

IR/PSC 276/276W: The Politics of Insurgency and Terrorism

University of Rochester

Fall 2011

Tuesdays, 2-4:40pm

Dewey 4162

Instructor

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This seminar deals with the logic of asymmetric conflicts between states and non-state actors. We will examine the military, political, and social factors that determine when and where such conflicts are likely to occur. Unit I covers theories of how non-state actors can win conflicts against governments and what these theories imply about the decision to rebel. Unit II examines problems of recruitment, control, and targeting faced by rebel groups.

Course Materials

The following books have been ordered through the campus bookstore. I have also noted books available through ebrary or on reserve at Rush Rhees. Other necessary materials will be available through Blackboard.

Bergen, Peter L. (2011) *The Longest War*. Free Press.

Berman, Eli (2009) *Radical, Religious, and Violent: The New Economics of Terrorism*. MIT Press. (On reserve at Rush Rhees)

Hoffman, Bruce (2006) *Inside Terrorism*. Columbia University Press. (Also on ebrary)

Scheuer, Michael (2011) *Osama bin Laden*. Oxford University Press. (On reserve at Rush Rhees)

Van Inwegen, Patrick (2011) *Understanding Revolution*. Lynne Rienner.

Course Goals

Ultimate learning outcome:

- Write an original research paper arguing for an explanation of the differences in insurgent groups' social or political impacts and responding to counter-explanations of the empirical record.

Mediating learning outcomes:

- Evaluate empirical claims in assigned readings in terms of the quality and scope of the empirical evidence.
- Propose and defend interpretations of qualitative and quantitative data.
- Assess the fit between empirical claims in assigned readings and cases other than those the author uses.

Foundational learning outcomes:

- Research features of insurgencies and distill this information for the class.
- Explain the argument of each of the assigned readings; distinguish between prescriptive arguments and empirical arguments; and point out any problems of logic in these arguments.

Course requirements

80% of the grade in this class is based on attendance, participation, and assignments prepared for class or done in class. Take-home assignments will consist of two group presentations and two writing assignments building toward a final paper. In-class assignments will be based on small group assignments in which you will explore patterns in quantitative and qualitative data. The course schedule has the full break-down of the how much each assignment or class period is worth.

The remaining 20% of the grade will be based on a final research paper. In this paper, you will compare the effects of two or three non-state armed groups on a particular political or social outcome. The paper will propose strategic or tactical factors that explain differences in outcomes between the groups; present evidence of differences in outcome; document differences in strategies or tactics and the effects of those differences; and address competing explanations.

There will be two sessions of the course devoted to reviewing paper ideas and drafts. In Week 7, students will turn in an outline of a proposed paper. In Week 14, students will turn in a draft of the paper. These assignments are due by 5 pm on the Monday before class.

This paper should be 20-25 pages in length using 12 point font, 1 inch margins, double-spacing, and in-text citations, not including the bibliography. The paper must properly credit all sources and be original work. See <http://www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/> for details on avoiding plagiarism.

Evaluation Policies

Attendance: This is a seminar course. Student preparation and participation is vital to the success of the source.

If you need to miss a class because of a religious holiday, school function, funeral, or other extraordinary circumstances please email me in advance of class. If you are too ill to attend class, please provide me with a note from the Student Health Center stating that your illness prevented you from attending class; this note must be provided within 72 hours of the missed class. Students who follow the above procedure to obtain an excused absence may make-up any in-class assignments as take home assignments, which are due by 5 pm on the Monday immediately following the class that the student has missed.

Grading scale

A ($93.0\% < x$)

A- ($90.0\% < x \leq 93.0\%$)

B+ ($87.0\% < x \leq 90.0\%$)

B ($84.0\% < x \leq 87.0\%$)

B- ($80.0\% < x \leq 84.0\%$)

C+ ($77.0\% < x \leq 80.0\%$)

C ($74.0\% < x \leq 77.0\%$)

C- ($70.0\% < x \leq 74.0\%$)

Non-passing grades ($x \leq 70.0\%$)

A student with two excused absences who needs to miss another class should contact me directly to discuss their situation.

Unexcused absences or extreme tardiness will result in no credit for that session's attendance, in-class assignments, and participation.

Group presentations: Students will be working in small groups on presentations for Weeks 4 and 6. The criteria for presentations include a requirement that all members of the group who are present at the presentation participate, be prepared to answer questions about the material, and defend the presentation's conclusions. All present members of the group will receive the same grade for the presentation.

Students with an excused absence on the day of a presentation can complete a make-up assignment. Students with an unexcused absence on the day of a presentation will receive no credit for that presentation.

Late work: Barring extraordinary circumstances, late work will be marked down a third of a grade (e.g. A to A-) for each 24 hour period after it is due. Thus, if an assignment is turned in any time during the first 24 hours after it is due, it is penalized a third of a grade. Any assignment not turned in within a week of the due date will automatically receive a zero.

Policy on re-grades: If there is an arithmetical error in the grading of an assignment, please alert me and I will correct the error. If a student wishes to challenge the grade assigned to all or part of an assignment, the following steps must be taken:

1. Students must email me to a request for a re-grade (see below) within 72 hours of the assignment being returned to the class.
2. A request for a re-grade must explain which aspect(s) of the grading rubric the student believes should have been assigned a higher score. For each disputed aspect, students must justify why they should be given a higher grade given the standards in the grading rubric and cite specific materials in the readings or lectures if applicable.
3. I will re-grade all aspects of the assignment. The student's final score may go up or down or be unchanged.

Course evaluations and extra credit: I will award everyone in the class extra credit (an additional 3% added to the final score) if there is 100% participation in the on-line course evaluations.

Academic honesty

Work done for this class is governed by the University's policies on academic honesty. See <http://www.rochester.edu/college/honesty/> for details.

Legal Disclaimer

The schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better student learning.

Course schedule

Week 1 (9/6): Introduction to the course

Week 2 (9/13): The incidence of civil wars, revolutions, and terrorism since 1945

*Attendance and participation: 4% of final grade
33 pages of reading plus preparatory assignment*

Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*. Chapter 1 (33 pages)

Familiarize yourself with the following websites:

Global Terrorism Database (<http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>)

“Overview of the GTD” (<http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/about/>)

“Data collection methodology” (<http://www.start-dev.umd.edu/gtd/using-gtd/>)

Uppsala Conflict Data Project (<http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/>)

“UCDP database” (<http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/database/>)

“FAQ” (<http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/faq/>)

Unit I: How can governments be challenged?

Week 3 (9/20): Revolution

*Attendance and participation: 4% of final grade
261 pages of reading*

Van Inwegen, *Understanding Revolution*. Entire book, including Appendix

Week 4 (9/27): Presentations: Case studies of revolutions

Presentation: 15% of final grade

Week 5 (10/4): Rebellion, insurgency, and political change

*Attendance and participation: 4% of final grade
121 pages of reading*

Mao, T. (1938) *On Guerrilla Warfare*. Available on Blackboard under Course Materials (80 pages)

Wood, E. (2001) "An Insurgent Path to Democracy: Popular Mobilization, Economic Interests and Regime Transition in South Africa and El Salvador." *Comparative Political Studies*. Available at <http://cps.sagepub.com/content/34/8/862> (27 pages)

Lake, D. A. (2002) "Rational Extremism: Understanding Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century." *Dialog-IO*. Available at http://mitpress.mit.edu/journals/INOR/Dialogue_IO/lake1.pdf (14 pages)

Week 6 (10/11): Presentations: Comparing cases of internal violence

Presentation: 15% of final grade

Week 7 (10/18): Paper outlines due

Completion of outline of paper (due by 5 pm on 10/17), attendance, and participation: 7% of final grade

After paper outlines are handed in, each student will be assigned to read a few other students' outlines in preparation for class.

Unit II: How to run an insurgency

Week 8 (10/25): Recruiting and internal control

*Attendance and participation: 4% of final grade
222 pages of reading*

Weinstein, J. (2006) *Inside Rebellion*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 2-4. Available on Blackboard under Course Materials (103 pages)

Berman, E. *Radical, Religious, and Violent*. Chapters 1-4 (119 pages)

Week 9 (11/1): Case study of Sierra Leone

*Attendance and participation: 4% of final grade
45 pages of reading and preparatory assignment*

Richards, P. and J. Vincent. (2008) "Sierra Leone: Marginalization of the RUF." In *From soldiers to politicians*, ed. J. de Zeeuw. Lynne Rienner. Available on Blackboard under Course Materials (20 pages)

Hoffman, D. (2007) "The meaning of a militia: Understanding the Civil Defence Forces of Sierra Leone." *African Affairs*. Available at <http://afraf.oxfordjournals.org/content/106/425/639.full.pdf> (25 pages)

Familiarize yourself with "What the fighters say: A survey of ex-combatants in Sierra Leone" by

M. Humphreys and J. Weinstein (2003):
“Introduction” (<http://www.columbia.edu/~mh2245/SL.htm>)
“Survey” (<http://www.columbia.edu/~mh2245/Survey.pdf>)

Week 10 (11/8): Maintaining civilian support (172 pages)

Attendance and participation: 4% of final grade
45 pages of reading and preparatory assignment.

Wood, E. (2003) *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 1 and 8. Available on Blackboard under Course Materials (62 pages)

Popkin, S. (1979) *The Rational Peasant*. University of California Press. Chapter 6. Available on Blackboard under Course Materials (25 pages)

Kalyvas, S. (2006) *The logic of violence in civil war*. Cambridge University Press. Chapters 4-6. Available on Blackboard under Course Materials (85 pages)

Week 11 (11/15): Case study of the American Revolution

Attendance and participation: 4% of final grade
Readings TBA

Week 12 (11/22): Tactics and terrorism

Attendance and participation: 4% of final grade
174 pages of reading

Crenshaw, M. (2010) *Explaining terrorism*. Routledge. Chapters 4-6. Available on Blackboard under Course Materials (55 pages)

Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism*. Chapters 4-5 (93 pages)

Berman, E. *Radical, Religious, and Violent*. Chapter 6 (26 pages)

Week 13 (11/29): Case study of Al Qaeda

Attendance and participation: 4% of final grade
213 pages of reading

Bergen, P. *The Longest War*. Chapters 1-3, 6, 12-15 (130 pages)

Scheuer, M. *Osama bin Laden*. Chapters 4-6 (83 pages)

Week 14 (12/6): Paper writing workshop

Completion of draft of paper (due by 5 pm on 12/6), attendance, and participation: 7% of final grade

After paper drafts are handed in, each student will be assigned to read one other student's paper in preparation for class.

Week 15 (12/13): Course wrap-up

Final papers are due by the start of the class period: 20% of final grade