Political Science 479-Z
Selected Topics: Post-Conflict Reconstruction

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Course Content

This course will explore sources of contemporary armed conflicts and post-conflict reconstruction. It will go into international organizations, bad neighborhoods, ideology, identity politics, state failure, state building and the drive for resources. It will examine humanitarian and pre-emptive intervention; how wars end; and how officials undertake postwar economic, political and social reconstruction. It will address cases from Africa, the Middle East, Asia and Europe. Students will employ class discussions, written exercises and role playing to understand the logic of different vantage points (international-local, government-NGO, critical-constructive) of national-international conflict management and underlying dynamics of development.

Learning Objectives:

• Understanding of sources of conflict, and dynamics of war, negotiations, conflict resolution, and peace building
• Understanding of dynamics of state failure, state building, and institutional development
• Understanding of the dynamics of development in one or a group of specific countries
• Understanding of one set of policy issues more fully: economic development, political development, security and rule of law, or democratization and civil society
• Development of research skills: finding materials, summarizing sources, synthesizing information from different sources
• Development of writing skills: how to write grammatically and persuasively; how to formulate an argument with support from diverse sources

Core Readings

• Richard Caplan, International Governance of War-Torn Territories (Oxford 2005)
• *Annual Review of Global Peace Operation, 2010* (Lynne Reiner, 2010)
• Other required readings will be on e-reserve. The password is: givepeaceachance

• Students are expected to remain abreast of current developments in peace operations and conflict situations through the elite media: New York Times, National Public Radio, BBC, Washington Post, CNN, Fox, Al Jazeera and others. Students are expected to understand biases of various media.

Requirements

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<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tr>
<td>Papers I</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conference Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Paper II</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<td>Attendance/Participation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Factionland Simulation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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<td>Final</td>
<td>25%</td>
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Writing and Plagiarism. Plagiarism is the intentional or unintentional use of another’s words or ideas without giving credit to that person. While this includes copying text word for word without the use of quotation marks, it also includes paraphrasing another person’s work without proper citation. Intellectual honesty is a core value of university and the foundation of faculty and student development. Students guilty of plagiarizing any material will receive a failing grade for the course and the evidence will be automatically turned over to the Office of Student Conduct. During the first week of class, all students must review the UAlbany Library’s tutorial on plagiarism entitled: Plagiarism 101 (http://library.albany.edu/usered/ncplaga/index.html).

Participation. Class participation consists of preparation for and engagement in class discussion. It entails regular class attendance, completing assigned readings, asking relevant questions, and taking positions on issues raised in class.

Final: a final essay exam will give the opportunity to present information and opine on the material covered in class.

Papers: There will be two written assignments. Detailed assignments will be handed out in class. There may be penalties for late papers.


• Policy Memorandum and Background Note. A two-part note that gives background to one of the issues of policy or operations and that recommends a course of action to a senior executive, such as a Foreign Minister, US Secretary of State, UN Secretary General, Commander in the Field, Civilian Head of Peace Operations. It will further develop the issue and country that have been the subject of the first two assignments and will constitute the class’ Conference on Reconstruction (below).

Class Exercises

• Factionland Simulation: The class will be split into four factions: three domestic factions and the international community and will complete an exercise in negotiations. Each student will write a 1-2 page memo on the negotiations.
Conference: The class will conclude with a 4-Session “Conference on Reconstruction,” in which students will present policy memoranda that address the following issues at separate sessions: Security and Justice, Economic Development, Political Development, and Social Capital and Civil Society. Students will be expected both to make a presentation of their own paper, and ask questions and engage in a discussion concerning the papers written by other students.

Some Underlying Assumption, Themes and Questions.

• History demonstrates that all states – big and small, strong and weak – can grow and prosper and decline and fail. The list of declined and failed states includes Zaire, Liberia, Yugoslavia, Afghanistan, N. Korea, Athens, Rome, the British Empire and USSR. Our study of state weakness and failure, war and reconstruction, and economic development, political development and democratization is relevant to our own experiences today. No “type” of state is perfect. Democracies, dictatorships and republics all undergo growth and decline.

• “States” are collections of institutions that manage the economy, polity and societies in which we live. These institutions can be directed for private gain and public good. They include ministries, legislatures, local government, non-profit organizations, private businesses, corporations, international and multilateral organizations. Building “good” states with sustainable institutions is a never ending, complex process involving difficult trade-offs.

• There is a distinction between efficiency and morality. A state or government that governs efficiently may also pursue of immoral objectives, as was the case with Nazi Germany’s policies on “race” that led to the holocaust. A state or government that pursues noble principles can be very inefficient; those that pursue immoral principles can be very efficient.

• No single national or international institution has the “correct solution” to the problems of state-building. Many institutions are involved in these processes and coordination is messy.

• This course will address ‘lessons learned’ and ‘good practices’ for policy makers and field operations. It presumes that such lessons and practices best emerge from a good understanding of many cases and motivations that underlie individual behavior and collective action.

• How are the new wars different from those of an earlier era? How do ‘bad neighborhoods’ exacerbate conflict?

• Who is the international community, what are its rules of behavior, and how does it work with local forces? How do “local” and international organizations cooperate and coordinate their activities?

• How have policy makers learned lessons from the past? What is specific to different types of policy? What are the components of post-war development and transition?

• What are the priorities of international missions and operations at the end of wars? What is the balance between providing services and building ‘local’ capacity?
### COURSE OUTLINE

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<th>Date</th>
<th>Due</th>
<th>Class Activity</th>
<th>Theme/Issue</th>
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<tbody>
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<td>August 30</td>
<td></td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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<tr>
<td>September 1, 13, 15,</td>
<td>(9/13 – presentation on Afghanistan and Pakistan: Research)</td>
<td>Quagmire or Chaos</td>
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<td>September 20, 22, 27</td>
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<td>Factionland Prep (9/27)</td>
<td>State failure</td>
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<td>September 29</td>
<td>(10/4) 1st Paper due</td>
<td>Factionland Prep (10/6)</td>
<td>International community</td>
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<td>October 4,</td>
<td>(Annotated Bibliography)</td>
<td>Factionland Game</td>
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<td>October 6, 11</td>
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<td>Intervention</td>
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<td>October 13</td>
<td>1st paper Returned</td>
<td>Donors Conf. Prep (10/20)</td>
<td>Order and Rule of Law</td>
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<td>October 18, 20, 25,</td>
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<td>Donors Conf Prep (11/1)</td>
<td>Humanitarian/Economic Reconstruction</td>
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<td>November 3, 8, 10</td>
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<td>Political – Interim Administration, Power Sharing, Local Government</td>
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<td>November 15</td>
<td>2nd Paper due</td>
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<td>Human Rights, Social Capital, Civil Society</td>
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<td>November 17, 22</td>
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<td>Donors Conference on Reconstruction</td>
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<td>November 17, 22</td>
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<td>(Policy Memo)</td>
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<td>November 29, December 6,</td>
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<td>1. Security and Justice (11/17)</td>
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<td>November 29, December 6,</td>
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<td>2. Economic Development (11/22)</td>
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<td>November 29, December 6,</td>
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<td>3. Political Development (11/29)</td>
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<td>November 29, December 6,</td>
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<td>4. Social Capital and Civil Society (12/6)</td>
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<td>December 8</td>
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<td>Conclusions: Comparative State Fragility</td>
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COURSE READINGS

August 30: Introduction: Conflict and Development – Useful and Recommended Readings

♦ Clifford Geertz, “Deep Play: Notes on the Balinese Cockfight,” E-Reserve
♦ Andrew Mack, “Civil War: Academic Research and the Policy Community”, E-Reserve
♦ Steven van Evera, “How to Write a Paper,” Guide to Methods for Students of Political Science, on e-reserve

September 1, 13, 15: Afghanistan and Pakistan:

What is at stake in the conflict in Afghanistan? Is it a problem in religious extremism, terrorism, misguided imperial ambition? What are the goals of international policy makers, regional leaders and different groups of Afghans? To what extent do the countries in the neighborhood affect the strategy of conflict there? How do developments affect (and how are they affected by) developments in Afghanistan’s neighbors? How effectively have external actors – from the US and the UN – acted to reconstruct Afghanistan? What steps can be taken in order to build a stable government?

♦ Ahmed Rashid, Descent into Chaos, entire book

September 20, 22, 27: On State Failure:

What are the factors that lead states to fail? What is the difference between “fragile,” “collapsed,” and “failed” states? Is this meaningful? How do states break down socially, economically and politically? What are other examples of failed states? Can international institutions prevent state failure?

♦ Robert Rotberg, When States Fail, Causes and Consequences, pp. 1-150

September 29, October 4: The ‘International Community’:

What are the differences among International Governmental Organizations, Non-Governmental Organizations? How effective has the UN been in peace operations? Will a US-led peace operation likely to be more effective? What motivates individual peacekeepers in peace operations?

October 6, 11: **Intervention:**

What are the criteria by which we can assess that it is appropriate to intervene in a conflict? What is the role of third parties in interventions? Does “humanitarian Intervention” differ from “preemptive war”? What kind of planning takes place among international officials in advance of an intervention?

♦ Scott Atran, Robert Axelrod, Richard Davis, *Sacred Barriers to Conflict Resolution,* Science, August 2007, 1039-1040, handout

**Recommended**

♦ James Dobbins et al, America’s *Role in Nation Building from Germany to Iraq*, on e-reserve
♦ *The Do No harm Handbook*, on E Reserve

October 13: **FACTIONLAND GAME**

October 18, 20, 25: **Order and Rule of Law**

What are the challenges in establishing order and rule of law at the end of internal wars? What roles are played by international and domestic military, police, judiciary, corrections, and legal codes? How significant are transnational networks of organized and white collar crime? Why does killing continue?

♦ David Bayley and Robert Perito, Police in War
♦ *Annual Review of Global Peace Operations 2010, pp.11-24*

**Recommended:**

♦ International Peace Academy, “Managing Security Challenges in Post-Conflict Peace Building,” e-reserve
October 27: Humanitarian Relief and Economic Reconstruction

What are the basic aid strategies of international organizations and donor country governments? How are the immediate humanitarian needs of food and shelter balanced against longer term issues involving refugees and IDPs? How are choices made to balance international capacity and building national capacity? To what extent do immediate, humanitarian needs conflict with political exigencies of the intervention? How do planners make trade-offs on reconstruction, economic reform and employment growth?

♦ Kaysie Studdard, “Transformation of War Economies,” E-Reserve
♦ Caplan, International Governance of War-Torn Territories, Chapters 3, 6

November 1, 3, 8, 10: Interim Administration, Power Sharing, Democratization

Who are the key players in the multiple transitions that take place at the end of wars? How do international institutions help build new state institutions that contribute to political stability and broad political participation? Can warring groups – ethnic groups, nations, factions, social classes – agree on common principles and rules of the game? How do elections, parliaments or political decentralization contribute to a stable peace? How effective are institutions based on power sharing? How can international administrations work most effectively to support good local administration?

♦ Caplan, International Governance of War-Torn Territories, Chapters 1, 4, 5, 8-10,
♦ Philip G. Roeder and Donald Rothchild, Sustainable Peace, Power and Democracy after Civil Wars, pp. 1-1-82, 319-346

Recommended


November 15: Human Rights, Social Capital, Civil Society

Can a civil society be a basis for emerging social and political pluralism at the end of internal wars? How important is social capital and social reconstruction in a stable peace. How do international and local NGOs and traditional social organizations contribute to civil society and social capital?

♦ Jennifer Widener, “Building Effective Trust in the Aftermath of Severe Conflict,” Rotberg, ed, pp. 222-236
November 17, 22, 29, December 6: Conference on Reconstruction

♦ Student’s Papers and Presentations on:
  - (11/17) Security and Justice
  - (11/22) Economic Reconstruction and Development
  - (11/29) Political Reconstruction and Development
  - (12/6) Social Capital and Civil Society

♦ December 8: Conclusions on Comparative State Fragility