

EXPLORING GLOBAL CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE
POLITICAL SCIENCE 3596
Fall 2018

Professor: Dr. Ann Griffiths
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

After the Cold War ended, more and more of the world adopted liberalism and democracy, and many people speculated that we would see an unprecedented era of global peace. And, indeed, for a while this seemed to be the case. But not any more. The international system of the post-WWII era is being challenged, and we seem to be teetering on the brink of momentous change. Conflict and violence appear to be increasing, both between states and within states.

Are conflict and violence at an all-time high? What factors – at the system, state, institutional and individual levels – cause conflict and violence? How has conflict and political violence changed over the years in terms of actors, technology and strategy? What is terrorism and how can it be countered? Is violence by non-state actors the new face of international politics? What are the rules about conduct in conflict, and are they followed? What institutions exist to address violence/conflict, and are they effective? These are a few of the issues that this course will examine. This is not simply a course on current affairs, but it will use current conflicts to illustrate concepts and to explain the trends, actors, motives and strategies. The objective of the course is to introduce students to the theories of conflict/violence and to examine global actors, institutions, issues and debates.

The course is designed as part lecture and part seminar. Students will do one assignment in a small group and are expected to participate in discussions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- understand how war/conflict is defined, and the elements of the definitions;
- describe how the theory and study of war/conflict have changed over the years;
- understand systemic, state, institutional and individual causes of conflict;
- discuss the characteristics of inter-state and intra-state conflict;
- explain how the participants, technologies and strategies of conflict have changed over the years;
- identify the different types of non-state actors involved in political violence;
- discuss the role of institutions and interventions in preventing or stopping conflict.

REQUIRED READINGS

There is no required textbook. Required readings are listed in the section “Class Schedule and Readings” below. (There is also a list of Interesting Supplemental Readings given for most classes – these readings are supplemental.) Some readings are available on Brightspace (as indicated by a (B)) and other readings are available online. **Students are expected to read the required readings.** If you have problems accessing a reading, please tell the professor.

PLAGIARISM

This course is governed by the academic rules and regulations set forth in the University Calendar and the Dalhousie Senate. Students are expected to comply with academic integrity, including avoiding plagiarism. Dalhousie University defines plagiarism as “the submission or presentation of the work of another as if it were one’s own.” **Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the university, or even to the revocation of a degree.** All students should read the Policy on Academic Integrity contained in the university calendar or on the website. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities/sources from which facts, statistics and exact words and opinions have been derived. If you are uncertain about how or when to use citations, the professor would be happy to explain.

Dalhousie University subscribes to Urkund, a computer-based service which checks for originality in submitted papers. Any paper submitted may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. The Dalhousie Senate has affirmed the right of any professor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and electronic format, and to submit any paper to a check such as that performed by Urkund. Students are required to keep an electronic copy of papers, and the professor may request that electronic copy. Copies of student papers checked by this process will be retained by Urkund.

CELLPHONES

Use of cellphones and social media in class is strongly discouraged. Texting, tweeting, updating Facebook or otherwise using social media during class is distracting you, fellow students and the professor.

STUDENT ACCESSIBILITY SERVICES

Students with disabilities are encouraged to register as quickly as possible at the Student Accessibility Services (SAS) office if they wish to receive academic accommodation. To do so, students can phone (902-494-2836), email (access@dal.ca), or visit www.studentaccessibility.dal.ca. All forms are now available on the website. Please note that the student, not the professor must make the arrangements to write exams at the SAS office.

STUDY SKILLS PROGRAMS AT DALHOUSIE

Dalhousie has a variety of programs to assist students. For academic purposes, Dalhousie has created the Study Skills/Tutoring Program to help students become more effective learners. There are workshops and/or individual study skills sessions for help with time management, critical reading, note taking, preparing for exams, etc. For information, visit the Academic Support page on the Dal website https://www.dal.ca/campus_life/academic-support/study-skills-and-tutoring.html.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. CLASS PARTICIPATION/ATTENDANCE (10%) (Throughout the course)

An outline of how this will be determined can be found on Brightspace.

2. CLASS DEBATE (20%) (Throughout the course, as specified on assignment sheet)

Students will pick a topic and in pairs build an argument for the assigned debate. On the assigned date the two sides will debate the issue in front of the class.

A selection of topics will be distributed in the first class and students will select from the list. This is designed as a debate so students are expected to make an argument – that is, the point of a debate is to make an argument to convince others of the rightness of your position, not just describe or summarize. To make your argument convincing you should consult a number of academic sources and include a bibliography. You will submit your notes at the end of the debate.

3. CRITICAL ARTICLE REVIEW #1 (20%) (due in class, 10 October 2018)

Select one of the readings listed below and write a 1,200-2,000 word (4-6 double-spaced pages) *critical* article review. Note that a critical review means that you read the article with a questioning mind and examine the merits/shortcomings of its argument and assumptions rather than summarizing it. Students are expected to submit a hard copy, but to keep an electronic version just in case. **Late essays will be penalized at 2% per day.** A handout on how to write critical reviews is available on Brightspace.

- A. Christopher J. Fettweis, “Unipolarity, Hegemony and the New Peace,” *Security Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (2017) (B)
- B. Stephen M. Walt, “The World Wants You to Think Like a Realist,” *Foreign Policy*, 30 May 2018, at <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/05/30/the-world-wants-you-to-think-like-a-realist/>
- C. Kurt M. Campbell and Ely Ratner, “The China Reckoning: How Beijing Defied American Expectations,” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2018 (B)

4. CRITICAL ARTICLE REVIEW #2 (20%) (due in class, 7 November 2018)

Select one of the following articles to write your second critical review. Write a 1,200-2,000 word (4-6 double-spaced pages) *critical* article review. Students are expected to submit a hard copy, but to keep an electronic version just in case. **Late essays will be penalized at 2% per day.**

- A. Aisha Ahman, “Why Jihadist Insurgencies Persist,” OpenCanada.org, 23 May 2018, available at <https://www.opencanada.org/features/why-jihadist-insurgencies-persist/>
- B. Ely Ratner, “Course Correction: How to Stop China’s Maritime Advance,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 96, Issue 4 (July-August 2017) (B)

EVALUATION METHODS

The review will be marked based on a combination of two broad criteria. The first criterion is the cognitive element. This means the intellectual thinking that is displayed in the assignment – in other words, the understanding of the article that the student expresses, the ideas and the evidence that the student presents in the critique, and the ability to explain, analyse and interpret information and provide evidence. The second criterion is the mechanical element. This means that students will be assessed for their writing ability, effective organization of the assignment, use of language, correctness of grammar and spelling, and use of quotations, references and citations.

5. FINAL EXAM (30%) (As scheduled by the Registrar)

The final exam will be scheduled by the Registrar during the exam period of **6-16 December 2018**. **Do not make plans to leave Halifax until the exam schedule has been posted**. Students are expected to be at the exam in the time scheduled – unless they can provide a compelling reason for their absence. The exam will include material from lectures, readings and discussion in class. The format will be explained by the professor in class.

Assignment	Due Date	Worth
Participation/Attendance	throughout the term	10%
Critical Review #1	(in class) 10 October 2018	20%
Critical Review #2	(in class) 7 November 2018	20%
Debate	Throughout the term	20%
Final Exam	as scheduled by the Registrar 6-16 December 2018	30%

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

CLASS 1: INTRODUCTION

(5 September 2018)

Overview of the class, review of syllabus and assignment of debate topics.

CLASS 2: CONTEXT

(12 September 2018)

Steven Pinker, Bradley A. Thayer, Jack Levy and William R. Thompson, “The Forum: The Decline of War,” *International Studies Quarterly*, 2013, pp. 396-419 **(B)**

Meredith Reid Sarkees, “The COW Typology of War: Defining and Categorizing Wars (Version 4 of the Data),” no date **(B)**

Jerónimo Mohar Volkow and Benoit Gomis, “Overblown Coverage: Why More Care is Needed in Conflict and Terrorism Reporting,” OpenCanada.org, 27 June 2017, at <https://www.opencanada.org/features/overblown-coverage-why-more-care-needed-conflict-and-terrorism-reporting/>

Interesting Supplemental Readings

Meredith Reid Sarkees, Frank Whelon Wayman and J. David Singer, “Inter-State, Intra-State and Extra-State Wars,” *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 47 (2003)

Aaron Clauset, “Trends and Fluctuations in the Severity of Interstate Wars,” *Science Advances*, Vol. 4, No. 2 (21 February 2018)

International Crisis Group, “Watch List 2018,” Second Update, July 2018

Council on Foreign Relations, Global Conflict Tracker

CLASS 3: CAUSES OF CONFLICT #1 SYSTEM LEVEL

(19 September 2018)

Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, “Chapter 2: System-Level Theories,” pp. 28-54, in *Causes of War*, John Wiley & Sons, 2010, available **(B)** [Note: read selected chapters – the entire book is here, other classes will require you to read other chapters]

Stewart M. Patrick, “Trump and World Order: The Return of Self-Help,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 96, Issue 2 (March-April 2017) **(B)**

Baohui Zhang, “Xi Jinping’s ‘Pragmatic’ Offensive Realism and China’s Rise,” *Global Asia*, 1 July 2014 (B)

Glen M.E. Duerr, “Huntington vs. Mearsheimer vs. Fukuyama: Which Post-Cold War Thesis is Most Accurate?” Chapter 7 in David Orsi (ed.), *The ‘Clash of Civilizations’ 25 Years On: A Multidisciplinary Appraisal* (Bristol, UK: E-International Relations Publishing, 2018) (B) [Note: the whole book is here, scroll down to Chapter 7]

Interesting Supplemental Readings

Robert D. Kaplan, “Eurasia’s Coming Anarchy,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 95, No. 2 (March/April 2016)

Kurt M. Campbell and Ely Ratner, “The China Reckoning: How Beijing Defied American Expectations,” *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2018

John H.S. Aberg, “The Myth of the Chinese Authoritarian Model,” *Global Asia*, Vol. 13, No. 2 (25 June 2018)

Stephen M. Walt, “The World Wants You to Think Like a Realist,” *Foreign Policy*, 30 May 2018

Graham Allison, “Just How Likely is Another World War? Assessing the Similarities and Differences between 1914 and 2014,” *The Atlantic*, July 2014

CLASS 4 – CAUSES OF CONFLICT #2: STATE AND ORGANIZATIONAL LEVELS

(26 September 2018)

Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, “Chapter 3: The Dyadic Interaction of States,” pp. 55-82; “Chapter 4: The State and Societal Level,” pp. 83-129, in *Causes of War* (B) [Note: book is located in file for Class 3]

Emre Hatipoglu and Glenn Palmer, “Interstate Conflict: Recent Findings and Controversies,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 24 (2012) (B)

Gerald Schneider, “Economics and Conflict,” *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of International Studies*, online publication date November 2017 (B)

Interesting Supplemental Readings

Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, “Chapter 6: Decision Making: The Organizational Level,” pp. 162-185, in *Causes of War*

Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision*, 1971

CLASS 5: CAUSES OF CONFLICT #3: INDIVIDUAL LEVEL

(3 October 2018)

Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, "Chapter 5: Decision-Making: The Individual Level," pp. 128-161, in *Causes of War* (B) [Note: the book is located in the file for Class 3]

Luc De Keyser, "Is It in Man's Nature to Wage War?" Stratfor, Global Affairs, 3 August 2016, pp. 1-3, at <https://www.stratfor.com/weekly/it-mans-nature-wage-war>

Keren Yarhi-Milo, "After Credibility: American Foreign Policy in the Trump Era," *Foreign Policy*, 12 December 2017, at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2017-12-12/after-credibility>

Keith Gessen, "What if Putin were Nice?" *Politico*, 23 February 2015 (B)

Alina Polyakova and Torrey Taussig, "The Autocrat's Achilles Heel: How Putin and Xi Undermine their Own Rule," *Foreign Affairs*, 2 February 2018, at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/china/2018-02-02/autocrats-achilles-heel>

Tobias Theiler, "The Microfoundations of Diversionary Conflict," *Security Studies*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (2018) (B)

Interesting Supplemental Readings

Casey Brunelle, "The Proliferation of 'Alternative Truths,'" *Frontline Security*, Vol. 12, No. 2 (2017)

Philip Gordon, "A Vision of Trump at War: How the President could Stumble into Conflict," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 96, Issue 3 (May-June 2017)

Allan Dafoe, Jonathan Renshon and Paul Huth, "Reputation and Status as Motives for War," *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 17, No. 1 (2014)

Keren Yarhi-Milo, "In the Eye of the Beholder: How Leaders and Intelligence Communities Assess the Intentions of Adversaries," *International Security*, Vol. 38, No. 1 (Summer 2013)

CLASS 6: 'TRADITIONAL' WAR: INTER-STATE WARFARE

(10 October 2018)

Daniel Brunstetter and Megan Braun, "From *Jus ad Bellum* to *Jus ad Vim*: Recalibrating our Understanding of the Moral Use of Force," *Ethics and International Affairs*, Vol. 27 (2013) (B)

Rod Powers, "Laws of Armed Conflict: The Rules of War," 16 September 2016 (B)

Thomas S. Szayna, Stephen Watts, Angela O'Mahony, Bryan Frederick, Jennifer Kavanagh, "What are the Trends in Armed Conflicts, and What Do They Mean for US Defense Policy?" RAND Corporation, 1st published 2014, updated 2016 (B)

Caroline Flintoft, "Misery as Strategy: The Human Cost of Conflict," International Crisis Group, 31 May 2018, at <https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/misery-strategy-human-cost-conflict>

Interesting Supplemental Readings

Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, 5th century BCE(ish)

Mark Bowden, "How to Deal with North Korea: There are No Good Options. But Some are Worse than Others," *The Atlantic*, July/August 2017

Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Military Expenditures Databases

Daniel Benaim and Michael Wahid Hanna, "Water Wars on the Nile: How Water Scarcity and Middle East Influence are Reshaping Northeast Africa," *Foreign Affairs*, 9 August 2018

International Crisis Group, "Voices of Idlib," July 2018

CLASS 7: TECHNOLOGY AND STRATEGY

(17 October 2018)

Vincent Bernard, "Editorial: Science Cannot be Placed above its Consequences," in *New Technologies and Warfare, International Review of the Red Cross*, Vol. 94, No. 886 (Summer 2012) (B) [Note: only read the Editorial, although of course you can read the whole book if you want!]

Alexander Kott, "Challenges and Characteristics of Intelligent Autonomy for Internet of Battle Things in Highly Adversarial Environments," US Army Research Laboratory, 2017/2018 (B)

Erica D. Borghard and Shawn W. Lonergan, "The Logic of Coercion in Cyberspace," *Security Studies*, Vol. 26, No. 3 (2017) (B)

Robert Cassidy and Jacqueline Tame, "How We Twitterized Clausewitz and Ended up Bogged Down in Afghanistan and Iraq," Part II of *The Wages of War Without Strategy*, 20 June 2017, at <https://thestrategybridge.org/the-bridge/2017/6/20/the-wages-of-war-without-strategy>

Dan Altman, "Advancing without Attacking: The Strategic Game around the Use of Force," *Security Studies*, Vol. 26 (2017) (B)

Interesting Supplemental Readings

Thomas Macaulay and Tamlin Magee, "The Future of Technology in Warfare: From Drone Swarms to VR Torture," *Tech World*, 18 April 2018

Michèle Flournoy and Michael Sulmeyer, “Battlefield Internet: A Plan for Securing Cyberspace,” *Foreign Affairs*, 14 August 2018

Frederik Rosen and John Karlsrud, “The MONUSCO Unmanned Aerial Vehicles: Opportunities and Challenges,” *Conflict Trends*, Issue 4 (2014)

The Fulcrum Tactical Laser: An Overview

Robert Knake, “The Next Cyber Battleground: Defending the U.S. Power Grid from Russian Hackers,” *Foreign Affairs*, 19 July 2018

CLASS 8: CONFLICT WITHIN STATES: 21ST CENTURY WARFARE?

(24 October 2018)

Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, “Chapter 7: Civil War,” pp. 186-223, in *Causes of War* (B)
[Note: the book is included in the file for Class 3]

Max Boot, “The Evolution of Irregular War,” *Foreign Affairs*, 5 February 2013, available at www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/138824/max-boot/the-evolution-of-irregular-war

Vince Tumminello, “A Primer on Counterinsurgent Warfare,” *Small Wars Journal*, 5 August 2016 (B)

Interesting Supplemental Readings

Mao Zedong, “On Guerrilla Warfare,” 1937

Lise Morjé Howard and Alexandra Stark, “Why Civil Wars are Lasting Longer in Syria and Elsewhere: New Norms are Changing the Face of Conflict,” *Foreign Affairs*, 27 February 2018

Amy Chua, “Tribal World: Group Identity is All,” *Foreign Affairs*, 14 June 2018

Michael Young, “In Syria, the Hard Part May be about to Begin as Assad, Russia and Iran Eye Each Other Warily,” *The National*, 21 December 2017

International Crisis Group, “Tackling the MENA Region’s Intersecting Conflicts,” 22 December 2017

Gavin Lyall, “Rebellion and Conflict Minerals in North Kivu,” *Conflict Trends*, Issue 1 (2017)

Jon Barnett and W. Neil Adger, “Climate Change, Human Security and Violent Conflict,” *Political Geography*, Vol. 26 (2007)

CLASS 9: NON-STATE ACTORS #1: TERRORISM

(31 October 2018)

Alex P. Schmid, “The Revised Academic Consensus Definition of Terrorism,” *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (May 2012) (B)

David C. Rapoport, “The Four Waves of Rebel Terror and September 11,” *Anthropoetica*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 2002) (B)

Carl Bildt, “The Fourth Jihadist Wave,” Project Syndicate, 22 April 2016 [Note: google title]

Institute for Economics and Peace, “Executive Summary and Key Findings,” *Global Terrorism Index 2017* (B)

Barbara F. Walter, “Why Moderates Support Extreme Groups: It’s Not About Ideology,” *Foreign Affairs*, 18 June 2018, at <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2018-06-18/why-moderates-support-extreme-groups>

Interesting Supplemental Readings

Amarnath Amarasingam and Stephanie Carvin, “Defining Terrorism: Is It Time for a Change?” Centre for International Governance Innovation, 11 May 2018

Robert Malley and Jon Finer, “The Long Shadow of 9/11: How Counterterrorism Warps US Foreign Policy,” *Foreign Affairs*, 14 June 2018/published by Council on Foreign Relations, 1 July 2018

Audrey Kurth Cronin, “The ‘War on Terrorism’: What does it Mean to Win?” *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (2014)

Peter R. Neumann, “Don’t Follow the Money: The Problem with the War on Terrorist Financing,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 96, Issue 4 (July-August 2017)

Alasia Ibfuro Joy, “Demystifying Extremism in Nigeria: Understanding the Dynamics of Boko Haram,” *Conflict Trends*, Issue 3 (2015)

Anti-Defamation League, “A Dark and Constant Rage: 25 Years of Right-Wing Terrorism in the United States,” June 2017

CLASS 10: NON-STATE ACTORS #2: OTHER ACTORS

(7 November 2018)

Emil Aslan Souleimanov, “Making Jihad or Making Money?” *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 41, No. 4 (2018) (B)

Phil Williams, "Introduction," in *Violent Non-State Actors and National and International Security*, International Relations and Security Network, 2009 (B) [Note: the whole book is here but you are required to read only the Introduction]

Orlando J. Perez, "Gang Violence and Insecurity in Contemporary Central America," *Journal of the Society for Latin American Studies*, Vol. 32, Issue 1 (March 2013) (B)

Peter W. Singer, "Outsourcing War," *Foreign Affairs*, March 2005 [Note: don't google title, go to <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/2005-03-01/outsourcing-war>]

Interesting Supplemental Readings

Keith Krause and Jennifer Milliken, "Introduction: The Challenge of Non-State Armed Groups," *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (2009)

Wendy Isaacs-Martin, "The Motivations of Warlords and the Role of Militias in the Central African Republic," *Conflict Trends*, Issue 4 (2015)

Alexis Okeowo, "A Mexican Town Wages its Own War on Drugs," *The New Yorker*, 27 November 2017

Aisha Ahmad, "Why Jihadist Insurgencies Persist," OpenCanada.org, 23 May 2018

Neil Hauer, "Russia's Mercenary Debacle in Syria: Is the Kremlin Losing Control?" *Foreign Affairs*, 26 February 2018

International Crisis Group, "Double-Edged Sword: Vigilantes in African Counter-Insurgencies," Africa Report No. 251, 7 September 2017

International Crisis Group, "Stopping Nigeria's Spiralling Farmer-Herder Violence," Africa Report No. 262, 26 July 2018

Marcus Hedahl, "Unaccountable: The Current State of Private Military and Security Companies," *Criminal Justice Ethics*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (December 2012)

FALL STUDY BREAK: NO CLASSES WEEK OF 12-16 NOVEMBER 2018

CLASS 11: ENDING/PREVENTING CONFLICT: INSTITUTIONS AND INTERVENTIONS

(21 November 2018)

Anke Hoeffler and Marta Reynal-Querol, "Measuring the Costs of Conflict," ConflictRecovery.org, 2003 (B)

Charter of the United Nations, “Chapter V: The Security Council,” “Chapter VI: Pacific Settlement of Disputes,” and “Chapter VII: Action with Respect to Threats to the Peace, Breaches of the Peace, and Acts of Aggression,” available at <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter5.shtml>

Interesting Supplemental Readings

Comfort Ero, “A Changing Environment Brings Opportunities and Threats for the African Union,” International Crisis Group, 26 July 2017

Permanent Court of Arbitration, “The South China Sea Arbitration” (The Republic of the Philippines v. The People’s Republic of China), The Hague, 12 July 2016

Brian Resnick, “A Psychologist Explains the Limits of Human Compassion,” *Vox*, 19 July 2017

CLASS 12: LAST THOUGHTS/REVIEW

(28 November 2018)

Francis Fukuyama, “Against Identity Politics: The New Tribalism and the Crisis of Democracy,” *Foreign Affairs*, 14 August 2018 (B)