PLSC 26800: Insurgency, Terrorism, and Civil War
Department of Political Science
University of Chicago

Winter 2016
Time: TUTH, 12-1:20
Room: SS 122
Office Hours: Tuesday, 2:00-4:00 pm and by appt.

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Course Description

This course provides an introduction to asymmetric and irregular warfare. From Colombia to Afghanistan, non-state armed organizations are crucially important actors. The course explores how they organize themselves, extract resources, deploy violence, attract recruits, and both fight and negotiate with states. It also examines government counterinsurgency and counterterrorism policies, building peace after conflict, and international involvement in internal wars.

Readings deal with a variety of conflicts and cover a number of distinct topics. Because of the amount of material we need to cover, both the quantity and sophistication of the readings are high for a lecture course. This is a step up from the “Intro to X” courses in the Political Science major. You will primarily read peer-reviewed journal articles and excerpts from academic books, with the goal of introducing you to a wide range of recent research. This is not a class about current events, though we will often refer to contemporary cases in relation to the readings and topics of the class.

The readings will be touched on during lectures and more carefully analyzed in discussion sections. I reserve the right to change readings as necessary; these changes will be conveyed to you if they occur. There is a Chalk site for this class where some readings can be found. There are mandatory weekly TA discussion sections, in which participation is necessary. Please feel free to come to my office hours.

Course Components

Two analytical essays (45%). You will be asked to write two 5-7 page essays that grapple with key concepts and theories we examine in the first 2/3rds of the course. These are not research papers, but instead exercises in identifying, assessing, and integrating arguments and perspectives from the readings. Late papers will be penalized (you lose a full letter grade per day late). We will only grant extensions if there is a compelling personal reason that your College adviser is aware of.

Final exam (25%). The comprehensive written final will cover material from the entire quarter. The registrar has scheduled the exam for Tuesday, March 15, 10:30-12:30. There will be an early exam on Thursday of reading period in our normal room from 12-2 (note: if there turns out
to be a logistical problem with that space, I will let you know). You can take either - they will have different but equivalent material - but you must let your TA know 1 week ahead of time if you plan to do the early exam. Unless there is illness or some other serious personal issue, there will not be any make-up exams.

**Participation in weekly discussion sections (30%).** The TAs will lead a weekly discussion section in which the readings will be discussed in more detail. These will be scheduled during Week 1. Attendance at and involvement in discussion sections are required. It is expected that every student will do all the reading and be prepared to discuss it. Grappling with arguments, concepts, and evidence is essential to learning. Not taking this part of the course seriously will result in a low overall grade.

**Pass/Fail.** You can take the course Pass/Fail by informing your TA by the end of 3rd week. After this point, your only options are to take it for a grade or to withdraw.

**Electronic Etiquette**

Students should not use their laptops, cell phones or other mobile devices during lectures for any reason. TAs have the discretion to determine these guidelines in their sections.

We aim to be responsive to email from students. However, please do not expect an answer to your question any sooner than 48 hours after it is sent. Last-minute email questions and requests are bad for everyone involved. All correspondence should be appropriately professional.

**Academic Integrity**

This is the University of Chicago’s Academic Integrity statement:

“It is contrary to justice, to academic integrity, and to the spirit of intellectual inquiry to submit the statements or ideas of work of others as one's own. To do so is plagiarism or cheating, offenses punishable under the University's disciplinary system. Because these offenses undercut the distinctive moral and intellectual character of the University, we take them very seriously. Proper acknowledgment of another's ideas, whether by direct quotation or paraphrase, is expected. In particular, if any written or electronic source is consulted and material is used from that source, directly or indirectly, the source should be identified by author, title, and page number, or by website and date accessed. Any doubts about what constitutes "use" should be addressed to the instructor.”

If you have questions, ask me or your TA, and consult Charles Lipson’s *Doing Honest Work in College* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008). Any violations will be automatically passed on to the relevant College authorities.

**Course Schedule and Readings**

Readings with an asterisk (*) can be found through the University of Chicago Library e-journals and databases. I assume you know how to use these resources already; if not, consult library staff at the Regenstein. Readings marked with (Chalk e-reserves) can be found in the course's Chalk
Library e-reserves section; those marked with (Chalk documents) can be found in the course’s Chalk Course Documents section. If you are having trouble finding a reading, contact your TA or Professor Staniland as soon as possible.

Part I. The Origins of Civil Wars

Week 1

January 5: Introduction

January 7: Concepts, Trends, and Comparisons in Internal War

Week 2

January 12: The State

January 14: Economics and Resources

Week 3

January 19: Ethnicity and Identity
Horowitz. Ethnic Groups in Conflict. Chapter 5. (Chalk e-reserves)
January 21: Pathways to Civil War in South Asia: Afghanistan and Sri Lanka

Paper #1 Assigned

Part II. Dynamics of Violence

Week 4

January 26: Joining an Insurgency
Petersen, Petersen, Roger. Resistance and Rebellion: Lessons from Eastern Europe (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), Chapters 1 and 6 (Chalk e-reserves – this book has an electronic version you can access through the library)

January 28: Insurgent Organization and Mobilization

Paper #1 due at beginning of class on Jan. 28

Week 5

February 2: Counterinsurgency

*February 4: Alliances and Alignment in Civil War*

*Week 6*

*February 9: Militias & the State*
Read all four of the (short) pieces of this series on militias in Iraq; see links at the bottom of the linked page: http://carnegieendowment.org/sada/?fa=61016.

*February 11: Conflict Outcomes*
Staniland, Paul. “States, Insurgents, and Wartime Political Orders.” *Perspectives on Politics* (June 2012).*

*Week 7*

*February 16: Dynamics of Terrorism*

**February 18: Mass killing in war**


*Paper #2 assigned*

**Week 8**

**February 23: Varieties of Violence**


**February 25: Negotiations**


*Paper #2 due at beginning of class on Feb. 25*

**Part III. The End and Aftermath of Civil Wars**

**Week 9**

**March 1: Humanitarian Intervention**


Luttwak, Edward. “Give War a Chance.” *Foreign Affairs* (August 1999).*


**March 3: Peacekeeping & State-Building**


**Week 10**

*March 8: Violence and Democracy*


*March 10: Reading Period and No Class* [Early final offered]

**Final Exam:** Tuesday, March 15, 2015, 10:30 am-12:30 pm [Location TBA]