:00-12:00, Thu: 9-11:00, & by appointment

### COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This research seminar examines sources of communal conflict in the post-Soviet Eurasian region neighboring Russia and evaluates efforts to rebuild these states and societies. We explore the multi-faceted dynamics within the Western states of former Soviet Union (Ukraine & Moldova), the Southern Caucasus, and post-Soviet Central Asia that may affect conflict. Do culture and history predispose the diverse peoples of the former Soviet Union to repeated violence, regional instability, frozen conflicts, de-facto states, and non-democratic regimes? What role do politicians' interests, institutions, natural resources, economic factors, social movements, and geo-political forces play in contributing to conflict? How can we explain periods of violence, negative peace, and enduring peace that have occurred in different places and at different times in Post-Soviet Eurasia? We also examine whether regional states, particularly Russia, and international actors' interventions into these deeply divided states address sources of conflict and help resolve or exacerbate them. Finally, what factors explain the varying levels of effectiveness of projects for post-conflict state building, conflict resolution, good governance, and regional stability?

### EVALUATION:

- **Informed class participation (40% of your grade):** Students are expected to attend and to participate actively in *every* class discussion. As a small and upper-level course, this senior seminar's success will substantially depend on students' informed participation and ability to engage in lively and constructive exchanges of ideas grounded in theory and evidence. This means that students should come to every class having completed, having thought critically about, and taken key notes on the required readings and on discussion questions posted by the student leader of the day. Specifically, students should be prepared in each class to discuss and ask questions about: the authors' arguments, specific evidence, how well the authors' arguments hold up against alternative or complementary readings from the class, and what kind of further research could be conducted to improve authors' contribution to our understanding of the sources of or remedies for conflict in Eurasia. As a result, students must bring or be able to access readings in class.
  - As a part of their participation grade (**15%**), students will be required to write **discussion questions for one class** session during the semester. During that class session, the student leader will be responsible for leading class discussion for approximately 45 minutes. The student discussion leader for a particular session should develop questions that provoke their classmates to actively engage higher-level critical thinking skills (an example will be posted). This will include through spurring several of the following: critical analysis of the assigned readings' key arguments and methods, comparison of them to prior readings on big questions about the sources of and/or remedies for conflict, consideration of perspectives of different actors in conflict or conflict resolution, development of other questions on the topic of discussion, or suggestions for further research that could be conducted to improve or test the authors' argument. Toward the goal of stimulating this kind of critical thinking and analysis, student discussion leaders must upload their questions to the class Blackboard page **by 5pm on the day before the seminar meeting** for which they are scheduled to lead the discussion and other seminar students must read and be ready to engage in discussion about these questions by class. A signup sheet will be distributed at the beginning of the course.
  - Another part of their participation grade (**5%**) involves students working in small groups for an **in-class simulation** around US-based NGO practitioners advocating the merits of using US taxpayer funds to support their conflict-resolution and prevention activities in Central Asia (Mercy Corp's USAID's "Peaceful Communities' Initiative" assigned for **11/10**). Students will be randomly assigned to take on one of four roles: 1) US-based NGO practitioners advocating the merits of their taxpayer-funded program to a town hall in Evansville, Indiana; 2) US-based NGO practitioners advocating the merits of their taxpayer-funded program to the US House Committee on Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats; 3) citizens participating in Evansville, IN's town hall who evaluate the merits of US-based NGO practitioners' arguments about their conflict-resolution and prevention work in Central Asia, or 4) US Congresspersons on the House Committee on Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and

Emerging Threats evaluating the merits of US-based NGO practitioners' arguments about their conflict-resolution and prevention work in Central Asia.

- **Final research paper process (60%):** The capstone assignment for senior seminars in government is an approximately 20 paged, double-spaced original research paper, which for this class will involve the conduct of research that evaluates a hypothesis about the sources of or remedies for conflict in Eurasia. Your social scientific paper will be grounded in theory from which you will generate hypotheses that you will then explore through systematically analyzed empirical evidence. High quality social scientific research is best viewed as a process. Along these lines, you will be required to submit a prospectus, which will then inform your research design and final paper. (An example of a past student's work will be provided). Your 2-3-paged **prospectus (due 10/11: 8%)** will specify: your specific research question and explain why it is important; the theoretical framework you will use to analyze your research question, and the specific hypothesis or hypotheses suggested by your theory. Your 4-5-paged **research design** will build off of your prospectus to describe the methods you will use to gather and analyze different types of evidence/data that explore your hypotheses **(due 11/5: 14%)**. During a 15-minute meeting with me, you will show me your **primary data/evidence** and discuss progress and problems in analyzing these data **(between 11/11-12: 5%)**. At each stage of the process, you will receive feedback intended to improve your **final paper, due on 12/17 at noon. (33%)**.

I encourage students to visit me during office hours to discuss material, request sources for research topics, alert me to special learning needs, or pose any questions about readings, lectures, discussions, or the research paper and process. **Proactive use of office hours** is particularly important to help with the research paper process. I strongly suggest students stay informed about current developments in Eurasia. Some good English-language sources of news in the region include: *Eurasianet.org*: <http://www.eurasianet.org>, Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty: <http://www.rferl.org/section/Russia/161.html>; The Jamestown Foundation's *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, <http://www.jamestown.org/programs/edm/>, *The Central Asia-Caucasus Analyst*, <http://www.cacianalyst.org/>, *PONARS Eurasia*: <http://www.ponarseurasia.org/>; The Institute for War and Peace Reporting, <http://iwpr.net/>, *Transitions Online*: <https://tol.org/>. I will provide links to other web sites on the course's Blackboard site.

### Other Policies:

No student may pass this class without satisfying each and every segment of the above requirements. Please re-read and follow the Honor Code:

<https://www.wm.edu/offices/deanofstudents/services/communityvalues/honorcodeandcouncils/honorcode/index.php>.

Due to the **pandemic** and William & Mary's rules for faculty, staff, and students that protect the safety of the William & Mary community, all students in this course are required to adhere to the practices specified in the University's Healthy Together Community Statement (<https://www.wm.edu/sites/pathforward/health/index.php>). During this class, which is scheduled to be taught face-to-face, students are required to follow W&M rules regarding wearing a mask, which as of September 1, 2021 require masks in indoor shared spaces. If a student becomes ill, he or she, after getting medical attention, should communicate immediately with me so that we can work together and with W&M staff on coursework.

To ensure fairness and prepare students for the "real world," I will not accept late papers without written documentation. During class, computers must be used only for class purposes; at times, I may ask that computers be put away. Cell phones/PDAs must be turned completely off.

W&M accommodates students with disabilities in accordance with federal laws and university policy. Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a learning, psychiatric, physical, or chronic health diagnosis should contact Student Accessibility Services staff at 757-221-2509 or at [sas@wm.edu](mailto:sas@wm.edu) to determine if accommodations are warranted and to obtain an official letter of accommodation. For more information, please see [www.wm.edu/sas](http://www.wm.edu/sas)

W&M recognizes that students can face challenges that make learning difficult. There are many resources available at W&M to help students. Asking for help is a sign of courage and strength. Please reach out to me if you or someone you know are facing problems inside or outside the classroom, and I will do my best to guide you to appropriate resources on campus. Those resources include:

--For psychological/emotional stress, there is the W&M Counseling Center (757-221-3620), 240 Gooch Dr. 2<sup>nd</sup> floor, <https://www.wm.edu/offices/wellness/counselingcenter/>. Services are free and confidential.

--For physical/medical concerns, there is the W&M Health Center (757-221-4386), 240 Gooch Drive, <https://www.wm.edu/offices/wellness/healthcenter/>

--For other additional support or resources, please contact the Dean of Students by submitting a care report (757-221-2510) or by email

at [deanofstudents@wm.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@wm.edu) <https://www.wm.edu/offices/deanofstudents/services/caresupportservices/index.php>

I consider it part of my responsibility as an instructor to address the learning needs of all students in this course. I will present materials that are respectful of diversity: race, color, ethnicity, gender, age, disability, religious beliefs, political preference, sexual orientation, gender identity, citizenship, or national origin among other personal characteristics. I also believe that the diversity of student experiences and perspectives is essential to the deepening of knowledge in a course. I welcome any suggestions that you have about other ways to include the value of diversity in this course.

The Writing Resources Center, located on the first floor of Swem Library, is a free service provided to W&M students. Trained consultants offer individual assistance with writing: To make an appointment, visit the WRC webpage [www.wm.edu/wrc](http://www.wm.edu/wrc)

### **Required materials:**

Thomas de Waal and Nickolaus von Twickel, *Beyond Frozen Conflict: Scenarios for the Separatist Disputes of Eastern Europe*, edited by Michael Emerson, Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2020, paperback ISBN 9781538144176 ebook ISBN: 9781538144183

Articles in academic journals are available through Swem library's electronic database collections. Readings with a \* are posted on blackboard.

### **Recommended:**

Chris Howard, *Thinking Like a Political Scientist*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2017.

Wed., 9/1, **Introduction to the course**

## **SOURCES OF CONFLICT**

Mon., 9/6, **Empires' approaches to managing conflict & building nations in Eurasia**

- \*Bremmer, Ian. "Reassessing Soviet Nationalities theory," in Ian Bremmer and Ray Taras, eds., *Nations and Politics in the Soviet successor states*, Cambridge University Press, 1993, 3-26.
- \*Lynch, Dov. "The Soviet Collapse and the Rise of De Facto States." In *Engaging Eurasia's Separatist states*, pp. 22-27.

Wed., 9/8, **Accurately understanding why conflicts described as ethnic occur in some places in the former Soviet Union and not others and in some times and not others**

- \*Tishkov, Valery. "Ethnic Conflicts in the Former USSR: The Use and Misuse of Typologies and Data," *Journal of Peace Research* 36, no. 5 (1999); 571-91.
- \*Howard, Chris, "Who cares." In *Thinking Like a Political Scientist* Chicago: Chicago U Press, 2017, pp. 13-30. [recommended book]

Mon., 9/13, **Social science methods for explaining violence and violent dynamics.**

- \*King, Charles. "The Micropolitics of Social Violence," *World Politics* 56, No. 3 (2004): 31-55.
- Howard, Chris. "Moving from Concepts to Measures," in *Thinking Like a Political Scientist*, pp. 40-5.

### **The Cases of the Caucasus**

Wed., 9/15, **Factors contributing to succession**

- \*Lynch, Dov. "The logic driving succession," *Engaging Eurasia's Separatist States*, pp. 10-12, 41-89.

Mon., 9/20, **Resources**

- \*King, Charles. "The Benefits of Ethnic War: Understanding Eurasia's Unrecognized States." In *Extreme Politics*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010, pp. 103-132 (notes pp. 201-205).
- \*Howard, Chris. "Why" in *Thinking Like a Political Scientist*, pp. 64-top of 71.

### **The Cases of the Western former Soviet Union**

Wed., 9/22, **Moldova**

- \*Munteanu, Igor. "Social Multipolarity and Political Violence," in Pal Kolsto, ed., *National Integration and Violent conflict in Post-Soviet States: the Cases of Estonia and Moldova*, London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002, pp. 197-221.

- \*Howard, Chris. "Why: Testing a Causal Hypothesis" in *Thinking Like a Political Scientist*, pp. 71-81.

#### Mon., 9/27, **Ukraine**

- \*Wilson, Andrew. "The Donbas in 2014: Explaining Civil Conflict Perhaps, but not Civil War," *Europe-Asia Studies* 68, no. 4 (2016): 631-652, DOI: 10.1080/09668136.2016.1176994.
- \*Giuliano, Elise, "Who supported separatism in Donbas? Ethnicity and popular opinion at the state of the Ukraine crisis." *Post-Soviet Affairs* 34, nos. 2-3 (2018): 158-161 **only**. (focus on questions, methods, & data section)

#### Wed., 9/29, **The Evolution of Russia and External actors' roles**

- De Waal and von Twickel, "Scenarios for the Future of Eastern Europe's Unresolved Conflicts," sections 2.1-2.2.4. In *Beyond Frozen Conflict: Scenarios for the Separatist Disputes of Eastern Europe*, pp. 27-36. [**from our required book**; from now on, "in De Waal and Von Twickel."]
- \*Howard, Chris. "Choosing a research design," in *Thinking Like a Political Scientist*, pp 93-114.

#### The Cases of Central Asia

##### Mon., 10/4, **When Religion can be violently mobilized**

- \*Khamidov, Alisher. "When Religion Resorts to Violence: Explaining the Spatial Variation in religious-based Mobilization in Kyrgyzstan." In *Islam society and Politics in Central Asia*, edited by Pauline Jones, 199-220. Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2017.
- Howard, Chris. "Choosing Cases," pp. 117-8, 131-140.

##### Wed., 10/6, **Resources, culture, Islamism, and ideology**

- \*Collins, Kathleen. "Ideas, Networks, and Islamist Movements: Evidence from Central Asia and the Caucasus," *World Politics*. Vol. 60, No. 1 (2007): 64-96.

#### **PROSPECTUS DUE IN CLASS**

##### Mon., 10/11, **Explaining War in Tajikistan**

- \*Akbarzadeh, Shahram. "Why Did Nationalism Fail in Tajikistan?" *Europe-Asia Studies* 48, no. 7 (1996): 1105-129. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/153100>

#### **AFTER CONFLICT: STRATEGIES FOR REMEDYING OR EXACERBATING CONFLICT**

##### Wed., 10/13, **When does International Intervention harm, rather than help, peace?**

- \*Anderson, Mary B. "Introduction," "Characteristics of Conflict Areas," and "Food for Work: Rebuilding Homes in Tajikistan." In *Do No Harm: How Aid can support Peace – or War*, edited by Mary Anderson, 1-3; 23-39, 79-90. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1999.

#### **Fall Break – 10/18-19**

##### Wed., 10/20, **Evaluating Track 2 approaches to conflict management, resolution, and transformation**

- \*Gamaghelyan, Philip. "Towards an Inclusive Conception of Best Practices in Peace and Conflict Initiatives: The Case of the South Caucasus", *International Negotiation* 26, 1 (2020): 125-146, doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/15718069-BJA10023>.

##### Mon., 10/25, **What policies and factors discourage resumption of war?**

- \*Call, Charles. "Introduction," and "Making Peace Stick." In *Why Peace fails: the Causes and Prevention of Civil War Recurrence*, 8-17, 36-41, 183-209. Washington D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2012.

##### Wed., 10/27, **The promise and challenges of externally led statebuilding**

- \*Barnett, Michael and Christoph Zurcher. "The peacebuilders' contract: How external statebuilding reinforces weak statehood." In *Dilemmas of statebuilding: Confronting the Contradictions of Postwar Peace Operations*, edited by Roland Paris and Timothy D. Sisk, 23-41, 47-49. New York: Routledge, 2009.

## **Central Asia**

### **Mon. 11/1, Post-Conflict Tajikistan's settlement and the impact of international aid**

- \*Slim, Randa and Faredun Hodizoda. "Tajikistan: from Civil War to Peacebuilding." In *Searching for Peace in Central and South Asia*, edited by Monique Mekenkamp, Paul van Tongeren, and Hans van de Veen, 174-185. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002.
- \*Nakaya, Sumie. "Aid and transition from a war economy to an oligarchy in post-war Tajikistan," *Central Asian Study* 28, no. 3 (2009): 250-273.

### **Wed., 11/3, Regional efforts to manage water**

- \*Zakhirova, Leila. "The International Politics of Water Security in Central Asia," *Europe-Asia Studies* 65, No. 10 (2013): 1994-2013.
- \*Troianovski. Anton, "A Canal Blocked by Ukraine 7 Years Ago Widens a Gulf with Moscow," *The New York Times*, 9 May 2021.

## **RESEARCH DESIGN DUE: NOV. 5**

### **Mon., 11/8, Considering the contribution of women within an authoritarian peacebuilding approach**

- \*Ismailbekova, Aksana and Nick Megoran, "Peace in the Family is the Basis of Peace in the County: How Women Contribute to Local Peace in Southern Kyrgyzstan," *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* 14, no. 4 (2020): 482-500.

### **Wed., 11/10, The strengths and weaknesses of NGOs' contribution to peacebuilding + in-class simulation**

- \*Mercy Corps. "USAID's Peaceful Communities Initiative," Final Report submitted to USAID CAR Regional Mission, Almaty, Kazakhstan, December 2006, pp. 1-28 + skim annexes.
- Kull, Steven. "American Public Support for Foreign Aid in the Age of Trump," Brookings Institution Brief, July 31, 2017, pp. 1-7, <https://www.brookings.edu/research/american-public-support-for-foreign-aid-in-the-age-of-trump/>
- **IN-CLASS SIMULATION:** Articulating the merits of using tax payer funds to support foreign aid for post-conflict communities in Central Asia to two audiences: 1) a town hall in Evansville, Indiana, 2) US House Committee on Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats

## **Caucasus**

### **Mon., 11/15, What do de-facto peoples think and what are the implications?**

- \*O'Loughlin, V. Kolossov, G. Toal. "Inside the Post-Soviet de facto States: A Comparison of Attitudes in Abkhazia, Nagorny Karabakh, South Ossetia, and Transnistria," *Eurasian Geography and Economics*. 55, No. 5 (2015): 423-456.

### **Wed. 11/17, Defrosting a Frozen Conflict in Georgia (Discussion will be led by Dr. Maliniak)**

- De Waal, "2.2.5 Potential for incremental change," pp. 36-39 in De Waal and Von Twickel.
- \*Driscoll, Jesse, and Daniel Maliniak. "Did Georgian Voters Desire Military Escalation in 2008? Experiments and Observations." *Journal of Politics* 78, no. 1, (2016): pp. 265-280.

### **Mon., 11/22, Evaluating developments in and conflict resolution policies in Abkhazia**

- De Waal, "Abkhazia Today," pp. 156-176 and "Recommendations," pp. 17-26 (focus on those related to Georgia and Abkhazia), in De Waal and Von Twickel.

## **Thanksgiving break: Nov. 24-26**

### **Mon., 11/29, Examples of Track 1.5 and 2 approaches in the South Caucasus**

- \*Rothbart, Daniel, and Susan H. Allen. "Building Peace through Systemic Compassion." *Conflict Resolution Quarterly* 36, no. 4 (2019): 373-86. doi:10.1002/crq.21249.

- \*Gamaghelyan, Philip. “On methodological challenges of leading an analytic initiative in the context of the long-lasting Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: from inclusion to exclusion.” In *Conflict Resolution Beyond the International Relations Paradigm*, 129-151. Stuttgart: Ibidem, 2019.

Wed, 12/1, **The Impact of Regional Actors on resumption and “resolution” of conflict**

- Ohanyan, Anna, “The Forty-Day War and the ‘Russian Peace’ in Nagorno-Karabakh.” *Georgetown Journal of International Affairs*, June 16, 2021, pp. 1-4, <https://gjia.georgetown.edu/2021/06/16/the-forty-day-war-and-the-russian-peace-in-nagorno-karabakh/>
- De Waal, “Conclusion,” in *The Caucasus: An Introduction*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., Oxford University Press, 2008, pp. 257-260

The Western former Soviet Union & updates and reflection on conflict resolution efforts

Mon., 12/6, **How the EU and Russia influence conflict resolution in Transnistria**

- \*Beyer, John and Stefan Wolff, “Linkage and leverage effects on Moldova’s Transnistria problem.” *East European Politics* 32, no.1 (2016): 335-354.
- “Moldovan PM: People 'Will Never Approve Federalization,’” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 25 August 2019, video: <https://www.rferl.org/a/moldovan-pm-people-will-never-approve-federalization-/30128270.html>
- “Moldovan President Seeks 'Pragmatic Relationship' With Russia,” *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, 23 August 2021, <https://www.rferl.org/a/moldova-sandu-interview-russia/31424192.html>

Wed., 12/8, **Evaluating prospects for conflict resolution in Ukraine and considering lessons learned**

- Von Twickel, Nikolaus “The State of The Donbas: A Study of Eastern Ukraine’s Separatist-Held Areas” in De Waal and Von Twickel, Sections: 3.1 (pp. 61-62); 3.2.10-3.2.11 (pp. 75-77), 3.3.1-3.3.7 (pp. 77-90), 3.4.3 (pp. 97-99), 3.4.6 (pp. 102-103); 3.5.5 - 3.6 (pp. 110-117).

### Additional information about participation grade (beyond leading discussion & engaging in the simulation)

In general, here is what I consider excellent participation and attendance:

- **Level of involvement:** You make a strong effort to contribute often to large and small group discussions. You kick off discussion at times, but you do not consistently dominate the room. You know when to cut yourself off and to give others a chance to speak.
- **Substance of comments:** Your comments demonstrate knowledge of the readings and not simply your personal experience or intuition. You bring the readings to class and point us to specific pages to back your points. Your remarks build momentum, are focused and relevant. You do not speak just to get your voice on record.
- **Attendance:** You attend class every day, unless you offer a reasonable explanation such as an documented illness, family emergency, extra ordinary work commitment, or your required presence at a non-optional William & Mary event (e.g., class field trip).
- **Common courtesy:** You arrive on time every day and take your seat quietly if you are late. You disable your cell phone and other gadgets before class starts. You do not check email or instant messages, surf the web, do other classes' homework, or do other similar distracting behaviors during class. You listen carefully to others when they are speaking. You respect the right of your classmates to express their analysis, even if you might disagree.

Should the pandemic require us to shift to an online format, I will circulated adapted guidelines about participation.

(adapted from Manna 2011)

Grade range	Description
A- A (90-100)	--Frequent contributor in large group discussions each week. Active and engaged in small groups and paired discussions. --Comments grounded in the readings and demonstrate depth of understanding or attempts to grapple with them; ideas help to build momentum in discussions. -- Has self-awareness and does not ramble or try to dominate the room. Attends class essentially every day (e.g., 0-1 absences for the semester), always brings readings & is always courteous.
B- B B+ (80-89)	--Consistent commenter each week in large group, but some runs of silence or inactivity occasionally detectable. Active and engaged in small groups or pairs, and might excel slightly more there than in the large group. Occasionally may lack good self-awareness. --Comments are helpful and draw upon readings, but less consistently so and occasionally may be more grounded in intuition or personal experience. --Attends class most days (e.g., 3 absences for the semester), brings readings most days, and is always courteous.
C- C C+ (70-79)	--Infrequent participant each week in large group, but may be reasonably engaged in small groups. Attentive, but not involved. Often an imbalance between small group and large group effort. May have inconsistent self-awareness. --Comments are infrequently grounded in the readings; more reliant on intuition or personal experience --Absences becoming somewhat frequent (e.g., 4-5 absences for the semester), infrequently brings readings, but is always courteous.
D- D D+ (60-69)	--Extremely rare or essentially no participation each week in large group. Rarely attentive; largely uninvolved, including in small groups. May have very little self-awareness. --Hard to tell to what extent this person is trying to engage the readings because comments are so infrequent, or nonexistent. --Frequent absences (6 absences for the semester), but is always courteous.
F (<60)	--No engagement in large group discussion. During small group or paired time, still tends to work alone or be distracted. May demonstrate no self-awareness. --Impossible to tell to what extent the person has tried to engage the readings. --Excessive absences (7 or more absences for the semester). --May consistently fail to demonstrate courtesy.