GLA 5303: Politics of Civil Wars
Spring 2023

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Office: MS 4.03.32

Classroom: MH-2.01.08
Wednesday 6:00PM - 8:45PM
Office hours: Tuesday 2-3:30PM and by appointment

1   Course Description

Civil wars are one of the most lethal types of conflict around the world. In this seminar we will learn about the causes, dynamics, and aftermath of civil wars. What explains the outbreaks of civil wars? Why do some countries manage to solve their conflicts peacefully while others are permanently ravaged by violence and conflict? We will begin by discussing some of the most prominent drivers of civil wars, including the role of security dilemmas and commitment problems, the distinction between greed and grievances, and the role of social networks. The second part of the seminar will address participation and recruitment, the varieties and patterns of violence against civilians–including rape, terrorism, and genocide–counterinsurgency, rebel governance, and how ideologies shape combat and violence during war. Finally, the course aims to account for the resolution of civil wars, their duration, and their long-term legacies on political identities and behavior.

2   Three Course Objectives

1. **Learning about the different arguments** and theoretical debates about the causes and dynamics of civil wars.

2. **Critically assessing arguments.** The course will help you develop your capacity to critically assess arguments, methods, and conclusions. This implies thinking about some key questions: What are the authors' argument? What type of evidence does the text provide in support for the claims? How compelling is it? Is there a better and more convincing method to answer the research question? What are the implications of the argument to understanding other time periods, regions of the world, and other phenomena?

3. **Writing and thinking more critically** I hope that the course will give the tools to discuss, debate, and write about complex phenomena –such as human rights– in a more clear and effective way. Whether you're interested in a career as an academic or practitioner, writing remains as one of the most fundamental forms of communication.

3 Course Requirements

- Participation: **25%**
- Response papers: **20%**
- Research paper: **45%**
- Presentation of research paper: **10%**

Participation (25%)

This course will be taught in seminar format. Participation lies at the core of any seminar and is fundamental to its success. Unlike lectures, seminars can be best thought of as a *collective project*: their quality does not depend on the instructor or any one single participant, but on the process of deliberation, debate, and criticism by everyone in the room. This requires that you do the assigned readings for the week and come to class prepared to ask questions and actively engage in the *conversation*. This portion of the grade will be based on your participation in the weeks in which you did not write a response paper.

Response papers (20%)

Two short response papers critiquing the week's readings. These assignments should summarize the readings (**very briefly!**) and spend the remaining space developing a line of criticism, discussing theoretical and empirical flaws or shortcomings, implications of the argument/new avenues of research. Are the arguments persuasive? Is the use of evidence compelling? What could the author have done better? How do the readings connect to other and/or broader themes in the course (and possibly other fields)? Etc.

Response papers should be around 2 pages, double-spaced. Upload them on Blackboard by **noon** on the day of the class.

Important note: while all participants are expected to contribute to the seminar discussion, students writing response papers should be prepared to take a leading role.

Research paper (45%)

You will write a research paper (around 20 pages) about a civil war of your choosing and in consultation with me. The aim is not to explain the entirety of the conflict, but rather to focus on a particular question related to its onset, dynamics, or resolution. Some of the general questions that could be explored include: What caused the civil war? What explains the patterns of violence against civilians? How does the armed groups' organizational structure shape combat and resilience? What were the long-term consequences of conflict? What explains the conflict's duration and intractability?

The research paper should draw on the concepts and theories covered by the course and explain the variation of the conflict across space and/or over time. For instance, if you are exploring violence against civilians, you should incorporate the literature from weeks 8 or 9,

but you should also do independent research. How you approach the empirical part of the paper is up to you, as you can focus on a single case and explore variation within space or over time, compare various countries, and explore a single armed group or multiple armed groups.

The final paper is due by 5:00PM on **May 9th**.

Students will also submit a 1-2 page memo of their intended research paper topic. The aim of this short memo is to state the civil war that will be the focus of the paper, specify which specific dimension of the war you would like to explore, provide a short description and justification of the conflict, and provide a short list of references.

The memo will be due by 5:00pm on **February 13th**.

Presentation of research paper (10%)

This is a 10 minute presentation of the research paper, followed by questions from the other students. This will take place at one of the final two sessions.

4   Policies

Office hours and communication

You are welcome to schedule a meeting with me during office hours every **Tuesday** from **2 to 3:30pm**. An alternative way is to arrange a meeting via email. The time I have listed is *for you*. It is a time I have dedicated to being available to you to provide assistance and for you to ask questions about the assignments and papers, your performance in the semester, or talk about the department, graduate school, and career options.

Attendance

Attendance and participation are mandatory. They are also necessary conditions for success in this class. If you are ill or cannot attend class, please email me in advance to let me know you cannot make it. Unexcused absences will be reflected in the participation component of the grade.

Late Policy

Late papers will be accepted in cases of personal emergency. I strongly encourage you to discuss any problems with me before the papers are due. Late submissions will receive a 5/100 deduction per two hours of lateness.

Grading

This course will be grade according to the following scale:

A	≥ 93	B+	87-89	C+	77-79	D+	67-69
A-	90-92	B	83-86	C	73-76	D	63-66
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72	D-	60-62

F = 59 or below

Academic Honesty

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. In that sense, I expect your submitted work to be of your own and not a plagiarism of other people's ideas and works. Plagiarism, in any of its forms, will be reported in accordance with the procedure required by the Student Code of Conduct. It is important for you to familiarize with the proper methods of citation to avoid any possible misunderstanding. In all your work, you are free to choose your preferred citation style (e.g. APA, MLA, Chicago). The Student Code of Conduct is Section B of the Appendices in the Student Information Bulletin. Scholastic Dishonesty is listed in the Student Code of Conduct (Sec. B of the Appendices) under Sec. 203. For more information on the Student Code of Conduct, contact the Student Conduct and Community Standards team.

5 Class schedule

Part I: Introduction to civil wars

Week 1: Introduction to the course

- Syllabus, expectations
- Elbadawi, Emran and Sambanis, Nicholas. 2000. "Why are there so many civil wars in Africa? Understanding and preventing violent conflict", *Journal of African Economies*, 9(3): 244–269.

Week 2: What are civil wars?

- Nicholas Sambanis. 2004. "What Is Civil War? Conceptual and Empirical Complexities of an Operational Definition," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48(6): 814-858.
- Kalyvas, Stathis. 2001. "New and Old Civil Wars: A Valid Distinction?", *World Politics*, 54(1): 99–118.
- Kalyvas, Stathis. and Laia Balcells. 2010. "International system and technologies of rebellion: How the end of the Cold War shaped internal conflict", *American Political Science Review*, 104(3): 415-429.

Part II: Causes of civil wars

Week 3: Security dilemmas and commitment problems

- James Fearon. 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War" *International Organization*, 49(3): 379414.
- Goodwin, Jeff. 2001. *No Other Way Out: States and Revolutionary Movements, 1945-1991*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Chapters 1, 2.
- Posen, Barry. 1993. "The security dilemma and ethnic conflict". *Survival*, 35(1), pp.27-47.

Week 4: Greed and Opportunities

- Fearon, James and David Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review*, 97(1): 75-90.

- Collier, Paul and Anke Hoeffler. 2004. "Greed and Grievance in Civil War." *Oxford Economic Papers* 56 (4): 563-595.

- Dube, Oeindrila and Vargas, Juan, 2013. "Commodity price shocks and civil conflict: Evidence from Colombia." *The Review of Economic Studies*, 80(4), pp.1384-1421.

Week 5: Grievances

- Cederman, Lars-Erik, Kristian Skrede Gleditsch, and Nils B. Weidmann. 2011. "Horizontal Inequalities and Ethnonationalist Civil War: A Global Comparison." *American Political Science Review* 105 (3): 478-495.

- Roger Petersen, 2002. *Understanding Ethnic Violence: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth-Century Eastern Europe*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, Chapters 1, 2.

- Justino, Patricia. 2009. "Poverty and violent conflict: A micro-level perspective on the causes and duration of warfare." *Journal of Peace Research*, 46(3): 315-333.

Week 6: Organizing for rebellion

- Gould, Roger V. 1991. "Multiple Networks and Mobilization in the Paris Commune, 1871," *American Sociological Review*, 56(6): 716-729.

- Parkinson, Sarah Elizabeth. 2013. "Organizing Rebellion: Rethinking High-Risk Mobilization and Social Networks in War." *American Political Science Review* 107 (3):418-32.

- Wood, Elisabeth. 2003. *Insurgent Collective Action and Civil War in El Salvador*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, pp. 193-237.

Part III: Dynamics of civil wars

Week 7: Inside insurgencies

- Staniland, Paul. 2012. "Organizing Insurgency: Networks, Resources, and Rebellion in South Asia." *International Security* 37(1): 142-177.

- Bakke, Kristin M., Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, and Lee J. M. Seymour. 2012. "A Plague of Initials: Fragmentation, Cohesion, and Infighting in Civil Wars." *Perspectives on Politics* 10 (2):265-83.

- Weinstein, Jeremy M. 2005. "Resources and the Information Problem in Rebel Recruitment." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49(4): 598-624.

Week 8: Violence against civilians

- Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2006. The Logic of Violence in Civil War. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. Ch. 4, 5, 6.

- Humphreys, Macartan and Jeremy Weinstein 2006. "Handling and Manhandling Civilians in Civil War". *American Political Science Review* 100(3): 429-447.

- Hoover Green, Amelia. (2016). "The commander's dilemma: Creating and controlling armed group violence." *Journal of Peace Research*, 53(5), 619–632.

Week 9: Varieties of violence

- Wood, Elisabeth Jean. 2009. "Armed Groups and Sexual Violence: When is Wartime Rape Rare?" *Politics and Society* 37 (1): 131-161.

- Pape, Robert A. 2003. "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism." *American Political Science Review* 97(3): 343-361.

- Straus, Scott. *The Order of Genocide: Race, Power, and War in Rwanda*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006, Chapters 3 and 5.

Week 10: Counterinsurgency

- Jacob Shapiro, Eli Berman and Joseph H. Felter. 2011. "Can Hearts and Minds Be Bought? The Economics of Counterinsurgency in Iraq", *Journal of Political Economy* 119: 766-819.

- Fotini Christia, Andrew Beath and Ruben Enikolopov. 2013. "Empowering Women through Development Aid: Evidence from a Field Experiment in Afghanistan," *American Political Science Review*. 107 (3): 540-557.

- Jason Lyall, Yang-Yang Zhou and Kosuke Imai. 2020. "Can Economic Assistance Shape Combatant Support in Wartime? Experimental Evidence from Afghanistan." *American Political Science Review*, 114(1): 126-143.

Week 11: Rebel governance

- Arjona, Ana. 2014."Wartime Institutions: A Research Agenda". *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 58(8): 1360–1389.

- Mampilly, Zachariah. 2011. *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life during War*, Cornell University Press, Chapters 2 and 3.

- Lyall, Jason, Graeme Blair, and Kosuke Imai. 2013. "Explaining Support for Combatants during Wartime: A Survey Experiment in Afghanistan", *American Political Science Review*, 107(4): 679-705.

Week 12: Ideology

- Staniland, Paul (2015). "Militias, Ideology, and the State." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 59(5), 770–793.

- Gutíerrez-Sanín, Francisco and Wood, Elisabeth. 2014. "Ideology in civil war: Instrumental adoption and beyond." *Journal of Peace Research*, 51(2), 213–226.

- Thaler, Kai, 2012. "Ideology and violence in civil wars: Theory and evidence from Mozambique and Angola." *Civil Wars*, 14(4): 546-567.

Part IV: End and aftermath of civil war

Week 13: Legacies of war

- Balcells, Laia. 2012. "The consequences of victimization on political identities: Evidence from Spain." *Politics & Society*, 40(3): 311-347.

- Daly, Sarah Zukerman, 2019. "Voting for victors: why violent actors win postwar elections." *World Politics*, 71(4): 747-805.

- Student presentations

Week 14: War duration and termination

- Cunningham, David. 2006. "Veto players and civil war duration." *American Journal of Political Science*, 50(4): 875-892.

- Walter, Barbara. 1997. "The critical barrier to civil war settlement." *International Organization*, 51(3): 335-364.

- Student presentations

6 Common Syllabus Content

Counseling Services

Counseling Services provides confidential, professional services by staff psychologists, social workers, counselors, and psychiatrists to help meet the personal and developmental needs of currently enrolled students. Services include individual brief therapy for personal and educational concerns, couples/relationship counseling, and group therapy on topics such as college adaptation, relationship concerns, sexual orientation, depression, and anxiety. Counseling Services also screens for possible learning disabilities and has limited psychiatric services. Visit the Counseling and Mental Health Services website or call (210) 458-4140 (Main Campus) or (210) 458-2930 (Downtown Campus).

Student Code of Conduct and Scholastic Dishonesty

The Student Code of Conduct is Section B of the Appendices in the Student Information Bulletin. Scholastic Dishonesty is listed in the Student Code of Conduct (Sec. B of the Appendices) under Sec. 203 for more information. For more information on the Student Code of Conduct, contact the Student Conduct and Community Standards team.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The University of Texas at San Antonio in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act provides "reasonable accommodations" to students with disabilities. Only those students who have officially registered with Student Disability Services and requested accommodations for this course will be eligible for disability accommodations. Instructors at UTSA must be provided an official confidential notification of accommodation through Student Disability Services. Information regarding diagnostic criteria and policies for obtaining disability-based academic accommodations can be found on the Student Disability Services webpage or by calling their office at (210) 458-4157. Accommodations are not retroactive.

Tutoring Services

Tomás Rivera Center (TRC) may assist in building study skills and tutoring in course content. The TRC has several locations at the Main Campus and is also located at the Downtown Campus. For more information, visit the Tutoring Services website or call (210) 458-4694 on the Main Campus and (210) 458-2838 on the Downtown Campus.

Academic Success Coaching

The Tomas Rivera Center (TRC) Academic Success Coaching Program offers one-on-one study skills assistance through Academic Coaching. Students meet by appointment with a professional to develop more effective study strategies and techniques that can be used across courses. Group workshops are also offered each semester to help students defeat

common academic challenges. Find out more information on Academic Success Coaching website or call (210) 458-4694.

The Writing Center

The Judith G. Gardner Center for Writing Excellence helps the entire UTSA Community with various writing projects, questions, and challenges. Our experienced tutors provide assistance to current undergraduates, graduate students, and faculty/'staff members with each step of the writing process. Services are located at the Main Campus in the JPL building (2.01.12D) and at the Downtown Campus in the Frio Street Building (FS 4.432). They also offer online tutoring seven days a week by appointment so that you can chat live with a tutor. Visit The Writing Center's website to learn more and to schedule an appointment.

Sexual Harassment and Sexual Misconduct

UTSA is committed to providing an environment free from all forms of discrimination and sexual harassment, including sexual misconduct, sexual assault, domestic violence, dating violence, and stalking. If a student has experienced or experiences any of these incidents, know that UTSA has resources to help.

UTSA faculty have the responsibility to create a learning environment that is safe and free from hostility. State and federal law as well as UTSA's Handbook of Operating Procedures (HOP 9.24) require that instructors must report incidents of sexual harassment and sexual misconduct they learn about to the Title IX Coordinator or a Deputy Title IX Coordinator. This means that if a student tells their instructor about a situation (including classroom discussions, written work and/or one-on-one meetings) involving sexual harassment, sexual assault, dating violence, domestic violence, or stalking, the instructor must report it to the Equal Opportunity Services & Title IX Office. Although the faculty member must report the situation, the student will still have options about how their case will be handled, including whether or not the student wishes to pursue a formal complaint. The university's goal is to make sure students are aware of the range of options available to them and have access to the resources they need.

If a student wishes to speak to someone confidentially, they can contact any of the following on-campus resources, who are not required to report the incident to the EOS/Title IX Office: (1) Counseling Services at 210-458-4140; (2) Student Health Services at 210-458-4142; or (3) The PEACE Center at 210-458-4077.

Campus Safety & Emergency Preparedness

UTSA is committed to providing a safe campus environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors. As members of the community, we encourage you to take the following actions to be better prepared in case of an emergency:

- Alerts: Ensure you are signed up for UTSA Alerts through your ASAP.utsa.edu account.

- Emergency Procedures: Read through the information related to emergency preparedness on the UTSA Alerts page.

- Safety App: Download the LiveSafe App on your phone through the Apple store or Google Play; visit the LiveSafe App website for details.

- Important Numbers: UTSA Police - Emergency: (210) 458-4911; Non-Emergency: (210) 458-4242

Each one of us play a critical role in making sure ALL ROADRUNNERS are safe, know what to do, and how to stay informed during a campus crisis. Don't be scared, be prepared! #UTSAprepared

Inclusivity Statement

The University of Texas at San Antonio, a Hispanic Serving Institution situated in a global city that has been a crossroads of peoples and cultures for centuries, values diversity and inclusion in all aspects of university life. As an institution expressly founded to advance the education of Mexican Americans and other underserved communities, our university is committed to ending generations of discrimination and inequity. UTSA, a premier public research university, fosters academic excellence through a community of dialogue, discovery, and innovation that embraces the uniqueness of each voice.

The Roadrunner Creed

The University of Texas at San Antonio is a community of scholars, where integrity, excellence, inclusiveness, respect, collaboration, and innovation are fostered.

As a Roadrunner, I will:

- Uphold the highest standards of academic and personal integrity by practicing and expecting fair and ethical conduct;

- Respect and accept individual differences, recognizing the inherent dignity of each person;

- Contribute to campus life and the larger community through my active engagement; and

- Support the fearless exploration of dreams and ideas in the advancement of ingenuity, creativity, and discovery.

Guided by these principles now and forever, I am a Roadrunner!