

Spring 2023

## Conflict and Social Change 2 (520311)

Instructor: Yasuyuki Matsunaga

Class Time/Location: Wednesday, 08:30-11:40, Rm406

Office Hours: by appointment

E-mail: matsunaga@tufts.ac.jp

1. Enrollment precondition: see [here](#).
2. Course Moodle page: click [this](#); to sign in, you will need the enrollment key.
3. Course requirements
  - (1) Weekly reading assignments (due the day before the class meeting around 9 pm);
  - (2) Circulation of a draft paper five days before Week 12 (July 5);
  - (3) Submission of a final paper (a revised version based on feedback received) by the end of the exam period (Friday, July 21).
4. Additional requirements
  - (1) Showing up to the weekly class on time and remaining alert during the class time;
  - (2) Approval of your paper outline by the mid-semester point (Monday, May 29)
5. On the term paper
  - (1) To be written in formal academic English;
  - (2) The expected length is somewhere between 6,000 and 8,000 words;
  - (3) Your outline should spell out the following: (a) your central question (aka a “puzzle”--this indicates that your inquiry is meant to explain something novel or puzzling); (b) its justification (a brief argument as to why your question (“your puzzle”) is puzzling and worthy of investigation [which means that the answer to your question should not be already known or obvious]); (c) a methodological statement (on where and how you plan to obtain necessary data); and (d) a brief but substantial bibliography.
  - (4) Make sure to start sending me your draft proposals around the first or second week of May; it usually takes at least **several** exchanges (and not infrequently even more) before you get your outline approved.
  - (5) For the referencing method, use the author date referencing style. See [here](#)
  - (6) Write in your words; minimize quotes; and always credit the authors for all quotes and paraphrases.
  - (7) Any violation of professional ethics of academic conduct, including an act of plagiarism, will cost you an immediate and permanent expulsion from class with no course credit.
6. Additional notes
  - (1) Circulated drafts will be peer-reviewed in class (Weeks 12 & 13) à la Brookings style.
  - (2) Using a language-model AI (e.g. ChatGPT) won't help you become an original thinker/writer for academic purposes. You will be wasting your time using it. Instead, try to use search engines (e.g. Google) often, which is much better for finding out information. The golden rule remains: always write your sentences yourself.

## Course Objectives

1. To ensure that the participants become versed with cutting-edge, theoretically-informed analytical approaches and empirical research through reading and discussion of select social scientific works on the dynamics of conflict and contentious politics; and
2. To ensure that the participants get the opportunity to practice writing a theoretically-informed academic research paper.

## Overall Schedule

Week 1 (Apr 12) starts at 10:10 (course introduction, no reading)

Week 2 (April 19) through Week 8 (June 7) double class (08:30-11:40), May 31 will be changed to May 29

Weeks 9-11: no class (you will work on your paper)

Weeks 12-13: paper draft peer-review sessions à la Brookings style<sup>1</sup>

## Weekly Schedule and the Readings

Week1 (April 12): Course Introduction (this day only we will start at 10:10 instead of 08:30); no reading.

Week 2 (April 19): Analytical Recap: What Do We Aim For in Social Scientific Explanation? What is a Case?

Required Reading: Charles C. Ragin [1987]2014. *The Comparative Method* (University of California Press), particularly, "Preface and Overview," and "Introduction to the 2014 Edition"; and Ragin 1992.

"Introduction: Cases of 'What is a Case?'" in *What is a Case? Exploring the Foundations of Social Inquiry*, ed. Charles C. Ragin and Howard S. Becker (Cambridge University Press), 1-17.

Recommended Reading: The rest of the books (Ragin [1987]2014, Ragin and Becker 1992); Charles C. Ragin. 1994. *Constructing Social Research* (Thousand Oaks: Pine Forge Press); Charles C. Ragin and Claude Robinson. 2009. "The Distinctiveness of Comparative Research," in *The SAGE Handbook of Comparative Politics*, ed. Todd Landman & Neil Robinson (Sage), 13-34.

Week 3 (April 26): The Event-Structure Nexus and an Event as an Actualization

Required Readings: Sewell, William H., Jr. 2005. "A Theory of the Event: Marshall Sahlins's 'Possible Theory of History,'" in *Logics of History: Social Theory and Social Transformation* (University of Chicago Press), 2005, Ch. 7.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Brookings format allows a pre-selected discussant of your paper draft to summarize and offer a constructive critique before you get to respond to that critique. This will save us time because it skips the author's presentation part. We can spend the bulk of our time discussing your paper.

Recommended Readings:

Sahlins, Marshall. 1981. *Historical Metaphors and Mythical Realities: Structure in the Early History of the Sandwich Islands Kingdom*. University of Michigan Press.

\_\_\_\_\_. [1982]2000. "Individual Experience and Cultural Order," in *Culture in Practice: Selected Essays* (New York: Zone Books), 277-291.

\_\_\_\_\_. 1985. *Islands of History* (University of Chicago Press), esp. Introduction and Ch. 5 (Structure and History).

Sewell 2005 The rest of the book, esp. Ch 3 "Three Temporalities: Toward an Eventful Sociology," Ch 4 "A Theory of Structure: Duality, Agency, and Transformation," and Ch 8 "Historical Events as Transformations of Structures: Inventing Revolution at the Bastille."

[May 3: no class, school holiday]

Week 4 (May 10): Everyday Phenomena for Investigation (1) - Difference-Based Interactions

Required Readings: Sciortino, Giuseppe. 2012. "Ethnicity, Race, Nationhood, Foreignness, and Many Other Things: Prolegomena to a Cultural Sociology of Difference-Based Interactions," in *The Oxford Handbook of Cultural Sociology*, ed. Jeffrey C. Alexander et al. (Oxford University Press).

Recommended Readings: Wimmer, Andreas, and Nina Glick Schiller. 2003. "Methodological Nationalism, the Social Sciences, and the Study of Migration: An Essay in Historical Epistemology," *International Migration Review* 37 (3): 576–610; Brubaker, Rogers, Margit Feischmidt, Jon Fox, and Liana Grancea. 2006. *Nationalist Politics and Everyday Ethnicity in a Transylvanian Town*. Princeton University Press.

Week 5 (May 17): Everyday Phenomena for Investigation (2) - Social Closure and Inequality

Required Readings: Ch 3 Max Weber "Selections from Economy and Society, vols. 1 and 2, and General Economic History," and Ch 9 Frank Parkin, "Social Closure and Class Formation," in *Classes, Power and Conflict*, ed. Anthony Giddens and David Held (Macmillan 1982), 60-86 and 175-184.

Recommended Readings:

Tilly, Charles. 1998. *Durable Inequality*. University of California Press. 299 pgs.

\_\_\_\_\_. 1999. "Durable Inequality" in *A Nation Divided: Diversity, Inequality, and Community in American Society*, ed. Moen, Phyllis, Donna Dempster-McClain, and Henry A. Walker (Cornell University Press), Ch. 1 (pp. 15-33).

Week 6 (May 24): the Boundary Processes, or the Boundary-Making Approach

Required Readings: Wimmer, Andreas. 2009. "Herder's Heritage and the Boundary-Making Approach: Studying Ethnicity in Immigrant Societies," *Sociological Theory* 27(3): 244–70.

Recommended Readings:

Barth, Fredrik. 1998 [1969]. "Preface 1998" and "Introduction," in *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference*, ed. Fredrik Barth (Long Grove, IL: Waveland Press).

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland, and Marek Jakoubek, eds. 2018. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries Today: A Legacy of Fifty Years*. Routledge.

Week 7 (**Monday, May 29** instead of May 31): Quantitative Approaches to Conflict and Contentious Politics

Required Readings: Tezcür, Güneş Murat. "Ordinary people, extraordinary risks: Participation in an ethnic rebellion." *American Political Science Review* 110, no. 2 (2016): 247-264; and Posner, Daniel N., 2004. "The political salience of cultural difference: Why Chewas and Tumbukas are allies in Zambia and adversaries in Malawi," *American Political Science Review* 98(4): 529-545.

Recommended Readings:

Olzak, Suzan. 2004. "Ethnic and Nationalist Social Movements," in *The Blackwell Companion to Social Movements*, eds. David A. Snow and Sarah A. Soule (Blackwell), Ch. 28; Eifert, Benn, Edward Miguel, and Daniel N. Posner. 2010. "Political Competition and Ethnic Identification in Africa," *American Journal of Political Science* 54(2): 494-510.

[Paper outlines due by May 29]

[The instructor will be incommunicado from May 31 through June 4 due to overseas travel.]

Week 8 (June 7): TBA

Required Readings:

Recommended Readings:

Week 9 (June 14): Independent Study (1)

Week 10 (June 21): Independent Study (2)

Week 11 (June 28): Independent Study (3)

[Draft Papers due: Friday, June 30 (by midnight)]

Week 12 (July 5): Brookings-Format Paper Peer-Review (1)

Week 13 (July 12): Brookings-Format Paper Peer-Review (2)

The revised term paper is due via email at [matsunaga@tufts.ac.jp](mailto:matsunaga@tufts.ac.jp) by Friday, July 21, 2023 (the end of the exam period).