

EXPLORING GLOBAL CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE
POLITICAL SCIENCE 3596
Fall 2015

Professor: Dr. Ann Griffiths
Office: Room 355A, Hicks Building
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COURSE DESCRIPTION

As the Cold War ended and more and more of the world adopted liberalism/capitalism, many people speculated that we would see an unprecedented era of global peace. And yet conflict and violence continue, both between states and within states. What factors – at the system, state, institutional and individual levels – cause conflict and political violence? Who are the actors and what are their motives? How has conflict changed over the years in terms of actors, technology, weapons and strategy? What institutions exist to address violence/conflict, and are they effective?

These are a few of the issues and debates that this course will examine. This is not simply a course on current affairs, but it will use current conflicts to illustrate different concepts and to explain the trends, actors, motives and possible future scenarios. The objective of the course is to introduce students to the theories of conflict and violence and to examine global actors, institutions, issues and debates through the framework of these theories.

The course is designed as part lecture and part seminar. Students will do some work in groups and are expected to participate in discussions.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course students should:

- be able to describe how war/conflict is defined;
- be able to describe how the study of war/conflict has changed over the years;
- understand systemic, state, institutional and individual causes of conflict;
- be able to differentiate the characteristics of inter-state and intra-state conflict;
- be able to describe how the participants, technologies and strategies of conflict have changed over the years;
- understand the economic and societal costs of conflict;
- understand the role of institutions and interventions in stopping or preventing conflict.

REQUIRED READINGS

There is no required textbook. Required readings are listed in the section “Class Schedule and Readings” below. There is also a short list of Really Interesting But Not Required Readings given for most classes – students are not required to read these. Some readings are available on BBL (as indicated in each class list) but most readings are available online. Unless indicated that a reading is posted on BBL, the reading can be found online (google the title or go to the website provided). Students are expected to read the required readings. **If you have problems accessing a reading, please tell the professor.**

PLAGIARISM

Dalhousie University defines plagiarism as “the submission or presentation of the work of another as if it were one’s own.” Penalties for plagiarism can be severe. Prior to submitting any paper in a course, all students should read the Policy on Academic Integrity contained in the Dalhousie University Calendar or on the Dalhousie website. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations.

Dalhousie University subscribes to SafeAssign a computer-based service which checks for originality in submitted papers. Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University 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 SafeAssign. **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.** It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities/sources from which facts, statistics and exact words and opinions have been derived.

As a student, you are required to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course professor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand. Copies of student papers checked by this process will be retained by SafeAssign.

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), drop in at the Mark A. Hill Accessibility Centre or visit the website (www.studentaccessibility.dal.ca). All forms are now available on the website. Please note that the onus is on the student, not on the professor, to make the arrangements to write exams at the SAS office.

STUDYING SKILLS/TUTORING PROGRAMS AT DALHOUSIE

If you are looking for assistance to increase your study skills, Dalhousie has programs to help you become a more effective learner. You can attend workshops or sign up for individual study skills sessions to receive help with time management, critical reading, note taking, preparing for exams, etc. For more information, visit the Academic Support page on the Dalhousie website (www.dal.ca/sfs).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

GROUP ASSIGNMENT #1 (20%) (due Monday, 19 October 2015)

Students will be **divided into groups in class on 21 September** and given their assignment to discuss. Students will then meet outside class time to continue the discussion and write up the assignment. The assignment will be submitted as a group and all group members will receive the same grade. **It is important to be in class on 21 September so that you can be placed in a group.**

GROUP ASSIGNMENT #2 (20%) (due Monday, 9 November 2015)

Students will be **divided into new groups in class on 19 October** and given their assignment to discuss. Students will then meet outside class time to continue the discussion and write up a report on the topic provided. The assignment will be submitted as a group and all group members will receive the same grade. **It is important to be in class on 19 October so that you can be placed in a new group.** (NOTE: I understand that some students are not keen on working in groups. Therefore, for the second assignment, I will allow you to do the assignment in pairs rather than a group. You must inform me on 19 October of either your group or your partner.)

ESSAY (30%) (Due Monday, 30 November 2015)

Students will write an essay on a topic provided by the professor. The essay will be 2,500 to 3,000 words or 8-10 pages double-spaced. 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 selection of topics is attached at the end of this syllabus and will be posted on BBL. Students are expected to make an argument – that is, the essay should not just describe or summarize but make an argument about the topic or issue. This essay is designed to be a research paper so students should consult a number of academic sources and include a bibliography. Full citations are expected – preferably footnotes or endnotes.

ESSAY EVALUATION METHODS

The essay 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 ideas and the evidence that the student presents, and the ability to explain, analyse and interpret information and provide evidence that promotes an argument. 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.

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

The final exam will be scheduled by the Registrar during the exam period of **10-20 December 2015. 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 an acceptable written doctor's note.

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
Group Assignment #1	19 October 2015	20%
Group Assignment #2	9 November 2015	20%
Essay	30 November 2015	30%
Final Exam	as scheduled by the Registrar 10-20 December	30%

MARKING SCHEME

A+ = 87+	B = 72 - 75%	C- = 59 - 61%
A = 81 - 86%	B- = 69 - 71%	D = 50 - 58%
A- = 78 - 80%	C+ = 66 - 68%	F = 0 - 49%
B+ = 76 - 77%	C = 62 - 65%	

Dalhousie Grade Scale

A+ = 90+	B = 73 - 76%	C- = 55 - 59%
A = 85 - 89%	B- = 70 - 72%	D = 50-54%
A- = 80 - 84%	C+ = 65 - 69%	F = 0 - 49%
B+ = 77 - 79%	C = 60 - 64%	

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS

CLASS 1: INTRODUCTION

(14 September 2015)

Overview of the class and review of syllabus.

CLASS 2: CONTEXT

(21 September 2015)

Human Security Report Project, “The Decline in Global Violence: Evidence, Explanation and Contestation – Overview,” *Human Security Report 2013*, Simon Fraser University, BC, 2013 [BBL]

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

Meredith Reid Sarkees, Frank Whelon Wayman and J. David Singer, “Inter-State, Intra-State and Extra-State Wars,” *International Studies Quarterly*, Vol. 47 (2003), pp. 49-70 [BBL]

Sheila A. Smith, “Rethinking Asia’s Postwar Settlement,” Council on Foreign Relations, 5 August 2015, available online

Really Interesting But Not Required

Graham Allison, “Just How Likely is Another World War? Assessing the Similarities and Differences between 1914 and 2014,” *The Atlantic*, 30 July 2014

Council on Foreign Relations, Global Conflict Tracker, www.cfr.org/global/global-conflict-tracker/p32137#!/

Margaret MacMillan, “World War I: The War that Changed Everything,” *Wall Street Journal*, 20 June 2014

CLASS 3: THEORIES ABOUT WHY HUMANS FIGHT #1: SYSTEM LEVEL

(28 September 2015)

Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, “Chapter 2: System-Level Theories” and “Chapter 4: The State and Societal Level,” in *Causes of War*, John Wiley & Sons, 2010 [BBL] [NOTE: the entire book is on BBL, you are required to read selected chapters here and in other classes]

Mohammad Ayatollahi Tabaar, “The Dangers of (Mis)Perception after the Iran Deal,” *The Washington Post*, 3 August 2015 [BBL]

Yanmei Xie, "South China Sea: Washington Says One Thing but Beijing Hears Another," *The Interpreter*, 5 June 2015

Baohui Zhang, "Xi Jinping's "'Pragmatic' Offensive Realism and China's Rise," *Global Asia*, 1 July 2014 [BBL]

Really Interesting But Not Required

Robert Kagan, "Allure of Normalcy: What our Tired Country Still Owes the World," *The New Republic*, May 2014 [BBL]

Walter Russell Mead, "The Return of Geopolitics," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 93, Issue 3 (May 2014), pp. 69-79 [BBL]

G. John Ikenberry, "The Illusion of Geopolitics," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 93, Issue 3 (May 2014), pp. 80-90 [BBL]

Niall Ferguson, "A World Without Power," *Foreign Policy*, 1 July 2004

CLASS 4 – THEORIES ABOUT WHY HUMANS FIGHT #2: STATE, ORGANIZATIONAL AND INDIVIDUAL LEVELS

(5 October 2015)

Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, "Chapter 3: The Dyadic Interactions of States," "Chapter 5: Decision-Making: The Individual Level," and "Chapter 6: Decision Making: The Organizational Level," in *Causes of War*, John Wiley & Sons, 2010 [NOTE: the entire book is on BBL, located in the file for Class 3]

Keith Gessen, "What if Putin were Nice?" *Politico*, 23 February 2015 [BBL]

Really Interesting but Not Required

Graham Allison, *Essence of Decision*, 1971

No class 12 October 2015. Thanksgiving

CLASS 5: OTHER CAUSES AND CATALYSTS OF CONFLICT

(19 October 2015)

Thomas F. Homer-Dixon, "Environmental Scarcities and Violent Conflict: Evidence from Cases," *International Security*, Vol. 19, No. 1 (Summer 1994), pp. 5-40, available at www.homerdixon.com/projects/evidence/evid1.htm

Institute for Economics and Peace, “Five Key Questions Answered on the Link Between Peace and Religion,” no date [BBL]

John R. Bowen, “The Myth of Global Ethnic Conflict,” *Journal of Democracy*, Vol. 7, No. 4 (1996), pp. 3-14

Really Interesting But Not Required

Karen Armstrong, “The Myth of Religious Violence,” *The Guardian*, 25 September 2014

Margaret Atwood, “It’s Not Climate Change – It’s Everything Change,” *Matter*, Medium.com, 27 July 2015

Richard Haas, “The New Thirty Years’ War,” 21 July 2014, Project Syndicate, available through Council on Foreign Relations

CLASS 6: INTER-STATE WARFARE

(26 October 2015)

Stuart A. Bremer, “Dangerous Dyads: Conditions Affecting the Likelihood of Interstate War, 1816-1965,” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, Vol. 36, No. 2 (1992), pp. 309-341, available at <http://jcr.sagepub.com/content/36/2/309>

Alistair Roberts, “The Nation-State: Not Dead Yet,” *The Wilson Quarterly*, 2015 [BBL]

Lauren Dickey and Stephen E. Liszewski, “Five Takeaways from China’s Bold New Military Strategy,” Council on Foreign Relations, 27 May 2015

Bob Lee, “Is a Sino-US War Inevitable?” *The Diplomat*, 23 June 2015

Jonathan Masters, “Backgrounder: The North Atlantic Treaty Organization,” Council on Foreign Relations, 27 February 2015, available at www.cfr.org/nato/north-atlantic-treaty-organization-nato/p28287

Really Interesting But Not Required

President Barack Obama, “Remarks by the President on the Iran Nuclear Deal,” Speech made at American University, Washington, DC, 5 August 2015

Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu, “Speech to Joint Session of US Congress,” 3 March 2015, available at www.washingtonpost.com/news/post-politics/wp/2015/03/03/full-text-netanyahus-address-to-congress/

Paul Meyer, “A Problematic Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty,” OpenCanada.org, 14 May 2015

CLASS 7: NEW TECHNOLOGIES, NEW STRATEGIES

(2 November 2015)

Karl. W. Eikenberry, "The Limits of Counterinsurgency Doctrine in Afghanistan," *Foreign Affairs*, September-October 2013

Sarah Kreps and Micah Zenko, "The Next Drone Wars," *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 93, Issue 2 (March-April 2014), pp. 68-79 [BBL]

Benjamin Brake, "Strategic Risks of Ambiguity in Cyberspace," Contingency Planning Memo No. 24, Council on Foreign Relations, May 2015

Jeff Stein and Jonathan Broder, "Can America Win a War?" *Newsweek*, 30 April 2015

Interesting But not Required

Thomas Rid and Ben Buchanan, "Attributing Cyber Attacks," *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 38, Nos. 1-2 (2015), pp. 4-37 [BBL]

Jill Dougherty, "How the Media Became one of Putin's Most Powerful Weapons," *The Atlantic*, 21 April 2015 [BBL]

"Can a Tweet Topple a Government?" Interview with Alfred Hermida author of *Tell Everyone*, OpenCanada.org, 16 October 2014

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

(9 November 2015)

Jack S. Levy and William R. Thompson, "Chapter 7: Civil War," in *Causes of War*, John Wiley & Sons, 2010 [BBL] [NOTE: the entire book is on BBL, it is located with the readings for Class 3]

Max Boot, "The Evolution of Irregular War," *Foreign Affairs*, 5 February 2013

William Reno, "Explaining Patterns of Violence in Collapsed States," *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (2009), pp. 356-374 [BBL]

Really Interesting But Not Required

Mao Zedong, "On Guerrilla Warfare," 1937, available at www.marxists.org/reference/archive/mao/works/1937/guerrilla-warfare/ch01.htm

CLASS 9: NON-STATE ACTORS

(16 November 2015)

Keith Krause and Jennifer Milliken, "Introduction: The Challenge of Non-State Armed Groups," *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol. 30, No. 2 (2009), pp. 202-220 [BBL]

Alex P. Schmid, "The Revised Academic Consensus Definition of Terrorism," *Perspectives on Terrorism*, Vol. 6, No. 2 (May 2012), pp. 158-159 [BBL]

Institute for Economics and Peace, "Global Terrorism Index 2014," November 2014 [BBL]

David C. Rapoport, "The Four Waves of Rebel Terror and September 11," *Anthropoetica*, Vol. 8, No. 1 (Spring/Summer 2002) [BBL]

Patricio Asfura-Heim and Ralph H. Espach, "The Rise of Mexico's Self-Defense Forces," *Foreign Affairs*, Council on Foreign Relations, 11 June 2013, available at www.foreignaffairs.com/print/1113144

Audrey Kurth Cronin, "The 'War on Terrorism': What does it Mean to Win?" *The Journal of Strategic Studies*, Vol. 37, No. 2 (2014), pp. 174-197 [BBL]

Really Interesting But Not Required Readings

Human Security Research Group, *Human Security Report 2013*, "Chapter 2: War, Criminal Violence and Human Security," Simon Fraser University, 2013

Jonathan Powell, "How to Talk to Terrorists," *The Guardian*, 7 October 2014

Rukmini Callimachi, "ISIS and the Lonely Young American," *The New York Times*, 27 June 2015 [BBL]

Shiv Malik et al., "How ISIS Crippled al-Qaeda," *The Guardian*, 10 June 2015

Graeme Wood, "What ISIS Really Wants," *The Atlantic*, March 2015 [BBL]

"Mexico: First Statement from the Self-Defense Group of Aquila, Michoacán," 21 January 2014, *Warrior Publications* (Warning: this statement includes a graphic photo), available at <https://warriorpublications.wordpress.com/2014/01/21/mexico-first-statement-from-the-self-defense-group-of-aquila-michoacan/#more-3439>

CLASS 10: COSTS OF WAR AND VIOLENCE

(23 November 2015)

Anke Hoeffler and Marta Reynal-Querol, “Measuring the Costs of Conflict,” ConflictRecovery.org, 2003 [BBL]

Global Peace Index 2015, “Chapter 3: Global Economic Value of Peace,” Institute for Economics and Peace, 2015, pp. 63-78 [BBL] [NOTE: the full report is on BBL but you are only required to read Chapter 3]

United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR), “World at War: Global Trends, Forced Displacement in 2014,” available at <http://www.unhcr.org/556725e69.html>

Airwars, “Cause for Concern,” August 2015 [BBL]

William D. Hartung, “It’s Not Diplomacy, It’s an Arms Fair,” *Foreign Policy*, 14 May 2015

Really Interesting But Not Required

Amnesty International, “Death Everywhere: War Crimes and Human Rights Abuses in Aleppo, Syria,” May 2015

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

CLASS 11: INSTITUTIONS AND INTERVENTIONS

(30 November 2015)

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 www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter5.shtml

Report of the Secretary-General, United Nations, General Assembly/Security Council, “Responsibility to Protect: Timely and Decisive Response,” 25 July 2012

Nick Grono, “The Deterrent Effect of the ICC on the Commission of International Crimes by International Leaders,” International Crisis Group, 5 October 2012

Richard Nephew, “Issue Brief: The Future of Economic Sanctions in a Global Economy,” Center on Global Energy Policy, Columbia University, SIPA, May 2015 [BBL]

Really Interesting But Not Required

Ronen Bergman, "The Hezbollah Connection," *The New York Times Magazine*, 10 February 2015

Janine D. Giovanni, "The Man with the Toughest Job in the World," *The Guardian*, 30 July 2015

CLASS 12: LAST THOUGHTS/REVIEW

(7 December 2015)

Essay Topics

Due 30 November 2015

The essay should be 2,500 to 3,000 words or 8-10 pages double-spaced. You are expected to submit a hard copy, but you are required to keep an electronic version just in case. **Late essays will be penalized at 2% per day.**

You are expected to make an argument – that is, the essay should not just describe or summarize but make an argument about the topic or issue (in other words, try to convince the professor of something). Use your introduction to set out your argument. (If you are uncertain how to make an argument, feel free to ask the professor.)

This essay is designed to be a research paper so you should consult five to 10 academic sources and include a bibliography (which should be single-spaced and in alphabetical order according to the last name of the author/editor). Full citations are expected – preferably footnotes or endnotes.

Write an essay on one of the following topics.

1. Does the United Nations Security Council do a good job of its primary mission – i.e., promoting global peace and security?
2. Should states pay ransom – or allow ransom to be paid – to terrorists in order to free kidnapped citizens? Why/why not?
3. Is terrorism in recent years different from the terrorism that occurred in the 1960s and 1970s? How? (Think about actors, tactics, motives/goals, technology, geographic location.)
4. Does better technology necessarily win wars?
5. A lot of people compare the American war in Afghanistan with the American war in Vietnam. Is this a valid comparison? Why/why not?
6. If a state is not providing security to its citizens, then forming ‘self-defence groups’ is a good solution.
7. Are civilians being targeted more in conflict than in the past? If so, why?
8. Do the media play a helpful role in conflict?
9. Some Western people hailed counter-insurgency (COIN) doctrine as the solution to all coalition problems in the war in Afghanistan. Is COIN doctrine the only way to win asymmetric wars in the 21st century?
10. Will climate change lead to conflict? Why/why not? Where?

Have fun and I look forward to reading what you write.