POS 260

Current Issues in International Relations: Insurgency in a Global Context

Course Information:
POS 260: 21963
TR 1:30-2:45

Contact Information:
Dr. Reed M Wood
Office: 6760 Coor Hall
Phone: 965-4686
Email: Reed.Wood@asu.edu

Office Hours:
TR: 2:45-4:00;
other times
by appointment

TA information:
Jacquelyn Schneider
Jacquelyn.Schneider@asu.edu
Coor Hall, 6th floor
Office hours TBA

Course Description and Objectives

Insurgency, civil war, revolution and terrorism are traditionally thought of as domestic events or "intrastate" conflicts between one violent domestic political group and the state. However, recent conflicts in Afghanistan, Libya, and Sudan as well as the 9/11 attacks in the US demonstrate that insurgencies often spill across borders and draw in actors far removed from the original conflict site. These conflicts demonstrate that insurgencies and terror campaigns are often international in nature and often necessitate global policy responses. The recognition that civil conflicts are frequently international in character also requires students of such events to consider a wide array of both international and domestic factors in order to better understand the origins, dynamics, and resolution of modern insurgencies and terror campaigns.

This course provides a framework for studying these complex events. The course will provide a brief introduction to research on civil war and terrorism but will primarily focus its attention on the international dimensions of non-state actor violence. Specific issue areas covered in the course will include: transnational terror and state sponsorship of terrorism, interstate civil war diffusion, foreign intervention in civil wars, and peacekeeping. The primary goals of the course include: 1) To present a variety of theories on the origins and evolution of civil wars and insurgencies; 2) to understand the linkages between “domestic” conflicts and international politics; 3) to apply theories from the class to current conflicts and be able to make predictions about their trajectories as well as make predictions about the likelihood of future conflicts; 4) for students to conduct research and write a series of original papers on topics related to the class.
**Academic Expectations**

While there is no official prerequisite for this course, please note that this course assumes a basic knowledge of world politics. Students who have not previously taken courses such as POS 150 (Comparative Government) or POS 160 (Global Politics) may experience difficulty with the material and basic concepts. Please evaluate your own level of preparedness for this course.

The reading load for this course is fairly demanding. There is no textbook for the course; rather, readings are drawn from a variety of scholarly sources, including both academic articles and book chapters. Students will be expected to read, comprehend, and comment on between **30 and 50 pages per class**. Readings should be completed **before the class** for which they are assigned. Completing readings is a critical component of the course because failing to complete assigned readings will inhibit your ability to contribute to class discussion. On a related note, this course is designed to function more as a seminar than a lecture course. At times, lectures will be necessary in order to convey specific information. However, the majority of course time will be devoted to discussion of the assigned readings. Students are therefore expected to participate in class discussion by raising questions, critiquing readings, and applying the theories discussed to real world cases. Part of your grade will depend on your participation in the course (see below).

Lastly, this course is designed to be a **writing intensive** course. Short papers and a longer research project will take the place of standard exams. Students should expect to produce **approximately 25-30 pages of written work** over the course of the semester.

**Assignments and Grading**

Course grades are based on two short essays, a current events portfolio, one longer research paper, and class participation.

**Short Essays (15% each):** Rather than in class exams, students will write two brief (4-5 pages) response papers during the course. These papers will respond to specific questions related to the course content up to that point. Questions will be distributed one week prior to the essay due date. The **first essay** will be due on **February 14th** the **second essay** will be due **March 15th**.

**Current events portfolio (30%):** Students will keep a portfolio of world political events associated with insurgency, terrorism, and civil war that illustrate the themes, concepts, and theories discussed in the class. Students will clip (or print), save, and analyze **10 articles** that reflect the following themes, concepts, and issues from the course: **collective action (mobilization and recruitment), identity, control, bargaining, and resources and funding.** At least one article must deal with each of these items. Often the same article will deal with multiple concepts; however, each article can only be counted once. All articles must deal with insurgencies, civil war, terrorism, etc. and should in some way reflect the international aspects of these forms of political violence.
Articles should be taken *only* from *The New York Times, Wall Street Journal, Foreign Policy Journal, Time, The Economist* or *Der Spiegel* (a German news magazine). I strongly encourage you to use hard copies of these publications; however, it is ok to use the online version. In either case, you will need to clip, save, and comment on the articles. Keep articles and analyses in a notebook or binder as you will turn them in by **April 5th**. They will be returned to you promptly so you can use the articles to draft your term papers. We will discuss this project in more detail in the first weeks of class.

These sources may be located on line at the addresses provided below:

http://global.nytimes.com/?iht
http://www.nytimes.com/
http://online.wsj.com/home-page
http://www.economist.com/
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/
http://www.time.com/time/
http://www.spiegel.de/international/world/

**Term Paper (30%)**: Your article collection will serve as the basis for your term paper. I will provide you a set of potential paper questions later in the semester. All paper prompts will speak to the importance of the above themes in understanding insurgency and terrorism. I will provide you more information on papers in the coming weeks.

Papers must be 10-12 pages total and be double-spaced. You are expected to meet with the TA at least once prior to turning in the term paper to discuss your progress on your paper. After meeting with the TA you are welcome to discuss any additional issues with me. You will need to meet with your TA before **April 12th**. Papers will be due **May 1st**.

Late papers will be penalized 1 letter grade per day. You must submit papers by the beginning of the class in which they are due. This means that if you turn it in 10 minutes after class it will be penalized a full letter grade. You must turn in a hardcopy of the paper.

Paper will be scanned by anti-plagiarism software. There is a zero-tolerance policy for plagiarism! If you are caught plagiarizing or cheating in any way I must report a violation of university academic integrity standards, and you will receive an “E” for the course. There are no excuses and no exceptions. **When in doubt cite your source.**

**Participation (10%)**: Participation in an important aspect of the course. You are expected to attend class and to comment and raise questions on the readings. There will generally be limited time devoted to lecture, and most of class will entail discussion of the relevant topic and readings. This means that you must read the material before coming to class.
You participation grade is based on both your attendance and the frequency and quality of your comments and questions. Attendance will affect you grade in the following manner:

Missing 1-2 classes: No penalty
Missing 3 classes: Automatic 2-point deduction (=20%)
Missing 4 classes: Automatic 4-point deduction (=30%)
Missing 5 of more classes: Grade of “0” for participation

Please note: The above point deduction will be in addition to any points deducted for failure to participate in discussion. This means that attending every class is not sufficient to receive full participation credit if you never speak in class.

Assignment weighting summary:

Essay 1: 15%
Essay 2: 15%
Event Portfolio: 30%
Research Paper: 30%
Participation: 10%

Grading Scale. The following grading scale is used for this course:

80-82: B- 77-79: C+ 70-76: C 60-69: D < 60: E

Behavior and Expectations

Classroom behavior: Students are expected to show respect for the professor, teaching assistants, and other students. This means arriving a few minutes prior to the start of class, so that lectures and sections can begin on time without disruption; refraining from distracting behaviors during lectures and sections; and generally paying attention to what’s being said in class. Laptops should be used only for taking notes. Any behavior that would be inappropriate while watching a live performance (arriving after the first act has started; leaving your cell phone on; talking during the performance) is also inappropriate for lecture.

Texting, answering your phone in class, surfing the web, etc. will adversely affect your participation grade.

Students are encouraged to ask questions during lecture. If you do not understand something, please ask questions; others in the class likely will thank you for doing this! We will not be able cover every reading or idea in class; if a concept is unclear, please ask questions during lecture, in section, or during office hours.
Email etiquette: When you contact me (or any other faculty member or teaching assistant) via email, you should communicate professionally and avoid informal salutations and unprofessional or casual language. The appropriate salutations in emails to me are “Dear Dr. Wood” or “Professor Wood.” I will not read emails that lack a salutation or begin with an informal salutation such as “Yo” or “Hey”. You should also include your name at the end of any email. If you do not include your name I will not take the time to look you up based on your email address, will have no idea who sent the email, and will therefore not respond.

Student Obligations to Academic Integrity: Each student must act with honesty and integrity, and must respect the rights of others in carrying out all academic assignments. A student may be found to have engaged in academic dishonesty if, in connection with any Academic Evaluation or academic or research assignment (including a paid research position), he or she:

A. Engages in any form of academic deceit;
B. Refers to materials or sources or uses devices (e.g., computer disks, audio recorders, camera phones, text messages, crib sheets, calculators, solution manuals, materials from previous classes, or commercial research services) not authorized by the instructor for use during the Academic Evaluation or assignment;
C. Possesses, reviews, buys, sells, obtains, or uses, without appropriate authorization, any materials intended to be used for an Academic Evaluation or assignment in advance of its administration;
D. Acts as a substitute for another person in any Academic Evaluation or assignment;
E. Uses a substitute in any Academic Evaluation or assignment;
F. Depends on the aid of others, including other students or tutors, in connection with any Academic Evaluation or assignment to the extent that the work is not representative of the student's abilities;
G. Provides inappropriate aid to another person in connection with any Academic Evaluation or assignment, including the unauthorized use of camera phones, text messages, photocopies, notes or other means to copy or photograph materials used or intended for Academic Evaluation;
H. Engages in Plagiarism;
I. Uses materials from the Internet or any other source without full and appropriate attribution;
J. Permits his or her work to be submitted by another person in connection with any Academic Evaluation or assignment, without authorization;
K. Claims credit for or submits work done by another;
L. Signs an attendance sheet for another student, allows another student to sign on the student's behalf, or otherwise participates in gaining credit for attendance for oneself or another without actually attending;
M. Falsifying or misrepresenting hours or activities in relationship to an internship, externship, field experience, clinical activity or similar activity; or
N. Attempts to influence or change any Academic Evaluation, assignment or academic record for reasons having no relevance to academic achievement.
*Note: There are severe sanctions for cheating, plagiarizing and any other form of dishonesty. An initial incident will result in the student receiving an E and zero points for exam. A second incident will result in a failure (E or possibly an XE – failure for academic dishonesty) for the course. All work must be yours and it must be original to this class. If you have questions about this, please ask us. All instances of academic dishonesty will, per CLAS policy, be reported to the appropriate authority in CLAS.

Disability Accommodations: Qualified students with disabilities who will require disability accommodations in this class are encouraged to make their requests to me at the beginning of the semester either during office hours or by appointment. Note: Prior to receiving disability accommodations, verification of eligibility from the Disability Resource Center (DRC) is required. Disability information is confidential.

Establishing Eligibility for Disability Accommodations: Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) should contact DRC immediately. Their office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. DRC staff can also be reached at: 480-965-1234 (V), 480-965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit: www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc. Their hours are 8:00 AM to 5:00 PM, Monday through Friday.

Required Texts and Readings

The readings for this course offer conflicting interpretations of theory and history. Students should read these texts with the goals of identifying, comparing, evaluating, and contesting contending arguments.

Two books are required for this course:


Both are available as ebooks via ASU library online (lib.asu.edu). If you prefer a hard copy you are welcome to purchase one via Amazon.com or other book vendors.

Other reading materials come from academic journals or from academic books. These reading will be made available via Blackboard. They will be organized by date. Be sure to read them – either in electronic or printed form—prior to class. Please email me if you can’t find a reading that is supposed to be on Blackboard.
Part I: An Introduction to Civil War and Terrorism

1/5 Introduction

1/10 Defining Civil War

*Sambanis. 2004. “What is civil war?”
*Breaking the Conflict Trap, pgs. 1-9.

1/13 The Costs of Civil War (and why we care)

*Breaking the Conflict Trap, chapters 1-2

1/17 Civil Wars, “New” and “Old”

*Kaldor, Mary. 1997. “New and Old Wars”
*Kalyvas, Stathis. 2001. “New” and “old” civil wars: a valid distinction?”

1/19 Understanding Terrorism

*Inside Terrorism, chapter 1.

1/24 Psychology of Terror

*Video: “Battled of Algiers”

1/26 Strategic Logic of Terror

*Kydd, Andrew and Barbara Walter. 2006. “Strategies of Terrorism.”
*Video: “Battle of Algiers” cont’d

1/31 Tactics and Targets

2/2 Guerilla Warfare


2/7 Terrorism vs. Insurgency: Just another Tactic?

*Butler, Chris and Scott Gates. 2009. “Asymmetry, Parity and (Civil) War.”
*Video: “The Insurgency”

2/9 Causes of Civil War (an overview)

*Breaking the Conflict Trap, chapter 3-4

2/14 Collective Action and Free riding

*Summary of Olson. 1965. The Logic of Collective Action
*Mason, T. David. 2004. Caught in the Crossfire, chapter 4

2/16 State Violence and Collective Action

*Oberschall, Anthony. “Explaining Terrorism”

2/21 All about Identity: part I, religion

*Video: “Israel’s Next War?”

2/23 All about Identity: part II, ethnicity


2/28 Strategic Motives for Identity-based Violence

Part II: International Aspects of Civil Conflict

3/1 Rebels without Borders

*Salehyan, Idean. 2009. Rebels without Borders, chapters 1, 4 (ebook)

3/6 Terrorism across Borders

*Inside Terrorism, chapter 3.

3/8 Global Media

*Video: “Return of the Taliban”

3/13 Ethnic Ties beyond Borders


3/15 Diffusion of Terror and Insurgency  Second Essay Due


3/20-3/22 Spring Break

*No class

3/27 Refugees and Civil War

3/29 Climate Change and Conflict?

*Reuveny, Rafael. 2007. “Climate Change-induced Migration and Violence Conflict”

Part II: Resolving War

4/3 Stopping the Killing

*Video: TBA
*BCT, chapter 5

4/5 Ending War: What Works?  Portfolio Due

*Video: TBA
*BCT, chapter 6.

4/10 The Role of International Actors

*United Nations Charter. Chapters VI and VII.
*Evans, Gareth and Mohamed Sahnoun. 2002. “The Responsibility to Protect”

4/12 Resolving Civil Conflicts


4/19 Solutions for Ethnic Conflicts

*Kaufmann, Chaim. 1996. “Possible and Impossible Solutions to Ethnic Civil Wars”

4/17 Nation Building and Democracy Imposition

*Enterline, Andrew and Michael Grieg. 2008. “Against all Odd?”
*Gause, Gregory. 2005. “Can Democracy Stop Terrorism”
4/24 Limits and Problems of Intervention


5/1 Final Exam Day  Final Paper Due