COURSE SYLLABUS

Understanding Ethnic Prejudice: sociological and social psychological approaches

Instructor: Luca Váradi, PhD
Nationalism Studies Program
Central European University
Fall 2018-2019
Tuesdays 11AM & 1.30PM
4 Credits

Course Description

This course will focus on ethnic prejudice and specifically on the sociological and social psychological understanding of prejudice against different minority groups. We will examine the most influential classical theories of prejudice and will deal with the more recent developments in this field of research. At the same time, the course will give an insight into the broad variety of research methods used in social sciences. The first aim of the course is to introduce the highly diverse and multi-disciplinary field of prejudice research and to show that the notion of prejudice is present in various concepts of nationalism studies as identity-formation, inter-group conflicts and majority-minority relations. While learning about these issues, participants will also familiarize with a wide range of methods of empirical social research.

The course consists of six main thematic blocks focusing on different aspects of prejudice. In the first block the concept of prejudice and the main approaches and dilemmas of prejudice research will be in the focus and we will look at the most influential theoretical approaches in this field. The second thematic block is an overview of the qualitative and quantitative methods of empirical social research. In order to be able to critically review the results of empirical studies and to plan own research projects, we will familiarize with a wide range of research methods and will discuss their pitfalls and applicability. In the third thematic block we look at various forms of prejudice based on results of recent national and international empirical studies. Consequently, in the fourth block, we will seek answers to the question “Why people have prejudices?” looking at prejudice in its complexity by a multi-level approach. The fifth block will conclude the study of prejudice by discussing the possibilities of prejudice-reduction through an overview of various intervention and
prevention methods. In the final, sixth block we will take a closer look at the interplay of prejudice and public discourse through a hands-on training in critical discourse analysis.

Learning Outcomes

At the end of the course, students will have a fuller understanding of the extensive and highly multidisciplinary scholarly literature on prejudice in particular regarding the origins and forms of prejudice towards ethnic minority groups. They will have extensive knowledge about empirical studies focusing on various types of prejudice the results of which they will be able to critically discuss. They should also know to take the perspective of the targets of prejudice and to understand how prejudice might affect the identity of the members of stigmatized groups. They will also have an understanding of the role of the institutions of socialization and the media in transmitting norms related to prejudice. Finally, participants of the class will be familiar with the most effective methods of prejudice reduction and will have an understanding of the ethical and normative debates in the field of prejudice studies. By the end of the semester students should have a basic understanding of the logic of a variety of research methods most commonly applied in empirical social research.

Course Requirements

Participants are expected to attend class regularly, read the assigned readings every week, and actively engage in discussions. All students are expected to to lead the group discussion about at least two readings and prepare a one-page handout about these. Students are also asked to write two critical remarks or questions about each obligatory reading along with the completion of smaller assignments before some of the classes. These are intended to shape the common discussion. Both the remarks and the handouts should always be sent by email until Sunday 9PM.

Research project

To deepen the knowledge acquired in the course, students will complete a (small) research project in which they will analyse a real-life social problem related to prejudice based on the identification of relevant theories and original empirical research. A detailed research proposal introducing the problem, the theoretical framework, and the planned methods (3-5 double spaced pages) should be prepared.
by and discussed in class 11. Topics for the research project can be proposed by the students. Group work is possible upon approval of the professor. The research should then be completed (at least a pilot version) and presented to the group in a 20-minute conference style presentation along with a handout including a 250 word abstract, and a 3-page overview. The literature for the final presentation should be based on the class readings and on individual research.

**Assessment:**

1. Class participation and activity: 30%
2. In-class presentations and critical remarks about the readings: 30%
3. Research project and presentation: 40%

**Electronic device policy**

As described in the Student Handbook laptops and tablets are only allowed for displaying course-related materials (e.g. readings, notes, presentations). Use of the internet, social media, and e-mail are strictly forbidden. Use of cell phones and smart phones is forbidden in the classroom. The improper use of electronic devices will result in a reduced final grade.

**Feedback:** students can ask for individual feedback about their performance and learning progress any time. Class 12 will serve the purpose of mid-term feedback and consist of short personal consultations.
COURSE SCHEDULE

I. ETHNIC PREJUDICE: CONCEPTS, APPROACHES, DILEMMAS

1. The concept of prejudice

   Readings:


2. Personality-based approaches

   Readings:


   Recommended:

3. Individual and social consequences of prejudice: the targets’ perspective

   Reading:

   Recommended:

II. METHODS OF THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH OF PREJUDICE

4. Qualitative and quantitative methods in prejudice research

   Readings:

Assignment:
Comparison of measures of attitudes towards immigrants from the European Social Survey. Detailed description on the e-learning site.

5. Qualitative methods I.

6. Qualitative methods II.

Readings for both classes (select two readings from the list the methods of which are the closest to your own project/interest):

*Semi-structured qualitative interviews with 202 participants

*Group discussions

*Life history interviews
Karen Ross. (2014). Narratives of belonging (and not): Inter-group contact in Israel and the formation of ethno-national identity claims. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*

*Mixed methods (qualitative and quantitative)

*Critical discourse analysis of everyday discourse

*Discourse analysis of online comments
*In-depth interviews with 11 participants

*Linguistic discourse analysis of supremacist rhetoric based on a documentary film

*Analysis of 2700 online comments

*Comparative analysis of media representation

*Film analysis: the representation of Islam in five French feature films

*A list of further literature explaining the use of specific qualitative research methods can be found on the e-learning site of the course.

7. So how does a (quantitative) study of prejudice look like? (Everything you don’t read about in research papers)

Readings:

III. THE FORMS OF ETHNIC PREJUDICE

8. Anti-Roma prejudice in Hungary

Readings:

9. **Anti-Semitism in Europe**

*Readings:*

*Recommended:*

10. **Xenophobia / Anti-immigrant prejudice**

*Readings:*


*Recommended:*

11. **Presentation research proposals**

12. **Individual feedback – personal consultations**

13. **Integrative approaches to the study of prejudice**

*Readings:*

IV. **WHY DO PEOPLE HAVE PREJUDICES?**


14. Prejudice, conformity, and ingroup dynamics

*Reading:*

V. POSSIBILITIES OF PREJUDICE REDUCTION

15. Reducing prejudice through contact

*Readings:*


*Recommended:*


*Reading:*


17. Student presentations

18. Student presentations + feedback
VI. PREJUDICE AND PUBLIC DISCOURSE

19. Using (critical) discourse analysis to trace prejudice in public discourse: a workshop by Anna Szilágyi

20. CDA workshop session 2