

**Political Science 4640.001 Revolutions and Political Violence**  
**University of North Texas**  
**Summer II 2013**

**Location and Time:** Wooten Hall Rm. 116 MTWR: 12:00-1:50 PM

**Credit Hours:** 3 hours

**Instructor:** Jeremy R. Backstrom

**E-Mail:** jeremybackstrom@my.unt.edu

**Office Hours:** 2-3 PM MTWR and by appointment.

**Office:** Room 161-Wooten Hall

**Class Web:** <https://learn.unt.edu>

**General Statement:**

The instructor reserves the right to modify any course requirements and calendar due dates as necessary to manage this course. Students are responsible for contacting the instructor and seeking clarification of any requirement that is not understood.

**Required Course Materials:**

***Textbooks/reading materials:***

- Patrick M. Regan. 2009. *Sixteen Million One: Understanding Civil War*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers. (ISBN: 978-1-59451-620-7)
- T. David Mason. 2004. *Caught in the Crossfire: Revolution, Repression, and the Rational Peasant*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers. (ISBN: 978-0742525399)

***Additional reading materials:***

- Collier, Paul, V.L. Elliot, Havard Hegre, Anke Hoeffler, Mata Reynal-Querol and Nicholas Sambanis. 2003. *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*. Washington D.C.: The World Bank

**(NOTE: This text is available as a pdf document for free on Blackboard).**

- Additional readings will be available via Blackboard

***Technology Requirements:***

- Internet access (free access available in campus computer labs)
- Basic use of a personal computer (word processing and internet browsing).
- Access to the Blackboard system: <https://learn.unt.edu>  
Use your username and password to access the UNT Blackboard system.

***Software Requirements:***

- Microsoft Office or Open Office (Free alternative to MS Office)

**Course Description and Content:**

It has been demonstrated through many studies in political science that the occurrence of interstate conflict has become exceedingly rare while the incidence of intrastate conflict is a more common experience. Despite this finding, the actual occurrence of civil war is still a rare phenomenon; however, other forms of political violence arise more frequently. The purpose of this course is to help you to obtain a general understanding of the dynamics of revolutions, social

movements, civil war, and political violence. In studying the broad topic of political violence, we will concentrate on issues such as who participates in protests, revolutions, and civil wars; why they participate; how the state responds to their actions; how nonviolent social unrest can evolve into civil conflict; how civil conflicts end; and the post-civil war environment within the country itself, the surrounding region, and the international system. Upon completion of this course, you will have the knowledge and understanding of the theoretical work regarding revolutions, civil war, and political violence as well as empirical political science studies and numerous case studies to assist in your comprehension of the phenomena.

### **Learning Objectives:**

- Understand previous theoretical explanations for revolutions and political violence.
- Understand causes of political violence at the macro and micro level of analysis.
- Understand motivations of political violence at the individual level of analysis (who participates and why).
- Understand how civil wars end and how the international community plays a role in this process.
- Understand the effects of civil conflict on development and the surrounding region.

### **Current Events:**

As this is a course in political science, I encourage you as students to become more cognizant of the world and daily events that arise concerning political violence, revolutions, civil conflict, repression, or protests. Therefore, I want you to read the newspaper headlines (Dallas Morning News, New York Times, Washington Post etc.), watch the news on the television, or read online news (local news or national news such as CNN, MSNBC, FoxNews, BBC). During each class, we will devote time to discussions concerning current events involving political violence in general. An excellent overview of the current conflicts in the world can be found at UCDDP (Uppsala Conflict Data Program- Uppsala University) website: <http://www.ucddp.uu.se/gpdatabase/search.php>.

### **Communication and Email:**

As indicated above, you can contact me via email at [jeremybackstrom@my.unt.edu](mailto:jeremybackstrom@my.unt.edu). Please ensure that you address the email with the course number (PSCI 4640) and your last name in the “subject line” (Example: Backstrom- PSCI 4640). I request that you use proper English in your emails so I can understand your question/issue and offer you an answer or resolution to the issue. Proper English does not include the abbreviated version of words as those you would use in a text message/instant message/tweet. I will respond to your email in a timely manner, typically within 24 hours on the weekdays and 48 hours on the weekends. Please be aware that while this is my general and intended practice for responding to your e-mails, it is subject to the changes and interruptions of life. Finally, please note I do not discuss grades electronically. If you wish to discuss your grades, you will need to come to my office during my office hours or by appointment.

Additionally, I will be available during my office hours from 2-3 PM after our class (MTWR). If this does not meet your needs, if you need to meet with me at a different time, or if you need to meet with me for a longer period of time, please email me and schedule an appointment to meet with me.

### **Attendance Policy:**

As adults, you are expected to attend every class. **Attendance is required and roll will be taken at every class.** In addition, you are expected to be in the classroom on time. If you continue to have a problem with being on time (*more than twice*), you will be listed as absent for the day. Excessive absences or tardiness will count against you for your final grade. Each late arrival (1-10 minutes) will count as a tardy. If you are tardy twice, this will count as an absence. If you arrive late by 10 minutes or more, you will be marked as absent. If you depart early (*anytime prior to the scheduled ending of class*), you will also be marked as absent unless you discuss the necessity for an early departure with me before we begin class. The UNT Attendance Policy can be found at: <http://policy.unt.edu/policy/15-2-5>

You have a total of two absences that you may use at your discretion. **At the third absence and each subsequent absence, your overall grade for the course will be reduced by one letter grade.** Additionally, it is *your responsibility* to obtain the notes for the missed class from one of your fellow students.

Finally, as a student in this course, you are expected to come into each class having read the required readings and be prepared to participate in the discussion. As noted below, your participation in the discussion of the readings is a vital aspect of your performance and overall grade.

### **Additional Policies:**

Personal laptops or tablet (iPads) may be used to take notes during the class; however, this is not an invitation to check your email, surf the internet, chat online, or any other activity that would disturb your attention or the attention of students around you from the class discussion. If caught engaging in one of these infractions, I will warn you only once. After this warning, you will not be permitted use your laptop or tablet in class.

Cell phones, blackberries, iPods, or any other electronic communication device must be shut off during class. Similar to the policy regarding laptops and tablets, I will warn you only once; after, I will not tolerate any violation of this policy. You will be asked to leave the classroom for that day and be listed as absent for the class.

This is a course on political violence, which is a highly controversial topic, and through your prior opinions as well as our readings and discussions, I anticipate that each of you will develop own personal thoughts and views on the matter. As your instructor, I encourage scholarly debate and discussion in the classroom. However, you must be respectful of your fellow students and their opinions. I will not tolerate any outbursts or demeaning (including but not limited to hateful, racist, sexist, obscene, etc.) attacks/comments against your fellow students regarding their opinions or observations. If this does occur, I will consider it as a disturbance to the learning experience of the classroom, instruct you to leave for that day and you will be listed as absent. At the instructor's discretion, a student that violates these guidelines may be removed from the course.

The Code of Student Conduct can be found at <https://deanofstudents.unt.edu/conduct>.

### **Assignments and Grading:**

The course grade will be based on three components: classroom participation (40%), reflection papers (20%), and a final research project (40%).

\*\*\* As this course is an upper division class, I would like to approach the course in a different manner than other classes. My approach to the course is to treat the course as a seminar whereby the discussion between instructor and the class drives the daily class rather than exclusive lecturing by the instructor. In other words, I expect that you have completed the required readings for the day and are prepared to discuss them in the classroom. While certain questions and topics will guide our daily discussions, the course of the discussion will be largely shaped by you and your classmates. There will be certain topics during the course where I will lecture more but the standard class will be influenced by our discussions of the assigned readings.

**Participation: (40% of your overall grade)**

You are expected to complete the assigned readings prior to the designated date in accordance to the course calendar. In addition, as explained above, this course will be structured as a seminar in which the instructor and the students will interact and discuss the assigned readings. Therefore, it is imperative for you to complete the assigned readings and be prepared to discuss the concepts and arguments during the following class. Furthermore, in order to prepare for the discussion, you should be able to identify the author's arguments concerning the respective topic but also identify possible flaws/shortcomings of the arguments or questions concerning the theory presented.

Please note that if I observe that the discussion continues to linger without participation, if I am solely leading the discussion, or if there are only a few students participating, I will devise a daily quiz that will allow me to determine whether you completed the assigned readings and if you understand the theories presented. If this situation arises, you will not be permitted to use the assigned readings or your notes from the readings to take the quizzes. Finally, if you miss the daily quiz, there are no quiz make-ups.

At the beginning of each class, we will have a "check-in" and at the end of the class, we will have a "check-out". The check-in session will allow me to take attendance, determine where you are at in the required reading, assist you in engaging in conversation/discussion in the classroom, and initiate the discussion of the assigned readings. The check-out session will assist us in wrapping up the discussion for the day and allow you to give me feedback/critique regarding the topic as well as how things went for the specific class. If you only talk during the check-in/check-out sessions, you will only receive a "C" or satisfactory for your participation grade.

**Reflection Papers: (20% of your overall grade- 4 reflection papers and worth 5% each)**

At the end of each class week (Thursdays), you are expected to write a reflection paper regarding the assigned readings for the week or a particular discussion we had in the classroom. You can offer your thoughts, feelings, opinions, etc. regarding a particular topic that you found interesting, highly significant, or controversial. With a class this size and a highly divisive topic such as political violence, we may not have the opportunity to address all viewpoints, opinions, or arguments. Therefore, this allows you to express your feelings, thoughts, opinions, and arguments with me specifically and I can engage in dialogue with you concerning this. This is a method of continuing our classroom discussions outside of the actual classroom. The reflection papers are not intended to be conducted in an academic research format and you do not need to include formal citations but rather reference the article(s) or book chapter that you discuss. You will receive the full 20% of the final points if you abide by the following formatting guidelines:

- 1 ½-2 page in length.
- Must be typed/word processed.
- Double spaced
- Times New Roman Script
- 1 inch margins
- No grammatical errors.
- The reflection paper must explicitly address either: 1) an aspect/article of this week's reading or 2) a discussion we had in class.
- Handed in on time (Thursday by the beginning of class).
- Hard copy (paper).

**Research Project: (40% of your overall grade- 20% per installment)**

For the final research project, you are expected to choose an event of political violence that occurred between 1945 and 2012 and discover more information concerning the conflict. In conducting this project, it is necessary that you answer several questions concerning the conflict such as information concerning the belligerents involved, causes and motivations of the conflict, external involvement in supporting the belligerents, how the conflict ended, external involvement in ending the conflict, and the post-conflict environment. The research project is split up into two installments. At the end of the first week, I will give you a handout covering more information regarding the research project and a list of questions that you will need to address.

Your research project must adhere to the following formatting requirements:

- 12-15 pages in length (I will not accept anything less than 12 pages.)
- Must be typed/word processed
- Double spaced
- Times New Roman Script
- 1 inch margins
- Proper citation for your sources
- No grammatical errors
- A cover page with your name, course/section number, and the name of the civil conflict (The cover page does not count toward the 12-15 pages in length).

Your grade for the final research project will be determined by your ability to answer the questions fully, your ability to connect the required readings and your case study of political violence, and your ability to write. As a college student, you are expected to meet college level writing requirements. **Therefore, I highly encourage you to take your time in completing your research project and to proofread your paper before you hand it in. Proofreading your paper does not mean merely running a spelling and grammar check with Microsoft Word as it often overlook multiple errors. Furthermore, a spelling and grammar check does not aid you in conveying the connection between the literature and the real world event; thus, you need to proofread your papers.**

Furthermore, at this level of your academic career, you should ensure to use citation for thoughts and ideas that are not your own. If you fail to provide citation for ideas that are not your own, this is plagiarism and you will be penalized heavily. Additionally, you will be required to

submit both installments of your final research project as a paper copy to me and an electronic copy to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com). Finally, I will not accept references such as Wikipedia, dictionaries, encyclopedias or other such sources. They are not college-level sources.

### **Extra Credit:**

Please note that I do not offer extra credit for this course. As the grading criteria for the course is composed of your daily participation, reflection papers, and a final research project, you, as the student, already possess a significant influence on your final grade based on your efforts in and outside of the classroom. Therefore, extra credit is deemed unnecessary.

### **Grading Rubric:**

**A:** 90-100%

**B:** 80-89%

**C:** 70-79%

**D:** 60-69%

**F:** 59% and below.

### **Late Work Policy**

All assignments for this course are expected to be turned in on or before the deadline as indicated for the assignment. As a reasonable person, I understand that uncontrollable, personal circumstances may arise. Thus, I am willing to work with you through such issues should they arise and you must submit a late assignment. **If you need to submit a late assignment, you must contact me in advance of the deadline for my approval and for arrangements to be made concerning the assignment.** Written documentation will be required in order to confirm your request to submit a late assignment.

**Late research project will be heavily penalized unless there are extenuating circumstances. Specifically, there is a 5 point penalty per day for a late research paper. This includes weekends and holidays.** If the assignment has not been submitted within 5 days, you will receive a “0” for the assignment. **If you receive a “0” for the final research project, you will fail the course.**

### **Tentative Reading and Course Outline:**

My approach to this course is to progress through the readings as a “timeline” of political violence. In the first week, we will discuss the prior grand theoretical approaches to understanding revolution and political violence as well as significant contributions to the study of civil war. In the second week, we then concentrate on the development and evolution of grievances of the rural peasants, the role of social organizations in the mobilization of dissidents, and the role of the state in the evolution of social movements to rebellion. During the third week, we will focus on the causes of civil wars (micro-level and macro-level) as well as the role of ethnicity as a possible factor in the onset of civil war. In the fourth week, we then discuss possible motivations for participation in civil war at the individual level. We will also begin our discussion of how civil wars end. Finally, in the fifth week, we concentrate on efforts to end civil war from an external perspective and the effects of civil war in the region and the international

system. We end the course with a discussion of possible solutions to decrease the outbreak of civil conflict.

## **WEEK 1: *Introduction to the Study of Political Violence, Revolutions, and Civil War***

### **July 8: Introduction to the course**

*Classes begin.* Overview of course

### **July 9: Introduction to the Study of Revolutions and Political Violence: Part I**

James DeFronzo 2007. *Revolutions and Revolutionary Movements* 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition. Chapter 1  
(A copy of the reading is available on Blackboard).

### **July 10: Introduction to the Study of Revolutions and Political Violence: Part II**

T. David Mason. 2004. *Caught in the Crossfire: Revolution, Repression, and the Rational Peasant*. Rowman and Littlefield Publishers.- **Chapters 1 and 2**

**(NOTE: Hereafter Mason (2004).)**

### **July 11: Introduction to the Study of Civil War**

Dixon, Jeffrey. 2009. "What Causes Civil War? Integrating Quantitative Research Findings." *International Studies Review* 11: 707-735.

Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2003. "The Ontology of "Political Violence": Action and Identity in Civil Wars." *Perspectives on Politics* 1(3): 475-494.

Sambanis, Nicholas. 2012. "A Review of Recent Advances and Future Directions in the Quantitative Literature on Civil War" *Defence and Peace Economics* 13(3): 215-243.

### **July 11: Reflection Paper #1 is due**

## **WEEK 2: *From Grievances to Mobilization to Rebellion***

### **July 15: Patron-Client Relations and Changes in Rural Lifestyle**

Mason (2004) - **Chapter 3**

### **July 16: Mobilization of the Peasants**

Mason (2004) – **Chapter 4**

Gurr, Ted Robert and Will H. Moore. 1997. "Ethnopolitical Rebellion: A Cross-Sectional Analysis of the 1980s with Risk Assessments for the 1990s." *American Journal of Political Science* 41(4): 1079-1103.

### **July 17: The State Strikes Back (Reform or Repression?)**

Mason (2004) – **Chapter 5**

Rasler, Karen. 1996. "Concessions, Repression, and Political Protest in the Iranian Revolution." *American Sociological Review* 61(1): 132-152.

**July 18: From Mobilization to Rebellion**

Mason (2004) – **Chapter 6**

Mason, T. David and Dale Krane. 1989. “The Political Economy of Death Squads: Toward a Theory of the Impact of State-Sanctioned Terror.” *International Studies Quarterly* 33: 175-198.

**July 18: Reflection Paper #2 is due**

**WEEK 3: Causes and Motivations for Political Violence**

**July 22: Causes of Civil War Part I**

Patrick M. Regan. 2009. *Sixteen Million One: Understanding Civil War*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers. **Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.**  
(NOTE: Hereafter Regan (2009).)

**July 23: Causes of Civil War Part II**

Fearon, James D. and David D. Laitin. 2003. “Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War.” *American Political Science Review* 97(1): 75-90.

Collier, Paul and Anke Hoeffler. 2004. “Greed and Grievance in Civil War.” *Oxford Economic Papers* 56(4): 563-595.

Kalyvas, Stathis. 2001. ““New” and “Old” Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?” *World Politics* 54(1): 99-118.

**July 24: Causes of Civil War Part III (Micro-Level and Macro-Level)**

Collier, Paul, V.L. Elliot, Havard Hegre, Anke Hoeffler, Mata Reynal-Querol and Nicholas Sambanis. 2003. *Breaking the Conflict Trap: Civil War and Development Policy*. Washington D.C.: The World Bank. – Overview (*Skim*), **Chapters 3 and 4**  
(NOTE: Hereafter Collier et al. 2003).

**July 25: Ethnicity as a Driving Factor?**

Regan (2009)- **Chapter 7**

Fearon, James and David Laitin. 2000. “Violence and the Social Construction of Ethnic Identity.” *International Organization* 54(4): 845-877.

Mueller, John. 2000. “The Banality of “Ethnic War”.” *International Security* 25(1): 42-70.

**July 25: Reflection Paper #3 is due**

**WEEK 4: Motivations for Participating in Civil War and How Civil Wars End**

**July 29: Film: Rwanda- Triumph of Evil**

**July 29: First Installment of the Final Research Project is due**

**July 30: Determinants and Motivation for Participation Part I**

Regan (2009) – **Chapters 8 and 9**

Humphreys, Macartan and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2008. “Who Fights? The Determinants of Participation in Civil War.” *American Journal of Political Science* 52(2): 436-455.

**July 31: Determinants and Motivation for Participation Part II**

Regan (2009) – **Chapter 10**

Weinstein, Jeremy M. 2005. “Resources and the Information Problem in Rebel Recruitment.” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49(4): 598-624.

**OR**

Gates, Scott. 2002. “Recruitment and Allegiance: The Microfoundations of Rebellion.” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 46(1): 111-130.

**August 1: How Civil Wars End**

Mason (2004) – **Chapter 7**

Luttwak, Edward N. 1999. “Give War a Chance.” *Foreign Affairs* 78(4): 36-44.

**August 1: Reflection Paper #4 is due**

**WEEK 5: *Ending the Conflict and the Hereafter***

**August 5: External Efforts to End Civil Wars**

Regan (2009) – **Chapters 11, 12, and 13**

**August 6: Development and International Effects of Civil War**

Collier et al. (2003)- **Chapters 1 and 2**

**August 7: Final Wrap Up and Possible Solutions I**

Collier et al. (2003) – **Chapters 5 and 6**

**August 8: Final Wrap Up and Possible Solutions II**

Mason (2004) – **Chapter 10**

Regan (2009) – **Chapter 14**

**August 8: Second Installment of the Final Research Project is due.**

***General Statement:***

The instructor reserves the right to modify any course requirements and calendar due dates as necessary to manage this course. Students are responsible for contacting the instructor and seeking clarification of any requirement that is not understood.

## **Institutional Policies:**

### ***Course Drop Information and Withdrawal:***

If you are unable to complete this course, it is **YOUR** responsibility to withdraw formally. **The schedule for Summer II and further information can be found at the following websites:** <http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/schedule/scheduleclass.html>  
<http://essc.unt.edu/registrar/schedule/summer/important%20deadlines.html>

### ***Academic Dishonesty Policy:***

#### **UNT Dept. of Political Science Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism**

The UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline defines cheating and plagiarism as the use of unauthorized books, notes, or otherwise securing help in a test; copying others' tests, assignments, reports, or term papers; representing the work of another as one's own; collaborating without authority with another student during an examination or in preparing academic work; or otherwise practicing scholastic dishonesty. Normally, the minimum penalty for cheating or plagiarism is a grade of "F" in the course. In the case of graduate departmental exams, the minimum penalty shall be failure of all fields of the exam. Determination of cheating or plagiarism shall be made by the instructor in the course, or by the field faculty in the case of departmental exams. Cases of cheating or plagiarism on graduate departmental exams, theses, or dissertations shall automatically be referred to the departmental Graduate Studies Committee. Cases of cheating or plagiarism in ordinary coursework may, at the discretion of the instructor, be referred to the Undergraduate Studies Committee in the case of undergraduate students, or the Graduate Studies Committee in the case of graduate students. These committees, acting as agents of the department Chair, shall impose further penalties, or recommend further penalties to the Dean of Students, if they determine that the case warrants it. In all cases, the Dean of Students shall be informed in writing of the case. Students may appeal any decision under this policy by following the procedures laid down in the UNT Code of Student Conduct and Discipline.

#### **UNT Dept. of Political Science Policy on Academic Integrity**

The Political Science Department adheres to and enforces UNT's policy on academic integrity (cheating, plagiarism, forgery, fabrication, facilitating academic dishonesty and sabotage). Students in this class should review the policy (UNT Policy Manual Section 18.1.16), located at: <http://policy.unt.edu/sites/default/files/untpolicy/pdf/> and file: 7-Student\_Affairs-Academic\_Integrity.pdf

Violations of academic integrity in this course will be addressed in compliance with the penalties and procedures laid out in this policy. Students may appeal any decision under this policy by following the procedures laid down in the UNT The UNT Policy Manual Section 18.1.16 "Student Standards of Academic Integrity." Acceptable Student Behavior: Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum at UNT. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The Code of Student Conduct can be found at: [www.unt.edu/csrr](http://www.unt.edu/csrr)

***The Americans with Disabilities Act Information:***

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at <http://www.unt.edu/oda>. You may also contact them by phone at (940) 565-4323.

***Student Absences due to Religious Observance:***

Absences for observance of religious holy days are excused. According to UNT Policy 15.2.5, students are permitted to be excused from class or other activities for the observance of religious holidays, for religions whose places of worship are exempt from property tax under Section 11.20 of the Tax Code. Please notify the instructor as soon as possible regarding a future absence.