

POL 4900-NSA: Political Science Capstone Seminar
Civil Wars and Peacebuilding
Baruch College, Room B - Vert 4-212
Fall 2019, Saturday 2:30 – 5:25 pm



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Course Description

Capstone courses are designed to enable students to develop a sophisticated understanding of the concepts and theories employed in political science. Students will prepare class presentations and a substantial research paper as part of the course requirements. This class will provide you with extensive exposure to the qualitative and quantitative study of civil wars and peacebuilding. It starts by defining civil wars and why we should care for them. It then examines factors that pushes people to fight, elements that influence duration of civil conflicts, and the means through which wars can come to an end. There is a focused discussion on three issues that relate to civil wars: rape and child soldier recruitment during conflict, the effect of climate change on conflict onset and duration, as well as the impact of conflict management on the environment. The course then focuses on what happens at and after conflict termination. Does intervention by other states work effectively to end conflict? Can peace be built in conflict societies? Can a country become a stable democracy after divisive conflict? How can we make sure conflict doesn't recur?

Course Objectives: This course has three main pedagogical objectives:

- 1) To become acquainted with the key concepts, problems, and debates in the civil conflict literature.
- 2) To practice and improve the ability to think critically and rigorously, and express that thinking in oral and written form.
- 3) To practice and improve the ability to apply theoretical knowledge to concrete, real-world problems and issues, whether you will be doing so as a political science student or in any other capacity.

Reading Material: All the reading material will be provided on Blackboard. Reading the material listed below is compulsory. Coming to class without having read the material would not only undermine your ability to learn, but it would also reduce your chances of participation in class discussions, thus lowering your grade. The works marked with a book symbol (📖) are journal articles or book chapters. These take longer to read than newspaper articles or opinion pieces, marked with a world map symbol (🌐). The dot (•) signifies a topic that will be discussed in class but requires no reading in advance. I will ask you on Week 2 (7 September) what you are specifically interested in studying. If there is consensus in class on a specific issue or region of the world, I will include it in the syllabus.

Grading: The following scheme, although subject to change under extraordinary circumstances, will be used for grading:

A: 100-90 B: 80-89.9 C: 70-79.9 D: 60-69.9 F: 59.9 and below

Attendance: Attending class is the initial step to learning and eventually getting a good grade. Hence, I expect all students to attend every class. Students **MUST** attend at least 11 classes (out of 14) in order to pass. Failing to comply with this will result in a fail grade.

Participation and weekly assignments: (30%) Students need to listen to the lectures carefully and take advantage of the ample opportunities I will provide to discuss the course material. You will have to submit your assignments on the Discussion Board of Blackboard every week by 12 am the night before class. I believe in continuous assessment: not participating in class discussions and not submitting assignments will be detrimental to your final grade. Assignments include answering a question on the reading material in two or three paragraphs.

Midterm: (30%) For the midterm, I will prepare 10 questions (one for every 📖 reading). On Week 7 (12 October), I will randomly draw 3 questions that you will have to answer. The questions in the midterm are meant to test your knowledge of the material we will have read until that week.

Final Paper: (40%) Students have to write a 12-15 page (double-spaced) argumentative paper on a topic of their choice about one of the issues covered in class. Although the final paper counts as 30% of the grade, not submitting one would qualify you as a Fail. You will need to submit your research question (in one paragraph) and an annotated bibliography in class on Week 7 (12 October). You then submit a rough draft of your paper by midnight on Week 11 (9 November) and present your main findings and claims in class. Failure to comply with each of these tasks will take your grade down one sign. The final paper is due on 20 December at midnight. Papers should be submitted to <http://turnitin.com>.

Plagiarism Policy: By submitting your paper, you acknowledge the College's anti-plagiarism policy: http://www.baruch.cuny.edu/academic/academic_honesty.html. If you are having trouble with assignments, feel free to email me and come to my office hours to ask for help concerning the material. I hold the discretion to question you on your work if I suspect its authenticity.

PART I – CIVIL WARS

Week 1 What are Civil Wars?

31 August

- 📖 Richard J. Payne and Jamal R. Nassar, "Ethnicity, Ethnic Conflict, and Conflict Resolution," in *Politics and Culture in the Developing World* (Longman, 2012), 271-303.
- 🌐 Michael Hirsh, "The Problem With America's Syria Policy Isn't Trump. It's Syria." *Foreign Policy* (8 January 2019), <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/01/08/the-problem-with-americas-syria-policy-isnt-trump-its-syria/>.
- Review of the syllabus
- Building logical arguments for critical writing

Week 2 Why do some Civil Wars Last So Long?

31 August

- 📖 Sally Sharif, "Predicting the End of the Syrian Conflict: From Theory to the Reality of a Civil War," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* (January 2019).
- 🌐 Greg Grandin, "Ending Colombia's 100-Year War," *The Nation* (27 October 2015), <https://www.thenation.com/article/ending-colombias-hundred-year-war/>.
- Introduction to GIS

Week 3 Why Care for Civil Wars?

14 September

- 📖 Idean Salehyan and Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, "Refugees and the Spread of Civil War." *International Organization* 60:2 (2006): 335-366.
- 📖 Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, Idean Salehyan, and Kenneth Schultz, "Fighting at Home, Fighting Abroad: How Civil Wars Lead to International Disputes." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52:4 (2008): 479-506.
- 🌐 Jose Miguel Cruz, "Bloody Uprising in Nicaragua could Trigger the next Central American Refugee Crisis," *The Conversation* (20 July 2018), <http://theconversation.com/bloody-uprising-in-nicaragua-could-trigger-the-next-central-american-refugee-crisis-99924>.
- Selecting cases in qualitative research

Week 4 What Makes a Person Pick up a Gun?

21 September

- 📖 Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy M. Weinstein, "Who Fights? The Determinants of Participation in Civil War," *American Journal of Political Science* 52:2 (April 2008): 436-447.

- 📖 Stephen V. Ash and NetLibrary, Inc, *When the Yankees Came: Conflict and Chaos in the Occupied South, 1861-1865*. Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1995. [Chapter 2]
- Introduction to regression I

Week 5 Why the Rape and the Child Soldiering?

28 September

- 📖 Elisabeth Jean Wood, “Armed Groups and Sexual Violence: When is Wartime Rape Rare?” *Politics and Society* 37:1 (March 2009): 131-161.
- 📖 Jens Christopher Andvig and Scott Gates, “Recruiting Children for Armed Conflict,” in Scott Gates and Simon Reich, eds., *Child Soldiers in the Age of Fractured States* (2009).
- 🌐 Kimberly Dozier, “They Were Children When They Were Kidnapped By ISIS and Forced to Fight. What Happens Now That They're Home?” *Time* (23 May 2019), <https://time.com/longform/isis-child-soldiers-yezidi/>.
- Introduction to regression II

Week 6 Civil War, Climate Change, and the Environment – The Triangle of Evil?

5 October

- 📖 Vally Koubi, et al., “Climate Variability, Economic Growth, and Civil Conflict,” *Journal of Peace Research* 49:1 (2012): 113-127.
- 📖 Chad L. Smith, Gregory Hooks, and Michael Lengefeld, “The War on Drugs in Colombia: The Environment, the Treadmill of Destruction and Risk-Transfer Militarism,” *Journal of World-Systems Research* 20:2 (2014): 185-206.
- 🌐 Collin Douglas, “A Storm Without Rain: Yemen, Water, Climate Change, and Conflict,” The Center for Climate and Security (3 August 2016), <https://climateandsecurity.org/2016/08/03/a-storm-without-rain-yemen-water-climate-change-and-conflict/>.
- Designing a comparative study

Week 7 Midterm Exam

12 October

- Second half of class: Formulating a research question for the research paper
- Research question (in one paragraph) and annotated bibliography due at 12 pm the night before class

PART II – PEACEBUILDING

Week 8 How do Civil Wars End, Forever?

19 October

- 📖 Svensson, I., “Who Brings Which Peace? Neutral versus Biased Mediation and Institutional Peace Arrangements in Civil Wars,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53:3 (2009), 446-69.
- 📖 Bumba Mukherjee, “Why Political Power-Sharing Agreements Lead to Enduring Peaceful Resolution of Some Civil Wars, But Not Others?” *International Studies Quarterly* 50:2 (2006): 479-504.
- 🌐 Nancy Mitchell, “How the U.S. Aided Robert Mugabe’s Rise,” *The Washington Post* (26 November 2017), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/made-by-history/wp/2017/11/26/how-the-u-s-aided-robert-mugabes-rise/>.
- How to write a literature review

Week 9 No class: This class will be made up for on 23 November and 7 December, for an extra 75-minute session on each day

26 October

Week 10 No class: Preparation for Research Paper

2 November

Week 11 Do Interventions Work?

9 November

- First draft of the paper (8-10 pages) due on 8 November at midnight
- 📖 Dylan Balch-Lindsay, Andrew Enterline, and Kyle Joyce, "Third-Party Intervention and the Civil War Process," *Journal of Peace Research* 45:3 (2008): 345-363.
- 📖 Patrick Regan and Aysegul Aydin, "Diplomacy and Other Forms of Intervention in Civil Wars," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 50:5 (2006): 736-756.
- 🌐 Crispin Rovere, "The Syrian Conflict is a Civil War, and R2P won't Help," *The Interpreter* (1 September 2015), <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/syrian-conflict-civil-war-and-r2p-wont-help>.
- How to make a handout and give an effective presentation

Week 12 Should Peace be Kept or Built?

16 November

- 📖 Michael W. Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis, "International Peacebuilding: A Theoretical and Quantitative Analysis," *American Political Science Review* 94:4 (2000): 779-801.
- 📖 J. Michael Greig and Paul F. Diehl. 2005. "The Peacekeeping-Peacemaking Dilemma." *International Studies Quarterly* 49:4 (2005): 621-646.
- 🌐 Mujib Mashal, "The U.S. and the Taliban Are Near a Deal. Here's What It Could Look Like," *The New York Times* (13 August 2019), <https://www.nytimes.com/2019/08/13/world/asia/us-taliban-peace-deal-details.html>.
- How to write an effective introduction and conclusion

Week 13 Does Anything Good Come out of a Civil War?

23 November + an extra 75-minute class

- 📖 Havard Hegre, et al., "Toward a Democratic Civil Peace?: Democracy, Political Change, and Civil War, 1816-1992," *American Political Science Review* 95:1 (2001): 33-48.
- 📖 Wood, Elisabeth J. (2001), "An Insurgent Path to Democracy: Popular Mobilization, Economic Interests and Regime Transition in South Africa and El Salvador." *Comparative Political Studies*, 34(8), pp. 862-888.
- 🌐 Varun Nayar, "After A Historic General Election, Nepal Has Chosen A Communist Coalition," *Pacific Standard* (3 January 2018), <https://psmag.com/news/nepal-moves-left-after-historic-election>.
- How to cite literature
- Paper Presentations in the extra 75 minutes

Week 14 No Class: Thanksgiving Holiday

30 November

Week 15 Can we Make Sure it doesn't Come back?

7 December + an extra 75-minute class

- 📖 Thomas Edward Flores and Irfan Nooruddin, "Democracy under the Gun Understanding Postconflict Economic Recovery," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53:1 (2009): 3-29.
- Paper Presentations in the extra 75 minutes

Week 16 Final Exam Week

20 December

- Submit your paper by 12 pm to <http://turnitin.com> (no hardcopies)