POLI 4040
Civil Conflict
Fall 2009
T TH 3:10 – 4:30
229 Tureaud Hall

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Office: 310 Stubs Hall
Office Hours: Tuesday & Thursday 10:00 to 11:30 a.m. or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS

Civil conflict plagues much of the developing world and is often responsible for social upheaval, massive loss of life, poverty, and the destruction or reestablishment of political systems and states. This course is designed to give you a basic understanding of the causes, processes, and consequences of civil conflict, with particular attention paid to civil war. More specifically, we will address the debates surrounding civil war onset, the organization of rebel groups and the related rebel recruitment and participation patterns, civil war duration and termination, and the theoretical and practical implications of conflict. Although the focus is on civil war, a recurring theme will be the application of similar theories to all forms of civil conflict. This is obviously a great deal of information to process in the course of one semester. However, this class is designed to expose you to each integral part of civil conflict in a brief, yet succinct manner. It is up to you to pinpoint the areas which you find most interesting and most important and to use your research paper as an opportunity to delve deeper into that area.

In addition to gaining a more in-depth knowledge of civil conflict, a primary goal of this course is to encourage the development of your critical thinking, research, effective writing, and presentation skills. The level of this course is reflected in both the assignments and expectations. The readings are substantially more in-depth than an introductory course, and the expectations for each assignment are much higher than that which many of you may have previously experienced. However, you will leave this course with an understanding of a tremendously important topic and the ability to critically evaluate its numerous components on your own. It is my hope that this serves as a starting point for a life-long interest in a very relevant topic.

REQUIRED TEXTS


RECOMMENDED TEXTS


Both the required and recommended texts can be purchased at the University Bookstore, Coop Bookstore, and Chimes Textbook. Though we will rely on these books (some in their entirety and some in portions), we will also use journal articles and websites. The journal articles are listed with the appropriate section on the course outline and can be accessed through the LSU Libraries webpage; you will be personally responsible for locating these journal articles. Any websites which will be utilized are included in the course outline.
For those of you who are new to the study of International Relations, the recommended text provides a general overview of the contemporary and salient topics in the sub-field. Additionally, this text will aid all of you in writing your research paper; it serves as an excellent resource for the correct writing and citation style with a particular focus on international relations. As such, this text will help you in future political science classes as well. Since the paper is a major component of the course, I would strongly suggest acquiring this book.

CLASS POLICIES

**Student Needs:** If you have special needs (such as a learning disability or health condition) that I should be aware of speak with me after class or make an appointment to meet with me privately. If at any point in the semester you will require additional arrangements to be made through disability services, you must notify me at the beginning of the semester. Additionally, if you are a member of a student organization or athletic team which requires that you miss class please notify me immediately. More generally, if you ever find yourself confused about the class, the material we are covering, or the assignments (including locating journal articles) come see me during office hours so that we can remedy this. Remember that the longer you wait the harder it will be to catch up. I very much enjoy speaking with my students so feel free to stop by my office any time.

**Attendance:** While LSU does not allow an attendance requirement I do expect that you be here to participate in class discussions and contribute to the overall success of the course. Each of you has chosen to enroll in this course so I hope that means you are interested enough in the material to be here as much as possible. If the love of learning is not enough to get you here on a regular basis, however, keep in mind that tests will be based on both the readings and lectures/discussions. Additionally, participation is a significant portion of the grade, and you cannot participate if you are not present or are routinely tardy.

**Class Atmosphere:** This course can only be good if each of you is actively engaged. This means everyone should participate in discussions and put sufficient time and effort into his/her work and preparation for each class meeting. The best way to do this is to read the material carefully and thoroughly and bring any questions you may have to class. All questions and input are welcome. However, remember that “positive” participation is not just participating- it is being respectful of your classmates and the instructor at all times; this means no interruptions or negative comments. We will be discussing some very controversial topics in this course so these are very important things to remember. Sleeping, carrying on conversations while class is in session, surfing the web, texting or any activity that is not directly related to the course will not be tolerated. Turn off all cell-phones and electronic devices that will interrupt class. Violation of these policies will be considered negative participation for the day in which the violation occurs; additionally, if this becomes a recurring problem, I will ask you to leave the classroom.

GRADING POLICIES

**Grade Scale:** All assignments will receive a numeric grade. For the calculation of the final grade I will adhere to the LSU ten-point grading scale for final grades. That grading scale is as follows:

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<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
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**Grade Availability:** All grades will be posted on Moodle for your review within two weeks of turning in the assignment.

**Academic Misconduct:** Academic misconduct “includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, collusion, falsifying academic records, and any act designed to give an unfair academic advantage to the student (such as, but not limited to, submission of essentially the same written assignment for two courses without the prior permission of the instructors, providing false or misleading information in an effort to receive as postponement or an extension on a test, quiz, or other assignment), or an attempt to commit such an act.” For these and other specific acts which may constitute academic misconduct, please see the following Office of the Dean of Students website:

A very specific form of academic misconduct which can be a problem is plagiarism. Please pay specific attention to what constitutes plagiarism; it is particularly important to note that plagiarism does not have to be intentional. Plagiarism is defined by the LSU Code of Student Conduct as, “the unacknowledged inclusion of someone else’s words, structure, ideas, or data... failure to identify any source (including interviews, surveys, etc.) published in any medium (including on the Internet) or unpublished, from which words, structure, ideas, or data have been taken...” If you have any questions as to what constitutes plagiarism, refer to the LSU Libraries Tutorials Plagiarism Guide found at http://www.lib.lsu.edu/instruction/plagiarism2.html.

Any case of academic misconduct will be referred to the Dean of Students for a formal hearing.

ASSIGNMENTS

First and foremost, all assignments in this course have been given great thought and planning. I do not believe in “busy work,” and I will not give you an assignment that does not contribute to your understanding of civil conflict specifically or your development as a scholar more generally. As I have put great time and effort into developing these assignments, I expect you to do the same when completing them. All work should be in an acceptable final form when turned in to me. In order to enable you to do your best on each assignment, I will provide you with the assignment guidelines in print form in a sufficient time prior to each deadline. Should you wish to begin an assignment early, you may access the guidelines on Moodle, or alternatively, if the document has not yet been posted, you may request a copy from me via email.

All assignments should be turned in on time- this means at the beginning of the class period in which they are due. Failure to hand in an assignment will result in a 5 point decrease in the highest possible grade you may receive for each calendar day that it is late. Therefore, if the assignment is one day late (which includes any time after the beginning of the class period in which the assignment is due), the highest grade possible is a 95. As you can see, turning in your assignment only a few days late can dramatically affect your grade. Organization trips or athletic events are not accepted as excuses for turning in assignments late. It is your responsibility to get any assignment to me before the due date if you are going to miss that particular class meeting. You will be allowed an extension if and only if you provide the appropriate written documentation (i.e. medical excuse).

All take-home assignments should be typed in 12pt. Times New Roman font using standard margins and double-spacing. A stapled hard copy should be turned in to me at the end of the appropriate class meeting. Additionally, you should submit an email version by the beginning of the class period in which they are due. Every final work should show an attention to both the overall assignment guidelines as well as organization, grammar, correct citation, and of course critical thinking and analysis.

Missed Exams: Missed exams will be made up during the final exam period. While you will certainly have time to do this during the final exam period, studying for both the mid-term and the final simultaneously, as well as taking both on the same day, is not ideal. I would therefore encourage you to avoid this situation if at all possible.

Contested Grades: All grade contestations must be made within 14 days of receiving the grade. If you think a mistake has been made in calculating a grade, please see me with your graded assignment after class or during my office hours. If you disagree with the marking of an answer as wrong or incomplete, you must make your case to me in writing. Each contestation should include a copy of the assignment or exam with a written statement expressing your rationale for the disagreement. If you think a final grade is incorrect you must notify me within 30 days of the grade being posted; this should be in writing and via email. In this event, I may request a copy of all graded work from you to verify my own records so you should always keep anything that is handed back to you. If you have not retained copies of your graded work I will be unable to reevaluate your final grade.

PARTICIPATION 10%

Verbal participation is expected of every student. While I understand that not all students are comfortable with this type of participation, it is essential that you learn to express your thoughts and questions verbally. For those
of you who struggle with verbal participation, I suggest you bring written comments or questions with you to class; this will better enable you to verbally contribute to the discussion.

Also, keeping up with current events is an essential task for anyone studying international politics in general and civil conflict more specifically; we cannot study a world which we do not pay attention to. Therefore, I expect each and every one of you to come prepared to discuss relevant current events. You should pay attention to the most important stories of the week as well as anything pertaining to your particular conflict of choice (see below). Additionally, you will each sign up for a country which is currently engaged in, or shows potential for, civil war. It is your responsibility to brief the class on events in this country each class meeting.

Finally, you need to be present, on time, and actively engaged in the class to get full participation credit. Absences, tardiness, or disruptive behavior will drastically lower your participation grade as you cannot participate if you are not present and attentive.

READING QUIZZES 10%

In order to ensure that you are keeping up with, and comprehending, the reading material (believe me, you will thank me when it comes time for you to study for exams), there will be 7 reading quizzes throughout the semester. These quizzes will not be announced prior to the class period in which they occur. If you read for class, you should be more than prepared for the quizzes. Quizzes will consist of two or three general questions. Each quiz is worth 2% of your final grade. Your lowest 2 grades will be dropped; this includes zeros for any two quizzes you might miss. Quizzes cannot be made up.

NEWS PRESENTATION 5%

To encourage the discussion of relevant events concerning civil conflict, each of you will be responsible for presenting on an event which you consider civil conflict, or one which you foresee as leading to a civil conflict. This will help to foster relevant discussion concerning contemporary events, and it will also allow you the opportunity to move from the theories and more abstract concepts discussed in the texts and to actual application. I hope that each of you take this opportunity to study a serious matter but to also have a little fun. Think of this as a chance to engage in 'political forecasting'. Rather than telling us what other people think about a situation, go out on a limb and give us your opinion; just remember to ground it in class materials and discussions. You will sign up for your news presentation day during the first week of class.

RESEARCH PAPER AND PRESENTATION 35% Total

In order for you to gain a better understanding of civil war, you will each write a research paper on a particular conflict. You will choose this conflict from a list provided to you by the instructor; two to three individuals will research each civil war. Your research paper may address any topic that you find interesting. These questions might range from the causes of that particular civil war, to the consequences, or perhaps even how elites mobilized individuals to participate in the civil war, just to name a few. In addition to your individual papers, each group will also be responsible for briefing the class on your assigned conflict; you should address the basic information (where, when, how, etc.), as well as cited causes and consequences of the conflict. Each individual should also briefly discuss the question they will be addressing in their paper as well as hypothesized findings. Presentations should be 20 to 25 minutes. Following your presentation, I will give each individual written feedback on the presented paper topic (you can come discuss the topic with me before your presentation date if you would like). The due dates and percentage breakdown for each assignment is listed below. You will receive a separate handout concerning each component of the assignment.

Presentation 10%
Due Dates: See Course Outline

Research Paper 25%
Due Date: November 17
MID-TERM EXAM 15%
Date: October 15

The mid-term exam comprises two parts: identification/short-answer and essay question(s). Keep in mind that even the identifications should be answered with complete sentences and be logically organized. As with everything, real world examples from historical or current events should be used to demonstrate your ability to apply the concepts and theories. Please bring a large blue book and a pen or pencil for the exam. DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ON THE BLUEBOOK UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO IN CLASS.

FINAL EXAM 25%
Date: Thursday, December 10 (3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.)

The final exam will comprise identification/short-answer and essay question(s). The final exam is cumulative; it is important for you to build upon the information covered in the first half of the class. Additionally, information from the presentations may be included on the exam. While I will not ask you specific questions about a particular civil war from the presentations, I may ask you to draw upon recurring themes from all of the presentations. It will not be sufficient to discuss only the civil war that you focus on throughout the semester; you will have to draw parallels between your work and others’ work. Please bring a large blue book and a pen or pencil for the exam. DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME ON THE BLUEBOOK UNTIL INSTRUCTED TO DO SO IN CLASS.

COURSE OUTLINE

In order to address contemporary events as they occur, we will adhere to a loose schedule for readings if necessary; if we do not finish the scheduled readings for a specific date or if an important topic arises which deserves additional discussion, we will simply alter our schedule for the following class meeting. Below, you will find an outline of topics and the corresponding readings for those topics. I will announce any alterations to the readings for the following class period at the end of each class. If you miss class please ask a friend, neighbor, or email me for this information. Also, important dates are noted in italics.

Week 1
August 25: Introductions
- Syllabus Overview
- Locating Journal Articles
- The Forms of Civil Conflict

August 27: Experiencing Civil War
  - Chapters 1 - 10

August 31
Final date to drop courses without receiving a grade of “W”

Week 2
September 1: Experiencing Civil War
  - Chapters 11 - 21

September 2
Final date for adding courses for credit and making section changes

September 3: Civil War, What Is It?
ONSET OF CIVIL WAR

Week 3

September 8: Grievances

September 10: Poverty & Regime Type
- Last day to add courses for credit or make section changes

Week 4

September 15: Ethnicity
  - Chapters 1 & 2
  - Pgs. 66 - 70 *Available on Moodle
- Gourevitch (1998)
  - Pgs. 15 - 31 *Available on Moodle

September 17: Ethnicity Cont.
  - Chapters 3-5
  - Presentation: Civil War Group # 1

Week 5

September 22: Blood Diamond Film
  - Chapters 1 & 2

September 24: Blood Diamond Film
  - Presentation: Civil War Group # 2

Week 6

September 29: Opportunity/Greed
  - Chapters 5 & 6 (Chapters 1 & 2 will also be discussed)

October 1 Fall Break
DURATION AND TERMINATION OF CIVIL WAR

Week 7

October 6: Duration and Termination Overview
- Presentation: Civil War Group #3

October 8: Intervention
- Presentation: Civil War Group #4

MID TERM EXAM WEEK

Week 8

October 13: Mid Term Review
- Questions about the Mid Term Exam
- The Research and Writing Process
  - “Research Help” *available on Moodle

October 15: Mid Term Exam

INTERNAL DYNAMICS OF CIVIL WAR

Week 9

October 20: Rebel Organization
  - Chapters 1-2
  - Presentation: Civil War Group #5

October 22: Rebel Recruitment
  - Chapters 3-4
  - Presentation: Civil War Group #6

Week 10

October 27: Rebel Strategies
  - Chapter 5
  - Presentation: Civil War Group #7

October 29: Rebel Strategies Cont.
  - Chapter 7
  - Presentation: Civil War Group #8
Week 11

November 3: Poverty
  - Pages 79-91
  - *Presentation: Civil War Group # 9

November 5: Human Rights Violations
  - Pages 198-217

November 6 Final date for resigning from the University and/or dropping courses; Final date to request rescheduling a final exam when three exams are scheduled in 24 hours

CONSEQUENCES OF CIVIL WAR

Week 12

November 10: Refugees & Spillover
- Iqbal, Zaryab and Christopher Zorn. 2007. “Civil War and Refugees in Post-Cold War Africa.” Civil Wars

November 12: Mass Killing

Week 13

November 17: Hotel Rwanda Film
- Research Papers Due

November 19: Hotel Rwanda Film

POST-CONFLICT SOLUTIONS

Week 14

November 24: The Issue of Recurrence and Some Potential Solutions
  - Chapters 8 & 9

November 26 Happy Thanksgiving!
Week 15
December 1: Solutions Cont.
- Chapters 10 & 11

December 3: Civil War Settlement & Prevention
- Pages 121-172

FINAL EXAM
December 10: 3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.