

GLIS 400: Seminar in Global and International Studies

Civil Wars

Fall 2020

Tuesdays and Thursdays: 12:05 – 1:20 | Zoom

Instructor: Michael Soules
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Office: Zoom
Office Hours: 2:00 – 3:00 p.m., Monday and Wednesday;
10:00 – 11:00 a.m., Tuesday and Thursday;
Or by appointment.

In recent decades, the number of civil wars has far surpassed the number of wars between countries. The sheer volume and destructiveness of these conflicts has captured the interests of a substantial number of policy commentators and scholars across a variety of disciplines. While this growing attention has greatly increased our knowledge of civil wars, much still remains disputed or unknown. The content of this class is intended to increase students' understanding of the theories and evidence provided by scholars to explain a variety of aspects of civil war, including its onset, conduct, and termination. These topics are relevant in contemporary politics as they concern a variety of issues ranging from historical portrayals to foreign military intervention.

Course Learning Objectives

The course learning objectives include the following. By the end of the course:

1. Students will be able to interpret and critically analyze how a global issue shapes an individual, local, national, or international outcome from social scientific and humanistic perspectives using social data and visual, oral, or written materials.
2. Students will demonstrate their mastery of synthesizing the knowledge gained from their global studies.
3. Students will be able to demonstrate understanding of some of the major explanations of the causes and consequences of civil wars.
4. Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of some of the prominent academic works on civil wars.

5. Students will demonstrate the ability to reflect and write about major concepts in the study of civil wars.

Course Materials

All assigned readings are posted on Canvas. No reading material needs to be purchased. Students should read all of the assigned works before the day they appear on the syllabus. Students should read the entirety of each article unless different page numbers are otherwise specified.

Course Requirements

All written assignments will be submitted through the assignments tab on Canvas. All written assignments must be in 12 point font, with one inch margins all around, and in a legible font. Students' grades in the course are determined by three types of assignments:

1. Research Paper – 60% (Broken Down in Various Parts)
2. Attendance and Participation – 20% (10% Each)
3. Short Essay – 20%

Research Paper. This thesis project will be the core assignment throughout the semester. Students must link their topic to the theme of the class (civil wars), but they are welcome to consider a broad array of topics related to this theme. Students will be assessed on various stages of the paper, which they will turn in throughout the semester. This will allow the instructor to provide feedback to students at various stages of their projects. Below is the list of steps that students will be graded on. The grading breakdowns provided below are a percent of the student's total grade for the course, rather than as a total for the research project.

1. Choose a Topic – 5%

Students will submit a list of 3 – 4 topics that they are considering for their research project. They must then individually meet with the instructor (via Zoom) to discuss these topics further. The instructor will provide a list of potential meeting times for students to choose from.

2. Prospectus – 5%

Students will provide a brief summary of the topic they have chosen (600 – 800 words). This summary must include (1) an explicitly stated research question, (2) the student's core thesis, and (3) the general approach(es) that the student will take to answer the research question and defend the core thesis.

3. Annotated Bibliography – 5%

Students will provide an annotated bibliography for at least 10 different sources. The annotated bibliographies should include (1) the reference for the source in APA format, (2) a brief

summary of the core ideas, arguments, etc., conveyed by the source, and (3) a brief statement about the relevance of the source to the student's project and how they will implement it.

4. Introduction – 5%

Students will provide a 1 – 2 page (double-spaced) introduction to their research projects. In addition to explicitly stating the research question and core thesis (which will be already completed for the prospectus), students should include (1) a hook to draw the reader in, (2) identification of a gap in our knowledge that the project is filling, and (3) a roadmap that briefly describes the structure of the rest of the paper.

5. Detailed Outline of Paper – 5%

Students will provide detailed outlines for their final papers. The outlines should include not only the already written introduction, but (1) summaries of the arguments made to defend the core thesis and (2) brief descriptions of the sources used to defend these arguments. In addition to the feedback provided by the instructor, students will also be broken down into small groups in order to give feedback to a small number of classmates with similar topics.

6. Presentation – 5%

Students will give 10-15 minute in-class presentations on their projects. Presentations should include (1) the research question, (2) the core thesis, (3) relevant background information, (4) the approach(es) used to answer the question and defend the thesis, and (5) the key arguments being made. This will provide students with the opportunity to receive additional feedback from the instructor as well as their classmates.

7. Final Paper – 30%

Students will provide the fully finished product for their research papers. These papers should be 12 – 15 pages long (double-spaced), including the references/works cited section. Students should make sure to incorporate feedback from the instructor into the final draft, particularly feedback given on the detailed outline of the paper submitted previously. A detailed rubric is available on *Canvas*.

Attendance and Participation. Discussions of the assigned readings, lecture material, and strategies for writing the final paper play a central role in the class. Thus, it is vital for students to attend class and actively participate. Active participation includes engaging in discussions about the readings, providing feedback during presentations and writing workshops, and participating during in-class discussions of writing and research strategies.

I acknowledge that having class via Zoom makes classroom discussion more difficult. Thus, if students are having technical difficulties or are very uncomfortable participating in verbal discussion, then they may raise discussion points in the Zoom chat, or to me via email or during office hours. However, in-class verbal participation is preferred when possible. I do not expect

that students will have “perfect” understandings of the readings, but I do expect students to put in their best effort and ask any questions they might have.

Students are allowed up to 3 *unexcused* absences. However, unexcused absences will not be permitted during presentation and paper workshop days (see dates below). Students will lose attendance points for every unexcused absence after the third or for an unexcused absence from a presentation or writing workshop day. See the policies section for more details on excused vs. unexcused absences. ***Attendance is 10% of the final grade, as is participation.***

Short Essay. The short essay asks students to write about how well theories pertaining to rebel groups apply to a specific group. Students will select one rebel group from a list provided by the instructor. The first part of the paper will give a brief background on the group (e.g., where and when it formed, its ideology, its goals, etc.). The second part of the paper will apply group-level theories learned in class to the group chosen by the student in order to determine how well these theories explain the behavior and experiences of the group. Students should apply at least two of the lessons in the essay, but they do not need to apply all of them. Specifically, theories should be chosen from the “Organizing for Rebellion” and/or “Waging Civil War” units. This assignment should be 3 – 5 pages in length, double-spaced, one inch margins on all sides, with a legible font. A bibliography should be included at the end. A detailed rubric is available on *Canvas*.

Note: There is no extra credit in the class. I calculate your course grade using only the requirements listed above.

Important Dates:

Choose a Topic:	09/03 @ 11:59 p.m.
Prospectus:	09/17 @ 11:59 p.m.
Annotated Bibliography:	10/08 @ 11:59 p.m.
Introduction:	10/22 @ 11:59 p.m.
Short Essay:	11/05 @ 11:59 p.m.
Detailed Outline:	11/16 @ 11:59 p.m.
Presentation:	Various Dates, See Class Schedule Below
Final Paper:	12/17 @ 11:59 p.m.
Note:	I cannot accept any final papers after 12/19 @ 11:59 p.m.

Grading Scale: Course grades are calculated using the following grade scale:

A = 94 to 100

A- = 90 to 93

B+ = 87 to 89

B = 83 to 86

B- = 80 to 82

C+ = 77 to 79

C = 70 to 76

D = 60 to 69

F = 59 and below

Please note that The Penn State grading scale does not allow the option of awarding grades of C-, D+, or D- grades.

Late Policy: All assigned course materials will be penalized by one grade-point average for every day that they are not turned in. This means that the work is an automatic F if it is five or more days late. Extensions are obtainable only for personal illness or family emergency, and then only if you have proper documentation. To request an extension on an assignment or an excused absence, students must meet the following criteria: (1) the request is being made due to a serious medical or personal emergency that will prevent you from finishing the assignment on time or attending class and (2) the emergency is properly document

Incomplete Policy: No student will be given a grade of “I” (Incomplete) unless they fit the following criteria: (1) the request is being made due to a serious medical or personal emergency that will prevent you from finishing the class; (2) the emergency is properly document; and (3) the student is passing the class prior to the request. The request should be submitted as soon as the emergency arises. Note that poor performance in the class or fear that you will receive an F is not a sufficient reason to ask for an incomplete.

Statement on Academic Dishonesty

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. Academic integrity is a basic guiding principle for all academic activity at The Pennsylvania State University, and all members of the University community are expected to act in accordance with this principle. Consistent with this expectation, the University’s Code of Conduct states that all students should act with personal integrity, respect other students’ dignity, rights and

property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts.

Academic integrity includes a commitment by all members of the University community not to engage in or tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation or deception. Such acts of dishonesty violate the fundamental ethical principles of the University community and compromise the worth of work completed by others. A full description of College policies and procedures regarding academic dishonesty can be found at CLA Academic Integrity website (<http://www.la.psu.edu/current-students/student-services/academic-integrity>).

Disability Accommodation Statement

Penn State welcomes students with disabilities into the University's educational programs. Every Penn State campus has an office for students with disabilities. Student Disability Resources (SDR) website provides [contact information for every Penn State campus](http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/disability-coordinator) (<http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/disability-coordinator>). For further information, please visit [Student Disability Resources website](http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/) (<http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/>).

In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, you must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: [See documentation guidelines](http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/guidelines) (<http://equity.psu.edu/sdr/guidelines>). If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus disability services office will provide you with an accommodation letter. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early as possible. You must follow this process for every semester that you request accommodations.

Counseling Services

Student counseling is through CAPS (Counseling and Psychological Services) in Student Affairs. You might also find the information Resources for Faculty/Staff, and Family useful. The CAPS program is located on the 5th floor of the Student Health Center. Students can call 814-863-0395 to set up a 10-15 minute non-crisis phone screening appointment to get started. There is also a 24/7 CRISIS Line: 877-229-6400. There is also the Crisis Text Line (24 hours/7 days/week): Text LIONS to 741741.

Educational Equity and Report Bias Statements

Consistent with University Policy AD29, students who believe they have experienced or observed a hate crime, an act of intolerance, discrimination, or harassment that occurs at Penn

State are urged to report these incidents as outlined on the [University's Report Bias webpage \(http://equity.psu.edu/reportbias/\)](http://equity.psu.edu/reportbias/).

Zoom

How to access Zoom

I will send an email to the class with a URL to join our Zoom class sessions. Simply click the link and it will take you to the Zoom class session. If it is your first time using Zoom, you will be prompted to download the Zoom program. A quick start guide for Zoom can be found [here](#).

Tech Support

If you have any difficulties with Zoom, or with Canvas and any other PSU course technology, please contact campus tech support. They have a phone number, email number and a live chat that is available 24 hours, 7 days per week. The contact information for Tech Support is:

Phone: 814-865-HELP (4357) Email: ITservicedesk@psu.edu Link to 24-7 Tech Support: <https://keeplearning.psu.edu/>

Keeping in touch over Canvas email

Because the class is held online, it is particularly important to stay in contact via email. I will be regularly sending the class notices and other information via email. Email is also the quickest way to get into contact with me if you have any questions about the course or need to meet. For email communication about the course, we will be using Canvas email. (Note that you can have Canvas email forward to your official Penn State email address.) Please plan to regularly check your Canvas email for announcements and other communications.

Appropriate behavior on Zoom

I expect all students participating in Zoom sessions to conduct themselves with maturity and professionalism at all times. This means that I expect you to not engage in any distracting, disruptive, inappropriate or uncivil behavior. Discussion is an important part of this class, and it is important to be respectful and constructive when engaging with others. The use of webcams is optional and you should do what you are most comfortable with.

Class Schedule

Unit 1: Introduction to Civil Wars

Week 1: What is a Civil War? Definitional and Conceptual Issues

08/25 Course Introduction

Reading: Skim the Syllabus

08/27 What is a Civil War?

Reading: Sambanis, Nicholas. 2004. "What is civil war? Conceptual and empirical complexities of an operational definition." *Journal of conflict resolution*, 48 (6): 814-825.

Week 2: Biases in Our Understanding and Studying Civil Wars

09/01 Biases in Our Understanding of Civil Wars

Watch Film: *Blood Diamond (2006)*

Reading: Dokotum, Okaka Opio. 2014. "tia (this is africa!): Colonial violence in Edward Zwick's *Blood Diamond (2006)*. *Journal of African Cinemas*, 6 (2).

09/03 Methods for, and Challenges in, Studying Civil Wars

Readings: Wood, Elisabeth Jean. 2006. "The ethical challenges of field research in conflict zones." *Qualitative sociology*, 29 (3).

Balcells, Laia, and Christopher M. Sullivan. 2018. "New findings from conflict archives: An introduction and methodological framework." *Journal of Peace Research*, 55 (2).

Unit 2: Causes and Onset of Civil War

Week 3: Common Explanations of Onset

09/08 Greed and Grievance Debate

Reading: Gutiérrez Sanín, Francisco. 2004. "Criminal rebels? A discussion of civil war and criminality from the Colombian experience." *Politics & Society*, 32 (2).

09/10 Ethnic Conflict

Reading: Cederman, Lars Erik, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Julian Wucherpfenning. 2018. "Grievances, Accommodations, and the Decline of Ethnic Violence." *Political Violence At A Glance*. January 24.

Available At: <https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2018/01/24/grievances-accommodation-and-the-decline-of-ethnic-violence/>

Week 4: Other Important Explanations of Onset

09/15 Gender Peace Thesis

Reading: Hudson, Valerie M., et al. 2009. "The heart of the matter: The security of women and the security of states." *International Security*, 33 (3).

09/17 Food Insecurity and Climate Change

Readings: Koren, Ore. 2017. "Living off the Land: Food and the Logic of Violence in Civil War." *Political Violence At A Glance*. February 6.

Available At: <https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2017/02/06/living-off-the-land-food-and-the-logic-of-violence-in-civil-war/>

Koren, Ore. 2019. "Climate Change and Conflict." *Political Violence At A Glance*. February 4.

Available At: <https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2019/02/04/climate-change-and-conflict/>

Unit 3: Organizing for Rebellion

Week 5: Recruitment Strategies

09/22 Recruiting Rebels

Reading: Weinstein, Jeremy M. 2005. "Resources and the information problem in rebel recruitment." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 49 (4).

09/24 Child Soldering and Coercive Recruitment

Watch News Clip: *The new buzz on Al Aqsa TV – Al Jazeera*

Available At: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gqthkdPaa2I>

Reading: Bloom, Mia. 2018. "Child Soldiers in Armed Conflict." *Armed Conflict Survey*, 4 (1).

Week 6: Female Fighters and Socializing Combatants

09/29 Female Rebels

Reading: Thomas, Jakana L., and Kanisha D. Bond. 2015. "Women's participation in violent political organizations." *American Political Science Review*, 109 (3).

10/01 Socializing and Disciplining Combatants

Readings: Cohen, Dara K. 2017. "The ties that bind: How armed groups use violence to socialize fighters." *Journal of Peace Research*, 54 (5).

Week 7: Ideology and Governance

10/06 Rebel Group Ideology

Reading: Gutiérrez Sanín, Francisco and Elisabeth Jean Wood. 2014. "Ideology in civil war: Instrumental adoption and beyond." *Journal of Peace Research*, 51 (2).

Unit 4: Waging Civil War

10/08 Rebel Governance

Reading: Mampilly, Zachariah, and Megan A. Stewart. 2020. "A Typology of Rebel Political Institutional Arrangements." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

Week 8: Rebel Group Strategies: Part I

10/13 Terrorism and Civil War

Watch Film: *The Battle of Algiers (1966)*

Readings: Byrne, Hannah. 2018. "The Feminist Threat: Why States Fear The Battle of Algiers." Georgetown Security Studies Review.

Available At: <https://georgetownsecuritystudiesreview.org/2018/04/02/the-feminist-threat-why-states-fear-the-battle-of-algiers/>

Meier, Anna. 2019. "Identity, Law, and How Political Elites Define Terrorism." *Political Violence At A Glance*. October 18.

Available At: <https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2019/10/18/identity-law-and-how-political-elites-define-terrorism/>

10/15 Sexual Violence and Other Abuses

Reading: Cohen, Dara Kay, Amelia Hoover Green, and Elisabeth Jean Wood. 2013. "Wartime sexual violence." *USIP Special Report*.

Week 9: Rebel Group Strategies: Part II

10/20 Foreign Intervention

Readings: Huang, Reyko. 2016. "Rebel diplomacy in civil war." *International Security*, 40 (4).

10/22 The Propaganda War

Reading: Loken, Meredith. 2020. "'Both needed and threatened': Armed mothers in militant visuals." *Security Dialogue*.

Unit 5: Civil War Termination and Reoccurrence

Week 10: Conflict Termination and Reoccurrence

10/27 Conflict Duration and Barriers to Termination

Readings: Walter, Barbara. 2013. "The Four Things We Know About How Civil Wars End (And What This Tells Us About Syria)." *Political Violence At A Glance*. October 18.

Available At: <http://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2013/10/18/the-four-things-we-know-about-how-civil-wars-end-and-what-this-tells-us-about-syria/>

Howard, Lise M. and Alexandra Stark. 2018. "How Civil Wars End." *Political Violence At A Glance*. February 9.

Available At: <https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2018/02/09/how-civil-wars-end/>

Adhikari, Shikshya. 2020. "Roadblocks to Legitimacy for the Taliban." *Political Violence At A Glance*. May 5.

Available At: <https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2020/05/05/the-roadblocks-to-legitimacy-for-the-taliban/>

10/29 Civil War Reoccurrence

Reading: Toft, Monica D. 2010. "Ending civil wars: a case for rebel victory?" *International Security*, 34 (4).

Week 11: Demobilization and Alternatives to Fighting

11/03 Demobilization and Reintegration

Reading: Jennings, Kathleen M. 2007. "The struggle to satisfy: DDR through the eyes of ex-combatants in Liberia." *International Peacekeeping*, 14 (2).

11/05 Alternatives to Fighting

Reading: Stephan, Maria J., and Erica Chenoweth. 2008. "Why civil resistance works: The strategic logic of nonviolent conflict." *International security*, 33 (1).

Unit 6: Consequences of Civil War

Week 12: Consequences

11/10 Human Costs

Readings: Milli Lake and Berry, Marie. 2017. "Women and Power After War." *Political Violence At A Glance*. June 6.

Available At: <https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2017/06/06/women-and-power-after-war/>

Zeitsoff, Thomas. 2016. "After the Violence: Three Things We Know About the Effects of War Trauma and what we can do about it." *Political Violence At A Glance*. February 1.

Available At: <https://politicalviolenceataglance.org/2016/02/01/after-the-violence-three-things-we-know-about-the-effects-of-war-trauma-and-what-we-can-do-about-it/>

11/12 Historical Revisionism

Watch Video: *How Southern socialites rewrote Civil War History*

Available At: https://ed.ted.com/best_of_web/ig6W6vJ5

Reading: Muro, Diego. 2009. "The politics of war memory in radical Basque nationalism." *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 32 (4).

Unit 7: Finishing the Paper

Week 13: Peer Review

11/17 Special Topics: Local Dimensions of Civil Wars and Critiquing Writing

Readings: Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2003. "'The ontology of' political violence": action and identity in civil wars." *Perspectives on politics*.

Humphreys, Macartan. "How to Critique."

Available At: <http://macartan.nyc/teaching/how-to-critique/>

11/19 Peer Review Day

Readings: Outlines of Other Group Members

11/20-24 Thanksgiving Break

Week 14: Presentations

12/01 Presentations I

Reading: None

12/03 Presentations II

Reading: None

Week 15: Presentations and Workshop

12/08 Presentations III:

Reading: None

12/10 Writing Workshop: Finishing Touches

Reading: None, Come with Questions about Final Drafts

12/17 Final Paper Due – 11:59 p.m.