

# PLTC 281 - Civil War, Insurgency, and Terrorism

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## **Class Meetings**

Fall Semester, 2021

Wednesday and Friday, 08:00 - 09:20

Room 200, Pettigrew Hall

## **Contact Information**

Instructor: Chris Price (cprice@bates.edu)

Office: 163, Pettengill Hall

Student Hours: Tu 9- 11AM, Th:1 - 3PM

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## **Course Description:**

Intra-state conflict, whether described as civil wars, insurgencies, or terrorism, has been the dominant form of political violence since 1945. While the number of violent conflicts has fallen since the end of the cold war, they caused more than 15 million deaths since 1945, and in the words of a World Bank overview, represent “development in reverse”. Beyond their enormous human cost, these conflicts impact many elements of politics, such as state building, political institutions, and the ordering of political power. This course focuses on the causes, dynamics, prospects for peace, and lasting legacies of political violence in a variety of cases, through a mix of reading, lecture, discussion, writing, and presentation.

This course is organized around five critical questions for scholarship and policy: What are the causes of political violence? Why do individuals join armed organizations? What explains the variation in targets, methods and frequency of violence used by states and armed challengers within and across conflicts? What are some of the challenges and prospects for ending these violent conflicts? Lastly, what are some of the enduring legacies of political violence?

We will examine these questions in order, using a mix of readings, lecture, discussion, presentations, and writing assignments. This course is a step up from introductory lecture courses, and will build your ability to critically evaluate readings from peer-reviewed publications, rather than an assigned textbook. The assignments are focused on providing you an overview of mainstream scholarship on civil conflict, improving your abilities to synthesize and evaluate arguments, and giving you a better sense of how social scientists conduct research. The expectation is that this course is comprised of three hours of in-class instruction and six hours of outside class work per week.

## **Learning Objectives:**

At the end of this course, students should be able to:

- Describe main theories on the causes, conduct, and consequences of intra-state conflict
- Identify different research methods in the social sciences, including experiments, statistics, historical narrative, and ethnography.
- Critically evaluate causal arguments in the social sciences, using counterfactual reasoning, orally and in writing

### Course Materials:

All course materials will be posted on the course site, to minimize the cost to students. Articles should also be available to you via your library account, and I will put books on course reserve at the library for those who wish to read them in hard copy. There is no requirement for you to buy the books, but they are available for purchase online either via their press site or retailers.

I may end up changing readings or topics due to unforeseen circumstances. If this happens, I will notify the class via email and update the syllabus on the Lyceum site.

### Brief Course Calendar:

Module	Week	Topics
Intro	1	Why take this course/Why is this subject important?
Onset	2	Why Fight? The Puzzle of Armed Conflict
Onset	3	Reasons for Violence - State, Resources and Class
Onset	4	Reasons for Violence - Identities, Ethnicity, and Networks [Analytic Essay 1 Prompts Posted]
Dynamics	5	Armed Group Organization [Analytic Essay 1 Due]
Dynamics	6	Strategies of Violence
Dynamics	7	Civilian Victimization [Analytic Essay 2 Prompts Posted]
Resolution	8	Resolution - Challenges to ending war [Analytic Essay 2 Due]
Resolution	9	Resolution - Peace Keeping and Intervention [Analytic Essay 3 Prompts Posted]
Resolution	10	Resolution - Reoccurrence of Violence [Analytic Essay 3 Due]
BREAK	11	Thanksgiving Break - No Class
Legacies	12	Legacies - State and Regime
Legacies	13	Legacies - Identities and Prosocial Behavior
		[READING PERIOD AND FINAL PROJECT]

### Class Structure

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This class meets for two eighty-minute sessions each week.

The first meeting each week will consist of a mix of lecture and large group discussion, focused on the week's readings. I will post lecture slides at the end of each week, but you should attend this session having at least skimmed the required reading and prepared to ask questions from the reading.

The second meeting each week will cover any outstanding questions on the topic for that week, and then shift to a workshop format. In this session, you will work in small groups to learn more about the nuts and bolts of how political scientists do research, as well as applying theories to cases. I will provide group assignments and materials for the following week on Fridays the week before.

## Assessments and Grades

Grading is based on a model of work either meeting, partially meeting, or not meeting expectations. For graded assessments, I will evaluate your performance against a rubric laying out these expectations, which I will provide to you in advance.

I do not use a curve in grading, as using a curve can potentially create perverse incentives for students to undermine their peers. My expectations are that each of you is capable of achieving an A in this course, and throughout the assessment process I will let you know how your work can be improved if you are not meeting expectations.

Your final grade will be assigned based on your achievement on the full set of assessments listed below.

### **Class Engagement (30%):**

- **Workshop Participation and Presentations - 20% (10 x 2%)**

Starting in our second week, we will use the majority of our Friday class as a workshop, where we will look in greater depth at how social scientists conduct research and how theories apply to specific cases of political violence. For each of these workshop periods, I will assign you into small groups and post the task and any additional readings for your small group the week prior to class.

During this period, you will work together as a team for roughly 30 minutes in discussing and coming to consensus on what you will present to the class. After this time, groups will present a brief synopsis to the class on main points that they think are valuable to the class, challenges they faced carrying out the assignment, and any questions they could not answer.

- **Discussion Questions - 10% (5 x 2%)**

Five times during the semester, by 5 PM the day before the Wednesday class session, you should e-mail me a reaction you had on the session's readings. These do not have to be long, and can cover any of the following points:

- Shortcomings in empirics or issues of logic you identify in the paper
- Questions you have but cannot answer about the authors empirics
- A case you know about which is not explained by the author's theory despite meeting scope conditions.
- Normative concerns you have about the implications of the author's analysis

I will use these points to help develop discussion questions for class, as well as to gauge your involvement with the readings.

### **Analytic Essays (3 x 15%):**

In weeks 4, 7 and 10, I will post a choice of essay prompts to the course website by 12:00 PM (Noon) Friday, and I will expect you to write a 1,000 - 1,500 word essay answering the question, due at 6 PM Friday one week later. This essay is not meant to be a research project, but an opportunity to show your ability to synthesize the material covered in class. I will provide further

guidance on formatting, how to submit, and my grading rubric with the prompt, and resources on writing effective essays on the course website by the fourth week of class.

**Final Project (25%):**

For the final, you will write a short paper based on prompts and case materials I will provide on Lyceum. The paper will be between 2,500 and 3,000 words, and should include a discussion of how the articles we read in class would explain the case, and judge this against the available evidence. You will have a choice between four possible prompts, and I am only expecting to write on one of the four.

## **Class Policies**

**Absences:** I understand that like in any professional workplace, there may be occasions where you find you have a schedule conflict or are unable to attend class. As such, you all have one unexcused absence throughout the semester, and I will allow further excused absences for reasons identified by the [Office of Student Affairs](#).

Regular attendance is important for a productive seminar format and a good predictor of positive learning outcomes. As such, if you miss class, please make arrangements to talk with me so that I know you are caught up on the material for that week.

**Academic Integrity:** Both the College and myself take academic integrity quite seriously. Throughout this course, the expectation is that in written work you will recognize the sources you used, and that unless an assignment is explicitly stated as a collaborative one, your work is yours and yours alone.

If you have questions about how to cite the works of others, please see the [Writing Center website](#), where you can find information about citation methods and formats.

The University's full policy on academic integrity can be found [here](#), and applies to this course.

**Accessibility:** It is my goal to create a learning experience that is as accessible as possible. If you anticipate any issues related to the format, materials, or requirements of this course, please meet with me outside of class so we can explore potential options. Students with disabilities may also wish to work with the Office of Accessible Education and Student Support to discuss a range of options to removing barriers in this course, including official accommodations. Please visit their [website](#) for contact and additional information. If you have already been approved for accommodations through the Office of Accessible Education, please meet with me so we can develop an implementation plan together.

**Deadlines and Extensions:** The assignment due dates are set well in advance and are meant to provide you flexibility to budget your time. If something comes up which meets the requirements for an excused absence, please let me know as soon as possible so we can arrange an extension.

For all other cases, late assignments will be penalized by 5% (approximately the plus or minus of a grade) for every twelve hours past the due date. There are two reasons for this: (1) to make sure that I have them and can provide feedback in a timely manner, and (2) fairness to your peers, who may also have done better if they had additional time to work, but may have felt unable to put off a deadline.

**Equity, Inclusion, and Respect for Others:** During the semester, we will be talking about religion, ethnicity, gender, class, and violence. Any of these topics alone is likely to raise strong responses, and even with the best of intentions, it's not unlikely someone will make an ill-considered remark when talking about them at length. I ask that we all do our best to be respectful of others, and that you please let me know if there are any issues which come out of class discussion which you believe need to be resolved. If you are uncomfortable talking to me, please use any of the resources available at the [College's Office of Equity and Inclusion](#).

I stand behind the University's statement on [Diversity](#):

Everyone is different; at Bates, we embrace and learn from that difference.

At Bates, we acknowledge and celebrate the plurality of identities, social positions, cultural perspectives and individual abilities that contribute to human difference. We believe in the emancipating potential of education to help all members of our community promote, respect and embrace diversity – broadly defined – and to preserve and advocate for human dignity. As we avow in the Bates mission statement, “With ardor and devotion — Amore ac Studio — we engage the transformative power of our differences, cultivating intellectual discovery and informed civic action” to prepare leaders who are “sustained by a love of learning and a commitment to responsible stewardship of the wider world.”

**Electronic Devices:** Electronic devices are now ubiquitous, and there will be particular times in class that will take advantage of them. However, they are often designed in ways that will take your attention away from what is going on around you, particularly in class. I thus reserve the right at any point in the course to ask you to put away your devices, and would ask that you put phones on airplane mode during class to avoid being distracted by notifications.

**Grading Disputes:** I will make every effort to be transparent and to be accurate in grading your assignments. However, in cases where you believe there is an error in grading, I will carry out re-grading by the following process:

- No earlier than 24 hours after you received the grade and no later than one week after, please send an email to me detailing which portion of the assignment you believe was incorrectly graded, as well as your reasoning for why, citing the rubric.
- I will then regrade the item with the rubric, and will adjust the grade accordingly. If there was an error, I will adjust the grade up; If there was no error, I will explain why the item was graded the way it was; and if it appears that there are additional issues with your answer, I may downgrade and will explain why

**Student Hours:** What are student hours? They are a time for you to talk with me about any concerns or issues you have with the class, as well as to ask other questions about topics relating to the study of politics which may not be germane to the whole class. You are encouraged to take advantage of these, as they can help head off problems, lessen concerns, and give me a better sense for how you are doing in the course and at Bates.

I have set aside Tuesday morning (9 - 12) and Thursday afternoon for student hours, which are the best times to meet with me. I will do my best to honor appointments outside of these hours, and to respond to emails promptly, but realize that it will be slower replies in the evening and weekends. If you make an appointment for a set time, I will honor that over students who have not.

**Student Resources:** Even in the best of times, students often face challenges that they will need help with outside of class; these are not the best of times. Bates College has a [number of resources](#) available to support you, covering physical and mental health, academic and peer support, and conflict resolution. Please take advantage of them.

**Other Unforeseen Issues:** For all other policies not enumerated here, my default will be College policy as listed in the [Bates College Student Handbook](#).

## Detailed Course Schedule and Readings

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### Week 1 - Syllabus and Intro

9/1, 9/3

#### *Readings*

- Syllabus

#### *Workshop*

- Reading an Academic Article and Making sense of statistical tables

### Week 2 - The Puzzle of Violent Conflict

9/8, 9/10

- Stephan, Maria J. and Erica Chenoweth. 2008. Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict. *International Security* 33(1): 7-44.
- Kalyvas, Stathis and Matthew Adam Kocher. 2007. How 'Free' is Free-Riding in Civil Wars? Violence, Insurgency, and the Collective Action Problem. *World Politics* 59(2): 177-216.
- Wood, Elisabeth J. 2003. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. New York, New York: Cambridge University Press. Chapter 1, pp.1-30. [Electronic Resource]

#### *Workshop:*

- How do Political Scientists define cases?

### Week 3 - Origins of Violence: The State, Resources, and Inequality

9/15, 9/17

- Boix, Carles. 2008. Economic Roots of Civil Wars and Revolutions in the Contemporary World. *World Politics* 60(3): 390-437
- Fearon, James and David D. Laitin. 2003. Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War. *American Political Science Review* 97(1): 75-90.

#### *Workshop:*

- How do political scientists code data?

### Week 4 - Origins of Violence: Ethnicity and Identity

9/22, 9/25

- Cederman, Lars-Erik, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Min. 2010. "Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis." *World Politics* 62(1): 87-119
- Lawrence, Adria. 2010. Triggering Nationalist Violence: Competition and Conflict in Uprisings against Colonial Rule. *International Security* 35(2): 88-122

#### *Workshop:*

- Examining Cases - Causes of Conflict

Week 5 - Organizing Violence

9/29, 10/1

- Parkinson, Sarah E. 2013. Organizing Rebellion: Rethinking High-Risk Mobilization and Social Networks in War. *American Political Science Review* 107(3): 418–32.
- Shapiro, Jacob N. 2015. *The Terrorists Dilemma: Managing Violent Covert Organizations*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press. Chapters 1, 4. [Electronic Resource]

*Workshop:*

- How do Political Scientists use historical material?

*Due:*

- Analytic Essay 1

Week 6 - Dynamics: Strategies of Violence - Rebels

10/6, 10/8

- Mack, Andrew. 1975. Why Big Nations Lose Small Wars: The Politics of Asymmetric Conflict. *World Politics* 27(2): 175-200.
- Goodwin, Jeff. 2006. A Theory of Categorical Terrorism. *Social Forces* 84(4): 2027-2046.

*Workshop:*

- Case Studies - Armed group strategies

Week 7 - Dynamics: Strategies of Violence - State

10/13

- Biddle, Stephen, Jeffrey A. Friedman, and Jacob N. Shapiro. 2012. Testing the Surge: Why Did Violence Decline in Iraq in 2007? *International Security* 37(1): 7-40.
- Downes, Alexander B. 2007. Draining the Sea by Filling the Graves: Investigating the Effectiveness of Indiscriminate Violence as a Counterinsurgency Strategy. *Civil Wars* 9(4): 420-444.

*Workshop:*

- No workshop - Enjoy Fall Break Weekend!

Week 8 - Dynamics: Civilian Victimization

10/20, 10/22

- Fujii, Lee Ann. 2013. The Puzzle of Extra-Lethal Violence. *Perspectives on Politics* 11(2): 410-426.
- Gutiérrez-Sanín, Francisco & Elisabeth Wood. 2017. What Should We Mean by “Pattern of Political Violence”? Repertoire, Targeting, Frequency, and Technique. *Perspectives on Politics* 15(1): 20-41

*Workshop:*

- Case studies - Violence against Civilians

Week 9 - Resolution: Negotiations

10/27, 10/29

- Duffy Toft, Monica. 2010. Ending Civil Wars: A Case for Rebel Victory? *International Security* 34(4): 7-36
- Kydd, Andrew & Barbara F. Walter. 2002. Sabotaging the Peace: The Politics of Extremist Violence. *International Organization* 56(2): 263-296.

*Workshop:*

- How do Political Scientists model theories?

*Due:*

- Analytic Essay 2

Week 10 - Resolution: External Intervention and Peacekeeping

11/3, 11/5

- Autessere, Séverine. 2014. *Peaceland: Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention*. New York, NY: Cambridge University Press. Intro, Chapter 1, pages 1-58. [Electronic Resource]
- Fortna, Virginia Page. 2004. "Does Peacekeeping Keep Peace? International Intervention and the Duration of Peace After Civil War." *International Studies Quarterly* 48(2): 269-92

*Workshop:*

- Case studies - Peacekeeping and intervention

Week 11 - Resolution: Dissolving Violent Organizations

11/10, 11/12

- Bateson, Regina. 2017. The Socialization of Civilians and Militia Members: Evidence from Guatemala. *Journal of Peace Research* 54(5): 634-647
- Humphreys, Macartan and Jeremy Weinstein. 2007. Demobilization and Reintegration. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51(4): 531-567
- Lake, Milli. 2017. Building the Rule of War: Post-conflict Institutions and the Micro-Dynamics of Conflict in Eastern DR Congo. *International Organization* 71(2): 281-315.

*Workshop:*

- How do Political Scientists talk with subjects about violence?

Week 12 - Legacies: Macro-Level

11/17, 11/19

- Davenport, C., Mogleiv Nygård, H., Fjelde, H., and Armstrong, D., 2019. The Consequences of Contention: Understanding the Aftereffects of Political Conflict and Violence. *Annual Review of Political Science* 22(1): 361–377.
- Wood, Elisabeth J. 2008. The Social Processes of Civil War: The Wartime Transformation of Social Networks. *Annual Review of Political Science* 11 (1): 539–561

*Workshop:*

- Case studies - States and Regimes after Conflict

*Due:*

- Analytic Essay 3

Week 13 - Thanksgiving Break

11/24, 11/26

- No Class - enjoy your time off!

Week 14 - Legacies: Micro-level

12/1, 12/3

- Balcells, Laia. 2012. The Consequences of Victimization on Political Identities: Evidence from Spain. *Politics and Society* 40(3): 311-347
- Blattman, Christopher. 2009. From Violence to Voting: War and Political Participation in Uganda. *American Political Science Review* 103(2): 231-247.
- Mironova, Vera and Sam Whitt. 2016. The Evolution of Prosociality and Parochialism After Violence. *Journal of Peace Research* 53(5): 648-664.

*Workshop:*

- How do Political Scientists carry out experiments to understand conflict?