

**EXPLORING GLOBAL CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE**  
**POLITICAL SCIENCE 3596**  
**Fall 2019**

**Professor:** Dr. Ann Griffiths  
**Office Hours:** To be determined  
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**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

When the Cold War ended in 1989, there was hope that the world would experience an era of peace. And, indeed, for a while this seemed to be the case. But not any more. The international system created after World War II to avoid another global conflagration is being challenged, and we seem to be teetering on the brink of momentous and violent change. Conflict and violence appear to be increasing.

Are conflict and violence increasing? What factors – at the system, state, institutional and individual levels – cause conflict and violence? What are the rules about conduct in conflict, and are they changing? 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? How is violence perpetrated by non-state actors related to national and human security? 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.) Most 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/ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

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/social media in class is strongly discouraged. Texting, tweeting and updating Facebook 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](http://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](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 2019)**

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. Stephen M. Walt, “The End of Hubris and the New Age of American Restraint,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 98, No. 3 (May/June 2019) (B)
- B. Jessica Chen Weiss, “A World Safe for Autocracy: China’s Rise and the Future of Global Politics,” *Foreign Affairs*, 11 June 2019 (B)
- C. Gary Uzonyi, “Interstate Rivalry, Genocide and Politicide,” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (2018) (B)

### **4. CRITICAL ARTICLE REVIEW #2 (20%) (due in class, 7 November 2019)**

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. Michele Flourny and Michael Sulmeyer, “Battlefield Internet: A Plan for Securing Cyberspace,” *Foreign Affairs*, 14 August 2018 (B)
- B. Lars-Erik Cederman, “Blood for Soil: The Fatal Temptations of Ethnic Politics,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 98, No. 2 (March/April 2019) (B)
- C. Aisha Ahman, “Why Jihadist Insurgencies Persist,” OpenCanada.org, 23 May 2018, available at <https://www.opencanada.org/features/why-jihadist-insurgencies-persist/> [go to website]

## 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 **5-15 December 2019**. **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.

<b>Assignment</b>	<b>Due Date</b>	<b>Worth</b>
Participation/Attendance	throughout the term	10%
Critical Review #1	(in class) 10 October 2019	20%
Critical Review #2	(in class) 7 November 2019	20%
Debate	Throughout the term	20%
Final Exam	as scheduled by the Registrar 5-15 December 2019	30%

## CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

### CLASS 1: INTRODUCTION

(5 September 2019)

### CLASS 2: CONTEXT

(12 September 2019)

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)

Joachim Krause, “How Do Wars End?” *Journal of Strategic Studies*, 2019 (B)

### Interesting Supplemental Readings

- International Crisis Group, “Watch List 2019.”
- Council on Foreign Relations, Global Conflict Tracker
- Therése Pettersson and Kristine Eck, “Organized Violence 1989-2017,” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 55, No. 4 (2018)
- Ferry de Kerckhove, “The Middle East in 2019,” Canadian Global Affairs Institute, May 2019

### CLASS 3: CAUSES OF CONFLICT #1 – SYSTEM LEVEL

(19 September 2019)

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: the entire book is here. You are required to read only specified chapters]

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]

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

Odd Arne Westad, “The Sources of Chinese Conduct: Are Washington and Beijing Fighting a New Cold War?” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 98, No. 5 (September-October 2019) (B)

### **Interesting Supplemental Readings**

- Stephen M. Walt, “The World Wants You to Think Like a Realist,” *Foreign Policy*, 30 May 2018
- Graham Allison, “The Thucydides Trap: Are the US and China Headed for War?” *The Atlantic*, 2015
- Zach Vertin, “Red Sea Rivalries: The Gulf States are Playing a Dangerous Game in the Horn of Africa,” *Foreign Affairs*, 15 January 2019
- Michael J. Mazarr, “This is Not a Great Power Competition,” *Foreign Affairs*, 29 May 2019
- Andrew F. Krepinevich Jr., “The Eroding Balance of Terror,” *Foreign Affairs*, 11 December 2018
- Olga Oliker, “Moscow’s Nuclear Enigma,” *Foreign Affairs*, 15 October 2018

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

(26 September 2019)

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)

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

### **CLASS 5: CAUSES OF CONFLICT #3 – INDIVIDUAL LEVEL**

(3 October 2019)

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, 2016 (B)

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

Tobias Theiler, “The Microfoundations of Diversionary Conflict,” *Security Studies*, 2018 (B)

### **Interesting Supplemental Readings**

- Keren Yarhi-Milo, “After Credibility: American Foreign Policy in the Trump Era,” *Foreign Policy*, 12 December 2017
- 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 2019)

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)**

### **Interesting Supplemental Readings**

- Sun Tzu, *The Art of War*, 5<sup>th</sup> 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
- Gary Uzonyi, “Interstate Rivalry, Genocide and Politicide,” *Journal of Peace Research*, 2018
- Jon Finer, ‘The Last War - and the Next? Learning the Wrong Lessons from Iraq,’ *Foreign Affairs*, 28 May 2019
- Ilan Goldenberg, “What a War with Iran Would Look Like,” *Foreign Affairs*, 4 June 2019

### **CLASS 7: TECHNOLOGY AND STRATEGY**

(17 October 2019)

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)**

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)**

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

Christian Brose, “The New Revolution in Military Affairs: War’s Sci-Fi Future,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 98, No. 3 (May-June 2019) **(B)**

### **Interesting Supplemental Readings**

- Paul Scharre, “A Million Mistakes a Second,” *Foreign Policy*, 12 September 2018
- Peter W. Singer and Emerson T. Brooking, “What Clausewitz can Teach us about War on Social Media,” *Foreign Affairs*, 4 October 2018
- Paul Scharre, “Killer Apps: The Real Dangers of an AI Arms Race,” *Foreign Affairs*, 16 April 2019
- David Carment, “War’s Future: The Risks and Rewards of Grey-Zone Conflict and Hybrid Warfare,” Canadian Global Affairs Institute, October 2018
- The Fulcrum Tactical Laser: An Overview

### **CLASS 8: CONFLICT *WITHIN* STATES – 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY WARFARE?**

(24 October 2019)

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*, Vol. 92, No. 2 (Mar-April 2013) (B)

Mary Kaldor, “In Defence of New Wars,” *Stability: International Journal of Security and Development*, Vol. 2, No. 1 (2013) (B)

### **Interesting Supplemental Readings**

- Mao Zedong, “On Guerrilla Warfare,” 1937
- Amy Chua, “Tribal World: Group Identity is All,” *Foreign Affairs*, 14 June 2018
- Robert Muggah and José Luengo Cabrera, “The Sahel is Engulfed by Violence: Climate Change, Food Insecurity and Extremists are Largely to Blame,” World Economic Forum, 23 January 2019
- Hanne Fjelde and Desirée Nilsson, “The Rise of Rebel Contenders: Barriers to Entry and Fragmentation in Civil Wars,” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 55, No. 5 (2018)
- International Crisis Group, “Preventing a Civil War within a Civil War in Yemen,” 9 August 2019

### **CLASS 9: NON-STATE ACTORS #1 – TERRORISM**

(31 October 2019)

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)

Institute for Economics and Peace, “Executive Summary and Key Findings,” *Global Terrorism Index 2018* (B) [Note: The whole report is here; read the Executive Summary and Key Findings]



Alexander Spencer, "Questioning the Concept of 'New Terrorism,'" *Peace, Conflict and Development*, Issue 8 (January 2006) (B)

Manuel Ricardo Torres-Soriano, "How Do Terrorists Choose their Targets for an Attack?" *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 31 (June 2019) (B)

### **Interesting Supplemental Readings**

- 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)
- Barbara F. Walter, "Why Moderates Support Extreme Groups: It's Not About Ideology," *Foreign Affairs*, 18 June 2018
- Peter Bergen and David Sterman, "The Real Terrorist Threat in America: It's No Longer Jihadist Groups," *Foreign Affairs*, 30 October 2018
- Anti-Defamation League, "A Dark and Constant Rage: 25 Years of Right-Wing Terrorism in the United States," June 2017
- Dag Arne Christensen and Jacob Aars, "Does Democracy Decrease Fear of Terrorism?" *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Vol. 31, No. 3 (2019)
- Lweendo Kambela, "Terrorism in Africa: A Manifestation of New Wars," *Conflict Trends*, 2019

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

(7 November 2019)

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*, Vol. 84, No. 2 (March-April 2005) (B)

### **Interesting Supplemental Readings**

- Christoph V. Steinert, et al., "Spoilers of Peace: Pro-government Militias as Risk Factors for Conflict Recurrence," *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (2019)
- United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC), "Homicide Kills Far More People than Armed Conflict," 8 July 2019 <https://www.unodc.org>
- Steven Dudley, "The End of Big Cartels: Why There Won't be Another El Chapo," *Foreign Affairs*, 27 February 2019
- Falko Ernst, "Mexico's Hydra-Headed Crime War," International Crisis Group, 3 June 2019

**FALL STUDY BREAK: NO CLASSES WEEK OF 11-15 NOVEMBER 2019**

**CLASS 11: ENDING/PREVENTING CONFLICT – INSTITUTIONS AND INTERVENTIONS**

(21 November 2019)

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>

Séverine Autessere, “The Crisis of Peacekeeping: Why the UN Can’t End Wars,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 98, No. 1 (January-February 2019) (B)

Allard Duursma, “Obstruction and Intimidation of Peacekeepers,” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 56, No. 2 (2019) (B)

**Interesting Supplemental Readings**

- 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
- Katharina P. Coleman and Benjamin Nyblade, “Peacekeeping for Profit? The Scope and Limits of ‘Mercenary’ UN Peacekeeping,” *Journal of Peace Research*, Vol. 55, No. 6 (2018)

**CLASS 12: LAST THOUGHTS/REVIEW**

(28 November 2019)

In case you haven’t read enough!

Tom Nichols, “How America Lost Faith in Expertise,” *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 96, No. 2 (March-April 2017) (B)