Course manual
Joint Master's Programme in
International Humanitarian Action

University of Warsaw

Conflicts and Crises in Eastern Europe
Semester 3
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Credits awarded: 4 ECTS, equivalent to 100 work hours (1 ECTS = 25 hours)

Period: Third semester

Venue & hours: Room 416 Collegium Iuridicum I, Tuesdays 16:45-18:15, from 8 November 2016

1. Introduction

The module is an element of the (Core Course, 4 ECTS) / third component (Regional Perspective - Eastern Europe, 30 ECTS) of the NOHA Joint Master’s Degree in International Humanitarian Action to be completed during the first/second semester. It forms a recognised part of the curriculum and is a requirement for obtaining the NOHA Master’s degree.

The main objective of the module is to present the complexity of the main challenges to the regional security of Eastern Europe. The region’s contemporary dynamics are analysed from the historic, socio-political, cultural and geopolitical perspectives. Recently solved (e.g. Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo) as well as still frozen conflicts (e.g. Transnistria, Gorny Karabakh) are in focus of the module. The prospects for regional stability are evaluated with account of the existing tinderboxes (e.g). The aim of the module is to acquire knowledge and improve skills for regional expertise – crucial for organising humanitarian action in Eastern Europe.

2. Learning outcomes

In conformity with the learning outcomes set out by the NOHA network, students should achieve the following learning outcomes by the end of this module:

- specialised knowledge about genesis, dynamics and resolutions of conflicts in the region of Eastern Europe
- a critical understanding of incentives for tensions as well as cooperation in Eastern Europe. Has innovative expertise on current problems and challenges to the security in the region
- a thorough knowledge of historical, political, cultural and economical background of the processes in Eastern Europe
- ability to interpret and critically analyse data, information and experience concerning Eastern Europe. Shows high skills to contextualize the obtained data. Has demonstrated a range of coaching and management skills to carefully assess the relevant factors for crisis and conflicts
- ability to formulate independent views in regard to Eastern Europe, support them with elaborate arguments, using a broad range of approaches and theoretical perspectives,
formulate coherent conclusions and make a synthetic summary of these conclusions
• specialised problem-solving skills combining interdisciplinary knowledge and understanding of the complexity of the situation of crisis-affected people in Eastern Europe

3. Course material

Course material will be provided by the module coordinator in an electronic version or are to be found in the library of NOHA. For the details see point 5.

Useful links: www.osw.waw.pl

4. Teaching and learning methodology

The programme of the module is divided into four stages. Stage I consists of weeks 1-3 which are introductory lectures on the historical dynamics of the region. This stage is concluded with a student task Symbols sometimes mean more than words. Each student is to choose a particular text of culture (a film, book, painting, poster etc.) which, in his/her opinion reflects well the characteristics features of Eastern/Central Europe. Each student prepares a max 7-minute long presentation.

Stage II (weeks 4-8) includes the analysis of conflicts which have taken place since the end of the cold war. Student task: in this stage each student chooses one conflict and prepares a presentation (oral form) on this particular case in accordance with the following scheme:
- time frame of the conflict
- genesis of the conflict
- final settlement or – in absence of such – a potential settlement of the conflict
Max. 30-minute long presentation

Week 8 assumes discussing still existing potential for crises and conflicts in the region. This class will be organised as a student debate.

Stage III (weeks 9-11) combines theory with practices. Weeks 9-11 are dedicated to introductory lectures on basics of international negotiations. During Week 12 students put their knowledge into practice and conduct simulations (under the coordinator’s supervision) of negotiations of one of the previously analysed conflicts (Nagorno-Karabakh). This exercise is the final preparation for the exam.

Stage IV (week 13): Students take an exam which will have a form of negotiations. Students are divided into 2-4 parties (e.g. the Ukrainian government, Donetsk separatists, Russia, EU, US) and negotiate the settlement of the Ukrainian crisis. The coordinator has a passive role during the exam, i.e. observes and evaluates performance of students.

5. Programme and training activities

Week 1
1. Eastern, Central or Central-Eastern Europe: attempts to define the region
Readings
Optional:

Week 2

2. The legacy of the past in Central Europe: geopolitical dynamics of the region in the historic perspective
- Conflicts, changes of borders and mass migration
- “Pulsating” sovereign states and nation-building processes
- The factor of external powers: Russia, Habsburg Empire, Prussia, Ottoman Empire, France
- The complex of the West, the fear of the East

Readings
Optional:

Week 3

3. Central Europe in the post-Yalta global order
- The Autumn of the Nations
- Regional integration processes
- Heading for the EU and the NATO

Readings
Optional:

Student Task Symbols mean sometimes more than words.
Each student is to choose for this week a particular text of culture (a film, book, painting, poster etc.) which, in his/her opinion reflects well the characteristics features of Eastern/Central Europe. Each student prepares a max 7-minute long presentation.

Week 4

4. The fall of Yugoslavia: from the independence of Slovenia to the secession of Kosovo
- The internal and external factors of the fall of the Yugoslavia
- The war in Bosnia and Herzegovina (1992-1995)
- Assessing the Dayton Accord
- The secession of Montenegro
- Oktobarska revolution in Serbia (2000)
- The Kosovo crisis (1999) and its implications for the regional security

Readings
Compulsory:

Optional:
- Jeffrey S. Morton et al, Reflections on the Balkan Wars: Ten years after the breakup of Yugoslavia, Palgrave Macmillan 2004, pp. 3-21, 93-118.

Student task: presentation (max. 30-minute long) of the analysis of this conflict (see point 4)

Week 5

5. The sources of instability in the peripheries: the Former Yugoslavian Republic of Macedonia and Albania

- The crisis in Macedonia (2001) and international reaction
- Albania in 1997: a case of a failed state?
- The Albanian factor in the Western Balkans
- Balkan Muslims and the impact of the global Jihad

Readings

Compulsory:

Optional:
- Risto Karajkov, Macedonia’s 2001 ethnic war: Offsetting conflict. What could have been done but was not?, “Conflict, Security & Development” 2008, vol. 8, No. 4, pp. 451-490.

**Student task:** presentation (max. 30-minute long) of the analysis of this conflict *(see point 4)*

**Week 6**

- *The Soviet legacy in the conflicts*
- *The phenomenon of quasi-states*
- *The major power rivalry: Russia, US, EU*
- *Was the Russo-Georgian conflict a proxy conflict with the West?*

**Readings**

**Compulsory:**

**Optional:**

**Student task:** presentation (max. 30-minute long) of the analysis of this conflict *(see point 4)*

**Week 7**

7. **The harbinger of the new global order? The conflict in Ukraine**
- *Ukraine: destined to stay an object of a power game?*
- *The annexation of Crimea*
- *Hybrid war: a new phenomenon?*
- *Established powers, rising powers and declining powers’ interests and actions in the Ukraine*
- *Visible features of the emerging new world order*

**Readings**

**Compulsory:**
Optional:

Student task: presentation (max. 30-minute long) of the analysis of this conflict (see point 4)

Week 8

8. Looking for tinderboxes: the main challenges to the regional stability
- Ethnic minorities and secessionism
- Unsettled situation of the Roma
- Political populism
- Region’s entanglement in the rivalry of the major powers

Readings

Compulsory:

Optional:
- Dominik Tolksdorf, Russia, the USA and the EU and the conflicts in the wider Black Sea region: the potential for multilateral solutions in the wake of the Ukraine conflict, “Global Affairs” 2015, vol. 1, No. 4-5, pp. 421-430.

Student task: This class will be organised as a student debate, in which each student, using the suggested material, should prepare his stand regarding one of the potential crises.

Week 9
9. Negotiations: the core concepts

Readings
Compulsory:

Week 10
10. Determinants of negotiations: psychology, ideology, culture (styles of negotiations)

Readings
Optional:

Week 11
11. Strategies, tactics, techniques of negotiations.

Readings
Compulsory:
- Christopher W. Moore, Peter J. Woodrow, Handbook of Global and Multicultural Negotiations, 2010, pp. 61-76.

Optional:

Week 12
12. Simulation of negotiations: the case of Nagorno-Karabakh (student task)

Suggested Readings:

**Student task:** students put their knowledge into practice and conduct simulations (under the coordinator’s supervision) of negotiations of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. This exercise is the final preparation for the exam.

With the help of the coordinator students are casted in roles (e.g. main negotiator, security advisor, strategist, spokesman). During the process of negotiations students are to achieve goals set for them by the coordinator.

**Exam week**

Students take an exam which will have the form of negotiations. Students divided into 2-4 parties (e.g. the Ukrainian government, Donetsk separatists, Russia, EU, US) negotiate the settlement of the Ukrainian crisis. The coordinator has a passive role during the exam, i.e. observes and evaluates performance of students.

**6. Workload**

The approximate total workload (including compulsory readings, preparing presentations and simulations) is around 100 hours. The workload is smaller in the introductory classes and more intensive in the weeks 4-8.

**7. Assessment methods**

The fundamental condition of receiving a graded pass is the presence during classes. Student has a right to be absent twice and only during these weeks when she/he does not perform a presentation (!).

During the course students are expected to prepare 4 different tasks, differing in form and difficulty:
- presenting a text of culture (10%)
- presentation of the analysis of a particular conflict (30%)
- participation in a debate (10%)

By being active (covering compulsory readings, asking questions, comments, participating in discussions) during classes a student can increase his final mark by 10%

Overall point from the tasks: 50%
Exam (40%)

System of grades:
55 % - 3 (pass)
75 % - 4 (good)
90 % - 5 (very good)

**8. Assessment criteria**
While assessing the overall performance of a student, the coordinator takes into account the number of absences, activity during classes (preparing compulsory readings) and the performance in tasks. Since the exam has a specific form of staged negotiations, it is strongly recommended to collect as much as possible points during the semester. However, the points collected during the course will not be taken into account, should the student not take part in the exam.

9. Appendices

[Any supporting documents to explain parts of the module more in detail.]