COURSE DESCRIPTION:

What explains the variations in outcomes and magnitudes of civil conflict? For example, why do some conflicts result in peaceful settlements while others lead to civil war? Why can the same type of event, such as political protest, end in a peaceful outcome in one context but a violent one in another? Over the last twenty years, comparative scholars have focused on connections and transformations within specific types of conflict. Scholars who studied authoritarianism began to explain why some democratization processes resulted in democratic consolidation while others ended in democratic collapse. Social movement theorists expanded their focus to include contentious politics more broadly. People studying insurgency groups included civil wars in their research. Yet, these types of conflict -- democratization, contentious politics, and civil wars -- are related to each other, and to other examples of civil conflict.

In this seminar, then, we will compare across types of civil conflict. First, we will consider general readings on cooperation and conflict. Then, we will locate specific types of conflict -- governmental collapse, ethnic conflict, insurgency, and civil war -- within the general space of civil conflict, observing the relationships between them, and explaining the variations in outcomes and magnitudes of violence. Finally, students will build and test their own theories regarding civil conflict.

The goals of the seminar are three-fold. First, you will gain an introduction to civil conflict studies in comparative politics. Second, this background will help you prepare for your comparative politics comprehensive exams. Third, the seminar can give you an early start on a conference paper, master's thesis, or dissertation proposal on civil conflict.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

The course requirements for this graduate seminar include class participation, seven short papers, a research design proposal, and a research design paper.

Students are expected to read the weekly required readings carefully and to participate actively in class discussions. To help you pull together your thoughts, and to write your short papers, I will distribute topics for the weekly readings. Also, students will serve in two additional roles: as a reading presenter for one class period and as a reading discussant for another class period.

The short papers critique the weekly readings. You will write 7 short papers across the semester. (If you choose to write more than 7 papers, I will drop your lowest grade/s.) Everyone will write a paper for the weeks of Part One: January 24, 31, February 7, and February 14. After that, you will write three papers from Part Two, addressing three of the four types of civil conflict discussed in this class. These papers will help you organize your thoughts for our class discussions. After the semester is over, they will serve as a resource for your comparative politics comprehensive exams. These papers should be 1-2 pages single-spaced and should be uploaded to Angel by Noon on Mondays. Note that all students will have access to all of the class papers. As the short papers are designed to focus and enhance class discussion, late papers generally will not be accepted.

The research design entails a proposal and a paper. The proposal presents your research question, a brief literature review, research design, methods, the feasibility of your project, and its contribution to the field. You must receive my approval for your research design topic. Be sure to talk with me about your topic in advance. If you change your topic during the semester, you must get my approval on your new topic, as well. I encourage you to talk with me about your proposal well before its deadline. The proposal should be 6-8 pages double-spaced and is due March 21st. I will distribute guidelines for the research design proposal later in the semester.

The research design paper addresses a question central to civil conflict. I will distribute in class a handout that explains how to write your research design paper. The paper should be empirical. In other words, your research should be scientific, generating hypotheses that are falsifiable and that can be tested with data. Students can choose from a wide range of methodological approaches, including (but not limited to) case studies, quantitative analysis, historical structuralism, and formal theory. Again, I encourage you to talk with me about your research design paper throughout the semester, particularly regarding conceptual issues, data problems, and potentially contradictory results. Ideally, your research design paper will be a preliminary version of a conference paper that you can present in the future or a start on your master’s essay or dissertation. The text of your research design paper should be 25-35 pages double-spaced. A hard copy of your paper is due in my mailbox by 5:00 on May 4th. Once you have submitted your paper, then upload a copy to Angel.
GRADING:

Your final grade will be calculated by weighing the class requirements using the formula below:

- Participation 20%
- Short Papers 30%
- Research Design Proposal 20%
- Research Design Paper 30%

REQUIRED READINGS:

The following books are required reading. We will also be reading journal articles, conference papers, and book chapters. Copies of readings that are not easily accessible (i.e. are not found on JSTOR or ProQuest) will be made available, for you to Xerox. Please return the readings as quickly as possible, so that others can copy them, as well.


COURSE SCHEDULE

PART ONE
January 10: Introduction to Civil Conflict

January 17: Martin Luther King Day – No Class

January 24: Theory Building I
   • Hirschman, Exit, Voice, and Loyalty.

January 31: Theory Building II
   • Levi, Consent, Dissent, and Patriotism.

February 7: Theory Building III
   • Axelrod, The Evolution of Cooperation.

February 14: Theory Building IV
   • Cook et. al., Cooperation without Trust?

PART TWO
February 21: Governmental Collapse I
   • Andrews, When Majorities Fail.

February 28: Government Collapse II
   • Cohen, Radicals, Reformers, and Reactionaries.

March 7: Spring Break – No Class

March 14: Ethnic Conflict I

March 21: Ethnic Conflict II
***** Research Design proposals due in class *****
• Varshney, *Ethnic Conflict and Civil Life*.

March 28: Insurgency I

April 4: Insurgency II
• Wood, *Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*.

April 11: Civil War I

April 18: Civil War II
• Kalyvas, *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*.

April 25: Housekeeping
**Academic Dishonesty**

The Department of Political Science, along with the College of the Liberal Arts and the University, takes violations of academic dishonesty seriously. Observing basic honesty in one's work, words, ideas, and actions is a principle to which all members of the community are required to subscribe.

All course work by students is to be done on an individual basis unless an instructor clearly states that an alternative is acceptable. Any reference materials used in the preparation of any assignment must be explicitly cited. Students uncertain about proper citation are responsible for checking with their instructor.

In an examination setting, unless the instructor gives explicit prior instructions to the contrary, whether the examination is in-class or take-home, violations of academic integrity shall consist but are not limited to any attempt to receive assistance from written or printed aids, or from any person or papers or electronic devices, or of any attempt to give assistance, whether the one so doing has completed his or her own work or not.

Lying to the instructor or purposely misleading any Penn State administrator shall also constitute a violation of academic integrity.

In cases of any violation of academic integrity it is the policy of the Department of Political Science to follow procedures established by the College of the Liberal Arts. More information on academic integrity and procedures followed for violation can be found at: http://www.la.psu.edu/CLA-Academic_Integrity/integrity.shtml

**Disabilities**

The Pennsylvania State University encourages qualified people with disabilities to participate in its programs and activities and is committed to the policy that all people shall have equal access to programs, facilities, and admissions without regard to personal characteristics not related to ability, performance, or qualifications as determined by University policy or by state or federal authorities. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please tell the instructor as soon as possible. Reasonable accommodations will be made for all students with disabilities, but it is the student's responsibility to inform the instructor early in the term. Do not wait until just before an exam to decide you want to inform the instructor of a learning disability; any accommodations for disabilities must be arranged well in advance.