

Diaspora Politics

Draft syllabus for fall semester, 2012

Compulsory course for MA students of Political Science Department, Yerevan State University, Armenia

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I. Introduction

Diaspora Studies is one of rapidly growing interdisciplinary academic fields for the last two or so decades. It is in the center of academic interests for many political scientists, sociologists, anthropologists, economists, historians and representatives of other disciplines. This growing interest is first of all related to the fact that after World War II and especially after the Cold War international migration flows increased significantly. This resulted many new diasporas in the developed countries, while, contrary to many predictions, old diasporas did not cease to exist and continued to grow and became more institutionalized.

Existence of large organized Armenian communities outside of Armenia is not a new phenomenon. Armenian Diaspora was developed well before Diaspora Studies formed as a separate field of study. It is widely accepted that the number of ethnic Armenians living outside is almost twice bigger than those living in Republic of Armenia. Interest towards studying Armenian Diaspora and in general Diaspora as a phenomenon gradually increased in Armenia after it gained its independence in 1991. For the first time in the modern history sovereign Armenia not only had opportunity to build its relations with Armenian communities throughout the world, but also it had become a wild spread notion that solving many internal and external problems is possible with the support of Armenian Diaspora. But only few of these optimistic expectations were realized, while a comprehensive and more realistic understanding of Armenia-Diaspora relations still needs to be developed. In this context studying and comparing of other states' models and policies toward their ethnic Diasporas is very actual especially taking into account the fact that Armenian reality in general and particularly Armenian academic community is mostly concentrated on discussing Armenian Diaspora.

This course is designed to partially fill that gap and suggest students some core concepts and theories of current Diaspora Studies, as well as to introduce comparative approach in studying modern Diasporas. However this course is mostly limited to presenting and discussing political aspects of Homeland-Diaspora-Hostland relations and is concentrated on topics that typically are in the sphere of interest of political scientists and public policy makers.

“Diaspora Politics” is a mandatory course designed for MA students of Political Science Department as well as for Diaspora Studies program of Yerevan State University. It complements number of other general courses

included in the curriculum (“Comparative Politics”, “Nations and Nationalism Theories”, “International Relations Theories”, “History of Armenian people” and etc.). Thus attending students are expected to have basic knowledge of modern political concepts and theories as well as the role and implementation of comparative method in political analysis.

II. Aims of the course

The aim of the course is twofold:

- (1) To introduce the main theories and concepts adopted in the field that are describing and explaining Diaspora as a phenomenon as well as to provide relevant methodology for studying and comparing existing modern Diasporas. This will allow students to deepen their theoretical knowledge and to get acquainted with some of the state-of-the-art research pieces;
- (2) To expand students’ empirical knowledge of modern Diasporas, their relations with homelands and host countries. This will be done through comparison of selected cases, including by studying similarities and differences of specific policies adopted by homelands and host countries.

III. Learning outcomes

Upon completion of the course students expected to:

- (1) Identify and describe main definitions of the concept “Diaspora”;
- (2) Describe and compare main theories and concepts adopted by Diaspora Studies, identify and discuss advantages and disadvantages of main approaches in studying Diasporas;
- (3) Identify and explain main factors effecting formation, development and unmaking of Diasporas;
- (4) Define main approaches in classification of modern Diasporas, identify main criteria used for that purpose and locate Armenian and other diasporas in different types of modern Diasporas;
- (5) Discuss and compare the influence of different Diasporas in political processes in homeland and host countries and to draw parallels with the case of Armenia Diaspora.
- (6) Identify and explain critical factors defining the dynamics of modern relations between Armenia and Diaspora.

IV. Structure of the course

The course consists of two main components which are designed to reflect its dual aim. **The first part** of the course that will last up till seventh week is designed to introduce to students the main theories and concepts currently adopted in Diaspora Studies. In this phase students will concentrate most of the time on lectures and readings aimed at understanding the theoretical basis of studying Diasporas as well as discussing presented ideas and approaches in few seminars (total number of seminars will be 3).

The second part of the course (7th-16th weeks) is more practical and interactive as it aims at studying and comparative analysis of existing Diasporas of the world, discussing specific policies and practices adopted by certain countries. After most of the lectures a seminar will follow in which students will be required to make personal and group presentations on a specific Diaspora or topic. Moreover, to increase the participation of students and implement interactive methods, some lectures in this part will be conducted by students (student teacher, guided lecture).

V. Teaching methods used

	Lectures	Seminars
First part	Mini lecture, reading assignments	Discussion and debates, student-led seminar discussion, position papers
Second part	Student teacher, guided lecture	Group student presentation, individual student presentation and research papers

VI. Course content and assigned readings

First Week

Lecture 1. Diaspora Studies as a modern interdisciplinary field: Origins and main areas of concentration.

Lecture 2. Historical evolution of the concept “Diaspora” and current perceptions.

Second Week

Lecture 3. Scientific definitions of the concept “Diaspora”.

Seminar 1. What constitutes Diaspora and what are main topics in Diaspora Studies?

Readings (materials in Armenian that will be provided to students are not listed here)

- Brubaker R., (2005) “The “diaspora” diaspora”, *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, Vol. 28 No. 1, pp. 1- 19
- Cohen R., (1997). *Global Diasporas: an introduction*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, pp. 21-29,
- Dufoix S., (2008). *Diaspora*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 15-25,
- Dyatlov V., Melkonian E. (2009) *Armenian Diaspora: Essays on Sociocultural Typology*. Yerevan: CI, pp. 7-35,
- Sheffer G., (2003). *Diaspora politics: at home abroad*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 8-13

Third Week

Lecture 4. Main causes of Diaspora making, development and unmaking. Push and pull factors

Lecture 5. Modern context effecting Diaspora making, development and unmaking: international migration, globalization, informational revolution and etc.

Fourth Week

Seminar 2. Why and how diasporas are being created and shattered?

Readings

- Cohen R., (1997). *Global Diasporas: an introduction*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, pp. 155-177,
- Hammar T. and Hammar K. (1997). “Why do people go or stay?”. In T. Hammar (Ed.), *International migration, immobility and development: multidisciplinary perspectives* (pp. 1-21). Oxford & New York: Berg,
- Van Hear N., (1998). *New Diasporas: The mass exodus, dispersal and regrouping of migrant communities*. London: Routledge, pp. 40-50,
- Brinkerhoff J. (2009). *Digital Diasporas: identity and transnational engagement*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 29- 54,
- Sheffer G., (2003). *Diaspora politics: at home abroad*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 111-

Lecture 6. Classification of Diasporas.

Fifth Week

Lecture 7. Classification of diasporas (continuation).

Seminar 3. How to classify diasporas?

Readings

- Armstrong J. A. (1976) Mobilized and Proletarian Diasporas, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 70, No. 2, pp. 393-408,
- Cohen R., (1997). *Global Diasporas: an introduction*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, pp. 177-192
- Sheffer G., (2003). *Diaspora politics: at home abroad*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 48-56, 73-76, 148-159,

Sixth Week

Lecture 8. Models of Homeland-Diaspora relations.

Lecture 9. Strategies and modes of political organization of diasporas in host countries.

Seventh Week

Lecture 10. Policies and attitudes of host countries toward diasporas.

Seminar 4. What are the main factors defining Homeland-Diaspora-Hostland relations.

Readings

- Dufoix S., (2008). *Diaspora*. Berkeley & Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 59-69,
- Sheffer G., (2003). *Diaspora politics: at home abroad*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 121 – 127, 160-180,
- Laguerre M. S., (2006). *Diaspora, politics, and globalization*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.133-162

Eight Week (second component of the course)

Lecture 11. Victim diasporas (African, Armenian and Jewish).*

Lecture 12. Imperial and labor diasporas (British and Indian).*

Ninth Week

Lecture 13. Trade and cultural diasporas (Chinese and Carebbbean)*

Seminar 5. What are the main characteristics of specific diasporas and how those characteristics are related to origins of particular Diaspora?

Readings

- Cohen R., (1997). *Global Diasporas: an introduction*. Seattle: University of Washington Press, pp. 31-155,
- Sheffer G., (2007). The Diaspora Phenomenon in Twenty-First Century: Ideational, organizational and behavioral challenges. In Tototicaguena G. (Ed.), *Opportunity structures in Diaspora Relations*. Reno, Nevada, Center for Basque Studies, pp. 187-214.

Tenth Week

Lecture 14. The issue of identity and political loyalty in modern diasporas.*

Lecture 15. The issue of citizenship and political status of modern diasporas in host countries.*

Eleventh Week

Lecture 16. The issue of citizenship and political status of modern diasporas in homelands.*

Seminar 6. What are the main factors effecting political identities and status of diasporas in modern world?

Readings

- Brubaker R., (1992). *Citizenship and Nationhood in France and Germany*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, pp. 21-34,
- Safran W., (2007). Democracy, Pluralism and Diaspora Identity: An ambiguous relationship. In Tototicaguena G. (Ed.), *Opportunity structures in Diaspora Relations*. Reno, Nevada, Center for Basque Studies, pp. 157-185,
- Sheffer G., (2003). *Diaspora politics: at home abroad*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 219-239.

Twelfth Week

Lecture 17. Political influence of diasporas in homelands and host countries.*

Lecture 18. Economic influence of diasporas in homelands and host countries.*

Thirteenth Week

Lecture 19. Locating diasporas in modern system of international relations.*

Seminar 7. What political and economic roles and functions diasporas adhere in modern international relations system?

Readings

- Laguerre M., (2006). *Diaspora, politics, and globalization*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 73-112
- Sheffer G., (2003). *Diaspora politics: at home abroad*. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 180-212,
- Tololyan Kh., (2007). Stateless power and the political agency of Diasporas: An Armenian Case Study. In Tototcaguena G. (Ed.), *Opportunity structures in Diaspora Relations*. Reno, Nevada, Center for Basque Studies, pp. 215-280.

Fourteenth Week

Lecture 20. Armenian Diaspora in 21st century.*

Seminar 8. What are specifics of different Armenian communities around the world?

Fifteenth Week

Lecture 21. Armenia-Diaspora relations since independence: Expectations and outcomes.*

Seminar 9. What are the main characteristics of Armenia-Diaspora modern relations?

Readings

- Паносян Р. (2000), Непростое прошлое, трудное настоящее, туманное будущее (отношения Армении и диаспоры в 1988-1999 гг.), *Диаспоры*, 1-2, стр. 30-51,
- Libaridian G., (1991), *Armenia at the crossroads: democracy and nationhood in the post-Soviet era : essays, interviews, and speeches by the leaders of the national democratic movement in Armenia*, Cambridge, Blue Crane Books pp. 127- 136, 157-170
- Armenia-Diaspora relations: 20 years since independence, (2010) Policy Forum Armenia.

Sixteenth Week

Lecture 22. The future of Armenia-Diaspora relations.*

Seminar 10. What should expect Armenia and Diaspora from each other for next decades?

Notes

Lectures marked with a star () will be conducted by active participation of students, who will be requested to cover some parts of the lecture by presenting their research papers and/or group work presentations.*

VII. Course requirements and assessment

The final grade of students attending the course will be based on the four different requirements that are expected to be fulfilled by the students throughout whole semester.

(1) Students are required to **attend the lectures** and especially seminars as well as actively **participate in the discussions (20 points)**. Reading materials will be delivered at the beginning of the course, and students are required to read mandatory materials prior to each seminar. Those 20 points will be granted only to those students who attended no less than 70% of lectures (17 out of 24 lectures) and prepared to at least 70% of seminars (7 out of 10 seminars) by reading materials, submitting position papers and research papers as well as making group presentation.

Each student is also required to submit two up to three-page long **position papers (15 points each)** before the seventh week and one up to ten-page long **research paper** by the end of the course (**30 points**). While the fact of submission of those papers will be considered as preparation of a seminar, the content of each of those papers will be graded separately.

(2) Position papers will be graded based on following criteria:

- ✓ Content (whether the paper presents core concepts without exceeding required two-page limitation) - 5 points.
- ✓ Structure (whether the paper has an appropriate form including introduction, main body and conclusion) - 5 points.
- ✓ Critical approach (whether the paper discusses the strengths and weaknesses of presented concepts and present an independent position) – 5 points.

(3) Research paper will be graded based on following criteria:

- ✓ Content (whether the paper presents core concepts without exceeding required ten-page limitation) - 5 points.

- ✓ Structure (whether the paper has an appropriate form including introduction, main body, conclusion and bibliography) - 5 points.
- ✓ Quality of the research (whether the paper is based on a profound research, including usage of differentiated sources) - 5 points.
- ✓ Innovative approach and independent analysis (whether the paper views the topic from a new position and contains authentic findings, assumptions and predictions)
- ✓ Applicability of the paper (whether the results of the paper can be used in future both for scientific and practical purposes. Students have to prove this in the paper) – 5 points.

(4) Also each student is expected to participate in a group work and by the end of semester to deliver one group presentation on a topic selected by the group in the beginning of the course **(20 points)**. Half of those 20 points will be granted based on the assessment of presentation by the students attended presentation. Every student will give from 1-10 points to each presentation, total number of points will be divided into the number of students participated in the assessment. Every member of the group will be given the same grade. The second half of the grade will evaluate based on following criteria:

- ✓ effectiveness of the group work (whether every member of the group contributed to the work and participated in the presentation) - 5 points,
- ✓ quality of the presentation (content and structure of presentation, presentation tools, public speaking skills and timing) - 5 points.

In the end of the course students will be graded based on the following chart:

- 91 -100 points = *Excellent (5)*
- 71-90 points = *Good (4)*
- 50-70 points = *Satisfactory (3)*
- 1-49 points = *below the passing benchmark (2)*