

POS 360: Violent Political Conflict
Stephen Pampinella
MWF 1:40 – 2:35
Office Hours: 3:00-5:00 on Wednesday
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Course Objectives

This course is designed to introduce students to the study of violent political conflict. We will examine the how, why and when of violent political conflict both domestic and international. How do political scientists explain the causes and outcomes of political violence? What are the key empirical and normative questions raised by violent political conflict, and what answers to these questions does the literature offer? What other strategies, like nonviolence, negotiation, and self-restraint are available to actors instead of political violence? How do theories of political violence inform policy makers in their strategic and operational decisions about dealing with political violence? In addition students will have the opportunity to participate in ongoing research and see how different kinds of political conflict are studied in the social sciences.

Disclaimer

As a former undergraduate and a Teaching Assistant in the Department of Political Science, I am aware that many SUNY Albany students don't care about their classes or what they learn in them, particularly if a class is challenging. Students who adopt that attitude in this class will fail. So:

DO NOT TAKE THIS CLASS IF YOU ARE UNWILLING TO DO THE REQUIRED WORK AND READING.

Grades and Assignments

Grading for this course will be based on a mid-term, a final, a 10-page research paper, in-class pop quizzes and participation. The breakdown is as follows:

25%: Midterm

25%: 10-page research paper

30%: Final

10%: Pop quizzes

10%: Participation

Both the midterm and final will be given in-class and will consist of short answer questions and one essay. Multiple questions and essays will be offered, students will choose which questions to answer. The 10-page research paper requires that students provide an explanation of the cause or outcome of a particular case of insurgency, terrorism, or counterinsurgency. This paper gives students an opportunity to apply social scientific theories of political violence to a particular case. We will discuss the paper assignment in

greater depth during the semester. Pop quizzes are given to ensure that students are keeping up with the reading. If you do the reading, you will easily pass the quizzes. Lastly, participation is to ensure class discussion. I will take regular attendance and will factor it into the participation grade as well. While I will explain the material we are discussing, I don't want to lecture for 55 minutes. So I will constantly pose questions to the class to think critically about certain theories or cases under discussion.

Reading Assignments

On average, there will be 120 pages of reading per week. All reading should be completed prior to the class it is assigned. When you read, **take notes of theories, events, and details that are relevant to the argument of the book or article.**

Books

1. Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (multiple editions and publishers).
2. Doug McAdam, *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1982.
3. John A. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 2002.
4. Mark Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*. University of Pennsylvania Press, 2004.

Articles and Book Chapters (made available by instructor)

1. Ted Robert Gurr. *Why Men Rebel*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1970. Chapter 4.
2. Mark Irving Lichbach. "What Makes Rational Peasants Revolutionary?" *World Politics* 46: 382-417.
3. Theda Skocpol. "France, Russia, China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 18/2: 175-210.
4. Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler. "Greed and Grievance in Civil Wars." *Oxford Economic Papers*, 56/4, 563-595.
5. James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review*. 97/1, 75-90.
6. Robert A. Pape. "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terror." *American Political Science Review*. 97/3: 343-361.
7. Assef Moghadam. "Suicide Terrorism, Occupation, and The Globalization of Martyrdom: A Critique of 'Dying to Win.'" *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29/8: 707-729.
8. Department of Defense. *Field Manual 3-24: Counterinsurgency*. Washington, DC: 2006. Chapter 1.
9. David L. Kilcullen. *The Accidental Guerrilla*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. Chapter 1.
10. Martha Crenshaw. "The Causes of Terrorism." *Comparative Politics* 13/4: 379-399.

11. Mark Sageman. *Leaderless Jihad*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008. Chapter 4.

Course Schedule

Wednesday Jan 19. Course Introduction.

Part One: Limits of Political Violence

Friday, Jan 21. Arendt, *On Violence*, 1 – 50.

Monday, Jan 24. Arendt, *On Violence*, 50-106.

Part Two: Theories of Political Violence and Social Movements

Wednesday, Jan 26. Gurr, Chap. 4.

Friday, Jan 28. Lichbach, 383-418.

Monday, Jan 31. Skocpol, 175-210.

Wednesday, Feb 2. Collier and Hoeffler, 563-595. Fearon and Laitin, 75-90.

Friday, Feb 4. McAdam, *Black Insurgency*, Intro to 2nd Edition.

Monday, Feb 7. McAdam, *Black Insurgency*, 1-35.

Wednesday, Feb 9. McAdam, *Black Insurgency*, 36-64.

Friday, Feb 11. McAdam, *Black Insurgency*, 65-116.

Monday, Feb 14. McAdam, *Black Insurgency*, 117-145.

Part Three: Modern Insurgency and Counterinsurgency

Wednesday, Feb 16. McAdam, *Black Insurgency*, 146-180.

Friday, Feb 18. McAdam, *Black Insurgency*, 181-234.

Monday, Feb 21 – Friday, Feb 26. NO CLASS

Monday, Feb 28. Taber, *War of the Flea*, Foreword-38.

Wednesday, Mar 2. Taber, *War of the Flea*, 39-96.

Friday, Mar 4. Taber, *War of the Flea*, 135-172.

Monday, Mar 7. Pape, 343-361. Moghadam, 707-729.

Wednesday, Mar 9. Paper discussion, no reading.

Friday, Mar 11. MIDTERM REVIEW SESSION

Monday, Mar 14. MIDTERM EXAM

Wednesday, Mar 16. Paper discussions, no reading.

Friday, Mar 18. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup*, 3-34.

Monday, Mar 21. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup*, 35-86.

Wednesday, Mar 23. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup*, 87-114.

Friday, Mar 25. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup*, 115-150.

Monday, Mar 28. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup*, 151-191.

Wednesday, Mar 30. Nagl, *Learning to Eat Soup*, 192-226.

Friday, Apr 1. Kilcullen, Chap. 1.

Monday, Apr 4. Crenshaw, 379-399.

Part Four: Terrorism

Wednesday, Apr 6. Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 1-25.

Friday, Apr 8. Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 26-60.

Monday, Apr 11. Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 61-99.

Wednesday, Apr 13. Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 100-136.

Friday, Apr 15. Sageman, *Understanding Terror Networks*, 137-184.

Monday, Apr 18 – Monday, Apr 25. SPRING BREAK, NO CLASS.

Wednesday, Apr 27. RESEARCH PAPER DUE.

Friday, Apr 29. Sageman, *Leaderless Jihad*, Chap. 4.

Monday, May 2. FINAL REVIEW SESSION