Terrorism, Insurgency, and Civil War—Spring 2013
(Public Policy 27780)

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Course website The course has a website at chalk.uchicago.edu

Course Description This course introduces students to modern, social scientific approaches to the study of political violence. We will focus on several key questions: What are the causes of political violence? How is violence used? Who participates in political violence? What do we know about how to counter the use of violence? How are rebel groups organized? And what are the consequences of violence for society?

As we address these questions, we will aim to meet three interrelated goals. First, students will come away from the course with a better sense of the social mechanisms underlying these critical phenomena and a more nuanced understanding of the policy challenges that political violence poses. Second, students will develop an appreciation for how difficult these questions are to answer. Finally, the course is designed to help students think critically about what we learn from the evidence, so that they can engage the relevant policy debates in a serious-minded and informed way.

Course Requirements The course has three requirements: participation, a short presentation, and two exams.

• Participation Class will center around a critical evaluation of the papers assigned for the session. Thus, doing the reading is essential. The goal is to have a serious dialogue among class members. Your contribution to participation will be judged not in terms of its quantity, but in terms of the level of insight and the extent to which it furthers this critical dialogue.
• **Presentations** As an experiment, we are going to try something I’m stealing from my former classmate, Macartan Humphreys (now at Columbia). We are going to start each class session off with two short presentations by two-student teams. The point of these presentations is two fold. (There are a lot of “two”s in this paragraph.) First, they will create a common base of cases of political violence we can talk about in class. Second, they will give each of you the opportunity to learn some details about one or two cases. Your job will be to provide a two-page fact sheet on your event (see below) and give a brief (5–7 minute) presentation about it.

Your two-page fact sheet should include sections addressing the following

1. Short description of event (what happened, who was involved, etc.).
2. Background to the event that provides some context on the conflict it was part of.
3. Why was violence used?
4. Why did people participate?
5. Did the violence have/achieve its purpose?
6. Was the violence organized? If so, how?
7. What arguments were offered to justify the violence?
8. Could the violence have been prevented and if so how?
9. Did this violent incident spark further violence?
10. Describe a question this event raises for our understanding of the use of political violence.

Here are the cases we will cover:

1. The 1916 Rising
2. The Srebrenica Massacre
3. The killing of Samuel Doe
4. The Anbar Awakening and Surge
5. Luvungi Rapes of July 2010
6. Assassination of Luis Carrero Blanco
7. 2008 Mumbai Attacks
8. Aranthalawa Massacre
9. The Bombing of Omagh
10. The Battle of Jenin
11. The Philippeville Massacre
12. Basilan beheading
13. King David Hotel Bombing
14. Attack on Camp Chapman
15. 2010 Moscow Subway Bombing
16. The 1970 October Crisis
17. The 1992 L.A. Riots
18. Lucanamarca Massacre
19. 1996 invasion of Congo by Rwanda
20. Godhra train burning and riots
21. The Leipzig Monday Demonstrations
22. The Guinea Fowl War
23. The Siege of the ‘Red Mosque’
24. Cubana Flight 455
25. The Colfax Riot
26. Balangiga massacre

**Course Materials** All readings are available online. Published materials can be found through the University of Chicago Library e-journals and databases. If you don’t know how to use these resources, consult the library staff at the Regenstein. Readings marked with a ** can be found in the course’s Chalk Course Documents section.

**Grades** Grading will be based on the course requirements as follows: participation and presentation (20%), midterm (35%), final exam (45%).
Course Schedule

Introduction

APRIL 1. Introduction and Conceptual Issues

No reading.

APRIL 3. Thinking About Evidence: Cross-Country Analyses of Conflict


The Causes of Conflict?

APRIL 8. Economic Causes 1: Mobilization and Predation


APRIL 10. Economic Causes 2: Poverty and Mobilization


APRIL 15. Economic Causes 3: How Rebels Fight


April 17. Ethnicity


April 22. Democracy and Freedom


Using Violence

April 24. Who Fights?


April 29. Does Violence Work?


MIDTERM EXAM

May 1. Internal Organization and the Efficacy of Violence


May 6. MIDTERM EXAM

May 8. Atrocities and Genocide


COIN and Counterterrorism

May 13. Evaluating Modern COIN Doctrine


May 15. Backlash


MAY 20. Countering Strategic Adversaries


MAY 22. Various Counter-Rebel Strategies


MAY 27. MEMORIAL DAY

MAY 29. Aid and Conflict


** The Legacy of Conflict

JUNE 3. Social Consequences


**June 5. Economic and Political Consequences**


