University of Rochester
Department of Political Science
IR 231 Counterinsurgency in Theory and Practice
Fall 2012
MWF 10 a.m.-10:50 a.m.
Gavett 312

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About this course: The United States and its allies are fighting insurgencies in Afghanistan, fought multiple insurgencies in Iraq, and are attempting to defeat insurgencies in Yemen, the Philippines, Central Africa, and elsewhere. Other states face insurgencies in their own territory, including China, Russia and, until recently, Sri Lanka. What do these efforts to defeat insurgencies consist of? How does counterinsurgency (COIN) work? How is it supposed to work? Why do U.S. policymakers expect the defeat of insurgencies abroad to make Americans safer at home? This course considers these questions through students’ analysis of theoretical literatures, the COIN literature, and research into internal conflict and state-building, as well as through students’ study of current and past COIN campaigns.

Educational goals: Build students’ analytical abilities; develop students’ ability to present a logically consistent argument that accords with the available evidence; to find and use evidence effectively; to analyze others’ use of evidence and logic; to analyze world events and state policies through a social science lens; to increase students’ understanding of states’ foreign policy choices in order to build their ability to act as responsible and informed citizens; to increase their ability to assess certain types of potential national security threats and to understand the tools available to meet these threats.

Course requirements: Students are expected to have read and considered the material prior to the class for which it is assigned, and be prepared to discuss it in class. Students are expected to attend all classes. No late assignments will be accepted without documentation of a medical or personal emergency. Details on assignments are below.

Academic Integrity: Be familiar with the University's policies on academic integrity and disciplinary action (http://www.rochester.edu/living/urhere/handbook/discipline2.html#XII). Violators of University regulations on academic integrity will be dealt with severely, which means that your grade will suffer and I will forward your case to the Chair of the College Board on Academic Honesty.
**Additional Resources:** I encourage students to use the university's resources. The Writing Center, other tutoring, and the Department of Political Science librarian are all available to you. Note that the Writing Center apparently requires a professor's approval to work on a class assignment, so plan ahead.

The Office of the Dean, through the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning and the College Center for Academic Support, provides tutoring. Students wanting information may go to CCAS in Lattimore 312, 275-2354.

The College Writing Program offers tutoring on written assignments.
http://writing.rochester.edu/help/index.html

Valuable information on research and writing is at

The Department of Political Science's reference librarian, Ann Marshall, is available to students. Contact her at amarshall@library.rochester.edu.

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**Books Suggested For Purchase**

These books will be on reserve. They are in the campus bookstore and may be available for purchase online.


*The U.S. Army-Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual 3-24*, University of Chicago edition. Also available as a free PDF online.


All other assigned and suggested material is available online, either on Blackboard or in the public realm.

**Course Requirements**

1. **Midterm 35% of class grade (15% for exam, 20% for essay):**
   a) Short-answer, in-class exam (15 questions on concepts from study guide)
   Counts for 15% of class grade. Grade based on accuracy and completeness of responses. Exam on October 5.
   b) Take-home exam: Write a three-page essay analyzing which COIN model is, theoretically, most likely to lead to success and why, and which is least likely, and why. Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the models you analyze. Grade will be based on accuracy in presentation of models, clarity of writing and argument, and logical consistency of analysis. Grammar, punctuation, and proper formatting also count. Essay is due in my email inbox by the beginning of class on October 5.

2. **Five-page final paper (35% of class grade):** Write a clear, succinct, focused argument recommending a specific COIN approach for a case of your choosing, current or past. Your prescription must differ from what was in fact applied. Analyze both the costs and the benefits of the strategy you propose, and explain why it is superior to alternative models of COIN success for the specific case. Use at least three scholarly sources on the insurgency, at least three scholarly sources on your recommended COIN approach, and at least three scholarly sources on the approaches you reject. Use a standard citation format. **You MUST meet with me at least once before December 1 to discuss the case and approaches you will examine.** Grade will be based on the strength of your argument, relevance of the evidence you present, and your clarity and precision of expression. Grammar, punctuation, and proper formatting also count. Due in my email inbox before class begins on December 12.

3. **Presentations (15% of class grade):** Present on one theoretical reading in the first half of the term and present on your argument in your final paper at the end of the term. Grade based on clarity, accuracy, coherence, and concision of presentations. I will distribute a sign-up list for presentations early in the term. Theory presentations are September 12 and September 14. Paper presentations are December 5, December 7, and December 10.

4. **Participation (15% of class grade):** This includes participation in class discussions, participation in discussions with visitors, and participation in discussions of other
students' presentations. Grade based on degree of familiarity and engagement with material, focus on topic at hand, civility, and constructiveness.

We will discuss how to read scholarly work, research and write essays, do presentations, and conduct interviews. Feel free to discuss your thoughts and class material with others, but you will be graded solely on your own work.

Course Outline

I. Introduction: What good is theory? What is analysis? What is COIN and what is it supposed to do? Why do we care?

II. States
   a. The uses of force, other tools

III. Political violence within states
    a. Political contestation
    b. Nonviolent political action by non-state actors
    c. Causes of internal violence
    d. Termination of internal violence

IV. Insurgencies
    a. Thinking like an insurgent

V. COIN Models
   a. Pre-1945 COIN
   b. Cold War COIN
   c. Contemporary COIN: The governance model
   d. Questions about the governance model

VI. Great powers, the United States, and COIN
    a. Interests and threats
    b. Contagion and spread
    c. Non-political violence: For financial profit and other personal advantage

VII. Cases
    a. Case studies and the comparative method, questions for cases
    b. Malaya
    c. The Philippines-Huks
    d. Vietnam
    e. Dhofar, Oman
    f. Chechnya
    g. Sri Lanka
    h. The Philippines today
    i. Somalia today
    j. China-Uighurs
    k. Iraq
    l. Afghanistan

I may modify the readings or the topic schedule depending on developments, but will give you plenty of notice via Blackboard. Make sure to read your emails from Blackboard to stay up to date.
Class Schedule

Friday, Aug. 3:1 Theory, analysis, and real life NO CLASS, FACULTY CONFERENCE

For this class, read:


Monday, Sept. 3: The uses of force NO CLASS, LABOR DAY

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


Wednesday, Sept. 5: Introduction and overview

For this class, read:


Friday, Sept. 7: States, state development, and political development

For this class, read:

Available online through the Voyager database.

Additional reading:


**Monday, Sept. 10: Political violence within states**

**For this class, read:**


Additional reading:


Wednesday, Sept. 12: The causes of internal conflict

PRESENTATIONS

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


Frantz Fanon, *The Wretched of the Earth* (New York: Grove Press, 2005 reprint).

**Friday, Sept. 14: The causes of internal conflict**

**PRESENTATIONS**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Monday, Sept. 17: Anarchy and political actors**

We will screen "Mad Max." It is on reserve so you can watch the portion we will not have time to see in class.
Wednesday, Sept. 19: Ending internal conflict

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


Friday, Sept. 21: Thinking like an insurgent

For this class, read:


We will screen "Red Dawn." It is on reserve so you can watch the portion we will not have time too see in class.
Additional reading:


Monday, Sept. 24: Counterinsurgency: Pre-1945 COIN and Cold War COIN

For this class, read:


Additional reading:

Hazelton Counterinsurgency in Theory and Practice Fall 2012


**Wednesday, Sept. 26: Contemporary COIN: The governance paradigm**

For this class, read:
Additional reading:


Friday, Sept. 28: The governance paradigm: Theory and empirics

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


**Monday, Oct. 1 The governance paradigm: Overreach?**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Wednesday, Oct. 3: The governance paradigm: One size fits all?**

**For this class, read:**

Friday, Oct. 5: MIDTERM ESSAY DUE, IN-CLASS MIDTERM

Monday, Oct. 8 NO CLASS, MIDTERM BREAK

Wednesday, Oct. 10: The governance paradigm: What else works?

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


Friday, Oct. 12: Great powers, the United States, and COIN

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


**Monday, Oct. 15: Case studies and the comparative method, questions for cases**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Wednesday, Oct. 17: Britain-Malaya**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Friday, Oct. 19: The Philippines-The Huis**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Wednesday, Oct. 24: El Salvador-FMLN**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Friday, Oct. 26: Dhofar, Oman**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Monday, Oct. 29*: Russia-Chechnya**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Wednesday, Oct. 31*: Turkey-PKK**

*For this class, read:*


**Additional reading:**


**Friday, Nov. 2*: Sri Lanka-Tamil Tigers**
For this class, read:


Additional reading:


Monday, Nov. 5*: The Philippines-Mindanao

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


Much more at the International Crisis Group site: crisisgroup.org

Wednesday, Nov. 7*: Somalia

For this class, read:


Additional reading:

Much more material from the ICG at:

And from Human Rights Watch at:
http://www.hrw.org/publications/reports?topic=All&region=121

Friday, Nov. 9*: China-Uighurs

For this class, read:


Monday, Nov. 12*: US-Iraq: Why

For this class, read:

Robert Jervis, "Explaining the War in Iraq," draft chapter.


Additional reading:


Andrew J. Bacevich, “No Exit: America Has an Impressive Record of Starting Wars but a Dismal One of Ending Them Well,” The American Conservative, February 1, 2010.

The Guardian (London), “What would you do?: You don’t want war. But how do we stop Saddam doing this again?: In recent weeks, it has become the hawks favorite riposte to mounting anti-war sentiment. But should critics of military action have to answer it? And, if so, can they offer any real alternative? We asked 30 high-profile opponents of the war to tackle the question,” February 27, 2003.


For this class, read:


Look at these Baghdad population changes graphics:

Additional reading:


Friday, Nov. 16*: US-Iraq: Accommodation

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


Monday Nov. 19*: US-Iraq: Today

For this class, read:


Additional reading:

The PBS program "Frontline" has a number of documentaries on Iraq: http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/gsearch.html?q=iraq&x=0&y=0


Wednesday, Nov. 21: US-Iraq: Doing COIN

For this class, read:


We will be screening "The War Tapes." It will be on reserve so you can watch the part we won't have time for in class.

Friday, November 23: NO CLASS, THANKSGIVING BREAK

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


For this class, read:


Additional reading:


marines.org/gazette/gen-petraeus-sends-letter-troops-assessing-progress-afghanistan


Friday, Nov. 30*: US-Afghanistan: The Future

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


We will be screening "Restrepo." It will be on reserve so you can watch the rest of it after class.
Wednesday, Dec. 5

PRESENTATIONS

Friday, Dec. 7

PRESENTATIONS

Monday, Dec. 10

PRESENTATIONS

Wednesday, Dec. 12: Conclusions, questions

FINAL PAPER DUE

Where are we? What have we learned?

*Readings may be updated with developing events.

(Last day of classes Dec. 12, Dec. 13-15 reading period, Dec. 16-22 exams)