



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
UNITED STATES MILITARY ACADEMY  
WEST POINT, NEW YORK 10996

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF

MADN-HIS

4 January 2017

MEMORANDUM FOR Students Enrolled in HI 463

SUBJECT: Syllabus for HI 463, *Race, Ethnicity, and Nation*, AY 17-02.

1. Purpose. *Race, Ethnicity, and Nation*, will allow cadets to better address thematic ideas critical to understanding how groups identify themselves and how they mobilize this status to claim political legitimacy. In particular, the course will aim to provide a historical comprehension of what the concepts of “ethnic,” “racial,” “national,” and gendered identities are, theories of how and when they emerged, and how they intersect or break down. *Race, Ethnicity, and Nation* will permit the historical study of the impacts and meanings of these racial, ethnic, national, and gendered paradigms and require cadets to consider the ways these group identities and group processes have stabilized, destabilized, and/or complicated international affairs during the modern era.

2. Scope. This course will be divided into three segments. The first block of the course will be a thematic investigation of definitions and theories of the ideas of ethnicity and race. The second block will explore theories and constructs of nation and nationalism. The third will examine a variety of alternatives to and intersections of race, ethnicity, and nation. Throughout the course, you will investigate the roots of ethnic and national groups and whether they are inventions of the modern age of centralized states, complex economies, imperial expansion and/or mass politics. Our focus will be the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. The course is necessarily comparative, allowing us to consider historical examples from around the globe. Case studies on Germany, France, Ecuador, Bosnia, the US, and Rwanda will permit us to consider how nations, ethnic groups, races and gender are related to the development of the modern warfare, modern science, the expansion of government, imperialism, colonization, the writing of history, and more. Each case will either allow the detailed development of one of the theories studied or will permit us to more deeply investigate the processes by which groups become races, nations, or ethnicities.

As the HI 463 instructors, we have based the course on certain assumptions. The primary theoretical assumption is that all identities are a function of the relationships among peoples. Thus, “identity” or “identification” is simultaneously a function of individual perception (description), the perceptions of others (ascription), and the historical context within which identities/identifications develop. Second, the notion that peoples formulate or “construct” their own identities does not make them any less significant. In HI 463 we will study how concepts of race may change over time. This fact, however, does not mean that race is less “real” to the extent that it can divide groups, unify those within the group, or act as an important claim to political, economic, social and military power. The third theoretical assumption is that race, ethnicity, and nation are all independent, but interrelated concepts. Sometimes they function concurrently, other times in opposition. These are not, however, the only potential identities for human beings and we will consider alternative groupings to race, ethnicity and nation, such as gender, intersectionality, statelessness, and indifference.

3. Course Goals & Objectives. HI 463, obviously, is a 400-level course. We have constructed *Race, Ethnicity, and Nation* to be similar to a graduate-level seminar. You will be required to read more, but meet less frequently than in a typical History Department offering. This will allow you the opportunity to advance your development as leaders, engaged thinkers, and life-long learners. You will accomplish this through the in-depth study of history, supplemented by theory taken from anthropology, sociology, political science, gender studies and colonial studies, and through demonstrating leadership in the classroom. You will develop historical-mindedness, ethical awareness, historical and cultural perspective, and communications skills. You will do so by exploring the intellectual and historical roots of the categories by which much of the world divides itself today. By examining the history of a specific region after studying complex theoretical models and methodologies, you will emerge as better scholars, citizens, and leaders, better equipped to understand the advantages and limits of different methodologies.

a. Goals.

- (1) To improve one's ability to think, listen, and read critically, analytically, and creatively.
- (2) To analyze human behavior and ideas, and to dissect historical themes, linkages, and causation.
- (3) To utilize methodologies drawn not only from history, but from philosophy, anthropology, gender studies, political science, and other disciplines.
- (4) To understand the influence of diverse historical forces—technological, social, political, economic—on human behavior, achievements, and ideas.
- (5) To communicate, effectively, both orally and in writing, and to demonstrate reasoned, critical thought in one's communications.
- (6) To demonstrate the willingness to pursue progressive and continued intellectual development.
- (7) To cultivate historically-minded and culturally-aware thinking, including the capability to understand nuance, contradiction and ambivalence.
- (8) To demonstrate the ability to research, write, and revise a historical essay.

b. Objectives.

- (1) To understand the interaction of social, political, cultural, economic, religious, technological, and military factors in shaping the post-Enlightenment world.
- (2) To promote better awareness of the historical categories which have contributed to some of the most divisive and intractable global conflicts.
- (3) To study the processes and historical conditions that allowed for nation-state formation, ethnic cleansing, racial segregation, and even genocide.

- (4) To consider historical examples of how and why groups make claims on political power.
- (5) To investigate the processes of how group and individual identity construction/identification by applying theory and comparative perspectives.
- (6) To study the relationship of Enlightenment thinking, modern state-building, and hierarchies of power to categories such as race, gender, ethnicity and nation.

#### 4. Student Requirements.

- a. There are four categories of graded exercises totaling 2000 points: examinations, instructor grades, class leadership, and writing assignments.
  - (1) Written requirements. The writing requirement consists of one research proposal, one research paper (minimum of 1500 words), and a peer review. In total the written work is worth 650 points. These requirements are explained in greater detail in the memo “HI 463 Research Paper Guidance 2017.”
  - (2) Instructor grades. The instructor will award a total of 400 points for class participation, writs, and other in-class requirements.
  - (3) Leading Class. Cadets will be responsible for leading one entire class discussion. Cadets, in consultation with the instructor, will determine which class they wish to lead **by LSN 3**. Failure to do so will result in a 10 point penalty per day, up to 50 points. Cadets will submit the questions and discussion points that they plan to use for discussion to the instructor NLT COB the day preceding the lesson they are leading. Failure to do so will result in a flat 20 point penalty. Cadets may use outside sources to facilitate their preparation for this discussion, but there is no requirement to do so. Any outside sources used should be cited with the question/discussion points submitted prior to the class. This exercise is worth 150 points.
  - (4) There is one examination (written, partial review) covering the first block of the course worth 300 points.
  - (5) Final (Term-end) examination. The 500 point comprehensive term-end will cover the course as a whole.

- b. The table below summarizes the graded exercises and their relative weights:

Requirement	Point Value	% of Course Total
Instructor grades	400	20%
Leading Class	150	7.5%
Mid-term exam (WPR)	300	15%
Paper Proposal	50	2.5%
Research Paper	500	25%
Peer review	100	5%
Term-end examination (Final)	500	25%
Total:	2000	100%

- c. Cadets will not pass the course if they fail to complete a major requirement or earn less than 50% on the TEE.

5. General guidance for all written products.

- a. Although the class incorporates various scholarly disciplines, we will follow the conventions of historical writing. In accordance with the Dean's [Documentation of Academic Work](#), fully document your paper using Chicago-style footnotes. The Department of History's [Style and Formatting Guide](#) provides examples of proper formatting. Remember to document all words, facts, and ideas that are not your own, including assigned readings. Not requiring documentation is "common knowledge" as defined in the *Little, Brown Handbook*: "commonsense observations" as well as "major facts of history, such as... dates." As the *Little, Brown Handbook* cautions, however, "interpretations of facts" are not common knowledge and therefore require documentation.
- b. If we use a blog, postings do not require formal footnotes, but should use parenthetical footnotes.
- c. You are expected to turn in all requirements on time and in proper format. Late papers will be penalized. Improper format or inadequate documentation may result in required resubmission.

6. Bibliography. The readings will include large segments or all of the following. Asterisks indicate those you must purchase. You must also have a working computer/iPad/tablet to complete readings. In addition to the Dropbox/Blackboard readings, a good number of readings come from E-brary books.

- a. \*Anderson, Benedict. *Imagined Communities. Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London: Verso, 2007 [rev.ed.].
- b. \*Burleigh, Michael & Wolfgang Wippermann. *The Racial State*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993 [1991]
- c. Eley, Geoff & Ronald Suny, *Becoming National, A Reader*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.

- d. \*Gellner, Ernest. *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009 [1983].
- e. Hutchinson, John & Anthony Smith, eds. *Ethnicity* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1996.
- f. Motyl, Alexander J., ed. *The Encyclopedia of Nationalism*, vols. 1-2. San Diego: Academic Press, 2001.
- g. HI 463 Dropbox/Blackboard Course Readings. **It is highly recommended that you access the Dropbox/Blackboard readings and upload all of them to your computer/tablet during the first week of classes.**

7. Counseling and Assistance

- a. Our goal is to make each lesson as challenging as possible, but the success or failure of the course will depend upon the time and effort you and your classmates are willing to devote to it.
- b. Dr. Frey's office is 145 Thayer Hall, and his telephone number is 938-7643. Emailing or calling to arrange an appointment is the best way to ensure availability, but walk-in visits are always welcome. Dr. Frey enjoys a good joke or funny anecdote, especially if it ties to identity formation at West Point.
- c. Dr. O'Donnell's office is 146 Thayer Hall, though she is just as often to be found wandering around the library or drinking coffee in Grant Hall. Please email her to set up a meeting time. She is just as happy to offer assistance with the course as she is to have informal conversations about life, West Point, or who you are (identity!).

//Original signed//

Encl  
Schedule of Lessons

David Frey, Ph.D.  
Associate Professor  
HI 463 Course Director  
Department of History

//Original signed//

Peggy O'Donnell, Ph.D.  
Post-doctoral Fellow in History and Atrocity  
Studies  
HI 463 Instructor  
Department of History