We will concern ourselves in this course with the rapidly expanding literature on the causes, characteristics, consequences, and resolution of intra-state conflict. Traditionally considered an element of comparative politics research, civil war analysis is now the hottest topic of investigation for quantitatively-oriented IR scholars. The leverage to be gained from merging comparative and IR research traditions is a prominent theme we will develop during this course. The course will offer a broad survey of all of this literature, most of it from the past decade.

Students are expected to attend every seminar meeting, having read and thought about the material assigned each week. Students failing to participate will find their grades suffering, as a sizeable proportion of the course grade will be based on participation and attendance. In addition to the seminars, students will write a term paper due at the end of the semester. This will be a substantial piece of original scholarship, involving an original argument or extension of an existing argument, and original empirical content. The breakdown of the overall grade will be thirty percent participation and attendance, and seventy percent for the term paper. More detail about the term paper will be distributed separately.


In addition, a large number of articles and book chapters have been assigned. Almost all of them are available electronically (either through JSTOR or the university library’s e-journal holdings). A few are not available electronically, although they can be dug out of the library stacks or borrowed from me for quick photocopying and return. Readings are listed chronologically, to help students recognize how the literature within a specific area has evolved.

**Weekly Seminars:**

**January 13th:** Welcome and Introductions  
Read: this syllabus.

**January 20th:** Congo’s “Civil” War?

January 27th: What is a Civil War?


February 3rd: Micro-foundations of Civil Wars


February 10th: Causes of Civil Wars


February 17th: Ethnicity and Civil Wars


(Note: the last two here are really one article, since they are both brief and the second is purely a response to the first.)

**February 24th: Political Geography, Natural Resources, and Civil Wars**


(Note: Students particularly interested in geographic influences on civil wars should contact me for a short list of studies that investigate the influence of natural disasters and climate change on civil wars.)

**March 3rd: Civil War Duration**


**March 10th: Spring Break**

No class meeting. Read whatever you like. Maybe a novel about civil wars?

**March 17th: Civil War Severity**


March 24th: Civil War and Genocide


March 31st: Interventions in Civil Wars


April 7th: Preventing Civil War Recurrence


April 14th: Civil War and State Failure


**April 21st: Secession and Autonomy as Alternatives to Civil War**


**April 28th: The International Relations of Civil Wars**


