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 and the Horn of Africa. 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 will make Americans safer at home? This course considers these questions through students’ analysis of relevant theoretical literatures, the COIN literature, and associated 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.

Books Suggested For Purchase


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


All other material is available online, either on Blackboard or in the public realm. Assigned books will be on reserve in the library. Scholarly articles are also available through the library's online resources.

**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 Friday, October 7.
   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 at the beginning of class on Friday, October 7.
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. 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 case you analyze. 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 the argument, relevance of the evidence presented, and clarity and precision of expression. Grammar, punctuation, and proper formatting also count. Due in class Monday, 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.

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 familiarity with the class material, focus on the 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 the work you present.

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

**Course Outline**

I. Introduction
II. States
   a. The uses of force
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. Counterinsurgency (COIN) Models
   a. Pre-1945 COIN
   b. Cold War COIN
   c. Contemporary COIN: The population-centric model
   d. Questions about the population-centric 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.

Class Schedule

Wednesday, Aug. 31: Introduction and overview

For this class, read:


Friday, Sept. 2 NO CLASS IN REGULAR TIME SLOT. We will reschedule.

For this class, read:


Monday, Sept. 5, is Labor Day. No class session.

For this class, read:

**Wednesday, Sept. 7: States, state development, and the uses of force**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Friday, Sept. 9: Political violence within states**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Monday, 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).

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

**PRESENTATIONS**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Friday, Sept. 16 NO CLASS IN REGULAR TIME SLOT. We will reschedule**

For this class, watch "Mad Max." It is on reserve.

**Monday, Sept. 19: Ending internal conflict**

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


**Wednesday, Sept. 21: Thinking like an insurgent**
For this class, read:

[http://www.britannica.com/original/print?content_id=1365](http://www.britannica.com/original/print?content_id=1365)


Watch "Red Dawn." It is on reserve.

**Additional reading:**


**Friday, Sept. 23: Counterinsurgency: Pre-1945 COIN and Cold War COIN**

For this class, read:


**Additional reading:**


**Monday, Sept. 26: Contemporary COIN: The population-centric model**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Wednesday, Sept. 28: The population-centric model: Theory and empirics**

**For this class, read:**

Additional reading:


**Friday, Sept. 30: The population-centric model: Overreach?**

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


**Monday, Oct. 3: The population-centric model: One size fits all?**

**For this class, read:**


**Wednesday, Oct. 5: The population-centric model: What else works?**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Class 16 Friday, Oct. 7**

MIDTERM ESSAY DUE, IN-CLASS MIDTERM

**October 10-11, Fall break**

**Wednesday, Oct. 12: Great powers, the United States, and counterinsurgency**
For this class, read:


Additional reading:


Friday, Oct. 14: Case studies and the comparative method, questions for cases

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


Monday, Oct. 17: Britain-Malaya

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


Paul Dixon, “’Hearts and Minds?’ British Counterinsurgency Strategy from Malaya to Iraq,” Journal of Strategic Studies 32:3 (June 2009), pp. 353-381.


http://www.rand.org/pubs/reports/R957/


Wednesday, Oct. 19: The Philippines-The Huks

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


http://purl.access.gpo.gov/GPO/LPS32792


**Friday, Oct. 21: US-Vietnam**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Monday, Oct. 24: US/El Salvador-FMLN**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


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

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Friday, Oct. 28*: Russia-Chechnya**
For this class, read:


Additional reading:


Monday, Oct. 31*:

Turkey-the PKK

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


**Wednesday, Nov. 2*: Sri Lanka-The Tamil Tigers**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Friday, Nov. 4*: The Philippines-Mindanao**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


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

Monday, 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

Wednesday, Nov. 9*: China-Uighurs

For this class, read:


Friday, Nov. 11*: 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:


Steven Metz, “’Learning from Iraq: Counterinsurgency in American Strategy,’” Strategic Studies Institute, January 2007.


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

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


Friday, Nov. 18*: 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


Monday Nov. 21*: US-Iraq: Doing COIN
Screening: "The War Tapes"

**For this class, read:**


November 23-27 Thanksgiving break

**Monday, Nov. 28*: US-Afghanistan: Why**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


**Wednesday, Nov. 30*: US-Afghanistan: What happened**

**For this class, read:**


**Additional reading:**


Friday, Dec. 2*: US-Afghanistan: The Future

For this class, read:


Additional reading:


**Monday, Dec. 5*: US-Afghanistan: Doing COIN**

Screening: "Restrepo"

**For this class, read:**


**Wednesday, Dec. 7**

PRESENTATIONS

**Friday, Dec. 9**

PRESENTATIONS

**Monday, Dec. 12**

FINAL PAPER DUE

Where are we? What have we learned? Conclusions, questions.

*Readings may be updated with developing events.*

(Last day of classes Dec. 13, Dec. 14-16 reading period, Dec. 17-22 exams)