

DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
NON-STATE VIOLENT ACTORS
PS 300
SPRING 2020
T Th 9:30-10:50
223 David Kinley Hall
Credit: 3 hours

INSTRUCTOR

Alyssa Prorok
Assistant Professor
320 David Kinley Hall
Phone: 217-300-6195
Email: aprorok@illinois.edu
Walk-in Office Hours: Tuesday/Thursday 11am-12pm

COURSE DESCRIPTION

What do ISIS, the Free Syrian Army, Sudan's Janjaweed, the Mexican Los Zetas Cartel, and Al-Qaeda have in common? All are non-state actors that employ violent methods to achieve their goals. This course will examine the emergence, organization, and life-cycles of violent non-state actors. The academic study of violent non-state actors (VNSAs) has blossomed in recent years, driven largely by the increasing prominence of these groups in world politics: some of the most pressing security concerns facing the world's governments today stem not from other states in the international system, but from non-state actors (e.g. Al-Qaeda for the United States, Hamas and Hezbollah for Israel, the drug cartels for Mexico and Colombia). This course explores the emerging bodies of literature that examine the development of these organizations, their political and military structures, their violent and non-violent activities, the alliances and rivalries they form with other non-state actors, and the processes by which they sometimes evolve into legitimate, non-violent political actors.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Your course grade will be based on class participation, two writing assignments, and two exams.

1. Class Participation (20%): Class participation grades will be based upon (1) regular attendance and (2) participation in class discussion. Attendance will be taken at the start of each class. If you are not in class or are tardy, you will not receive participation points for that day. Additionally, students are expected to make positive contributions to the class through comments/questions that build on, react to, challenge, or request specific clarifications on the readings. Both regular attendance and active participation in class discussion are required to receive an A for class participation.
2. Writing Assignment 1 - Reaction Paper (20%): During the first half of the semester, you will need to choose one assigned article from the reading list below and write a **2 page single-spaced**

reaction paper discussing that reading. You can choose any reading from the first half of the semester (anything assigned from WEEK 2 through WEEK 7), but your paper must be turned in BEFORE we discuss that reading in class. Therefore, whichever reading you choose, you should turn in your response paper by 9am on the day of class that your reading is assigned. More details on this assignment will be provided on Compass.

3. Exam 1 (20%): This exam is scheduled for **Thursday, March 12th** during class. Make-up exams will be given only to students with medical or personal emergencies. If an emergency arises, you will need to contact me **before** the exam or you will receive zero credit.

4. Writing Assignment 2 – Policy Briefing/Memo (20%): During the second half of the semester, you will write a **2-3 page single-spaced** policy briefing that applies research we have covered in class to a real-world NSVA (either past or present). You will apply what you have learned from **at least two course readings** to inform your reader about some aspect of your chosen NSVA. You can choose any articles covered in class EXCEPT the one you already covered in Writing Assignment 1. This assignment will be due at 11:59pm on **Monday, May 4th**.

5. Exam 2 (20%): This exam is scheduled for **Tuesday, May 5th** during class. It is non-comprehensive. Make-up exams will be given only to students with medical or personal emergencies. If an emergency arises, you will need to contact me **before** the exam or you will receive zero credit.

GRADES

The grading scale (in percentages) for the course is as follows:

99-100	A+
93-98	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
67-69	D+
63-66	D
60-62	D-
59 or below	F

Challenging a Grade: If for some reason you are dissatisfied with a grade you receive on an assignment and would like to challenge that grade, you must submit a written memo to the instructor explaining why you think the grade is unfair within 48 hours of receiving the grade. Grade challenges will not be accepted after 48 hours, nor will they be accepted in person (i.e., they must be challenged in writing with a written justification for why you believe the grade is

too low). The instructor will read the memo, re-read the assignment, and then assign a new grade. The instructor reserves the right to assign a lower grade.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

No required text books for this course. Electronic links to journal articles and all other course readings will be provided on the course website at compass2g.illinois.edu.

CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY POLICY

You are welcome to use your laptops to take notes during class, although research shows that students tend to retain and comprehend information better when they take hand-written notes (<http://www.psychologicalscience.org/index.php/news/releases/take-notes-by-hand-for-better-long-term-comprehension.html>). Cell phones should be turned off during class time.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS

Run, Hide, Fight policy info: <http://police.illinois.edu/emergency-preparedness/run-hide-fight/>

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

To obtain disability-related academic adjustments and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the course instructor and the Disability Resources and Educational Services (DRES) as soon as possible. To contact DRES, you may visit 1207 S. Oak St., Champaign, call 333-4603, e-mail disability@illinois.edu or go to the [DRES website](#). If you are concerned you have a disability-related condition that is impacting your academic progress, there are academic screening appointments available on campus that can help diagnosis a previously undiagnosed disability by visiting the DRES website and selecting "Sign-Up for an Academic Screening" at the bottom of the page.

If you are interested in obtaining information to improve writing, study skills, time management or organization, the following campus resources are available to all students:

Writer's Workshop
Undergrad Library
217-333-8796

<http://www.cws.illinois.edu/workshop>

<http://disability.illinois.edu/strategies>

<http://www.counselingcenter.illinois.edu/self-help-brochures/>

Also, most college offices and academic deans provide academic skills support and assistance for academically related and personal problems. Links to the appropriate college contact can be found by going to this website and selecting your college or school: <http://illinois.edu/colleges/colleges.html>

If you are experiencing symptoms of anxiety or depression or are feeling overwhelmed, stressed, or in crisis, you can seek help through the following campus resources:

Counseling Center

206 Fred H. Turner Student Services Building
7:50 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday
Phone: 333-3704
McKinley Mental Health
313 McKinley Health Center
8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday
Phone: 333-2705

McKinley Health Education offers individual consultations for students interested in learning relaxation and other stress/time management skills, call 333-2714.

** above content on Accommodations taken from <http://disability.illinois.edu/academic-support/instructor-information/examples-disability-statements-syllabus>

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT POLICY AND REPORTING

The University of Illinois is committed to combating sexual misconduct. As such, you should know that faculty and staff members are required to report any instances of sexual misconduct—which also includes dating violence, domestic violence, and stalking—to the University’s Title IX and Disability Office. What this means is that as your instructor, I am required to report any incidents of sexual misconduct that are directly reported to me, or of which I am somehow made aware. When a report is received, an individual with the Title IX and Disability Office reaches out to provide information about rights and options, including accommodations, support services, the campus disciplinary process, and law enforcement options.

There is an exception to this reporting requirement about which you should be aware. A list of the designated University employees who, as counselors, confidential advisors, and medical professionals, do not have this reporting responsibility and can maintain confidentiality, can be found here: wecare.illinois.edu/resources/students/#confidential.

Other information about resources and reporting is available here: wecare.illinois.edu.

** Text from: <http://wecare.illinois.edu/faq/employees/>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

http://studentcode.illinois.edu/article1_part4_1-401.html

COURSE SCHEDULE

Topic/Date

Week 1 (Jan 21 – 23)

Introduction to Non-State Violent Actors

Readings

No readings for Tuesday. For Thursday, please read:

- Jo, Hyeran et al. “Who is a Rebel? Typology and Rebel Groups in the Contemporary Middle East”. **Pg. 76 - first paragraph on pg. 79 ONLY.**
- Phillips, Brian. 2014. “What is a Terrorist Group? Conceptual Issues and Empirical Implications.” *Terrorism and Political Violence*.
- Carey, Sabine et al. 2012. “States, the Security Sector, and the Monopoly of Violence: A new database on pro-government militias” *Journal of Peace Research*. **(focus on pg. 249-254)**

Week 2 (Jan 28 – 30)

Participation and Recruitment

- Gurr, Ted Robert. 1970. *Why Men Rebel*, Selected chapter
- Lichbach, MI. 1995. *The Rebel’s Dilemma*. Selected Sections

Week 3 (Feb 4 – 6)

Participation and Recruitment

- Kalyvas, Stathis and Matthew Kocher. 2007. “How Free is Free Riding in Civil Wars? Violence, Insurgency, and the collective Action Problem.” *World Politics*.
- Tucker, Patrick. 2015. “Why Join ISIS? How Fighters Respond when you Ask Them.” *The Atlantic*. Available at: <http://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2015/12/why-people-join-isis/419685/>
- Humphreys, Macartan, and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2008. “Who Fights? The Determinants of Participation in Civil

War.” *American Journal of Political Science* 52(2).

Week 4 (Feb 11 - 13)

Participation and Recruitment

- Weinstein, Jeremy. 2005. “Resources and the Information Problem in Rebel Recruitment.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*
- Krueger, Alan and Jitka Maleckova. “Does Poverty cause Terrorism? The economics and the education of suicide bombers.” *The New Republic*, June 2002.

- Oppenheim, Ben et al. 2015. “True Believers, Deserters, and Traitors: Who leaves insurgent groups and why.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*.

Week 5 (Feb 18 - 20)

Participation and Recruitment

- Ness, Cindy. 2007. *Female Terrorism and Militancy: Agency, Utility and Organization*. **SELECTED CHAPTER

- Thomas, Jakana and Kanisha Bond. 2015. “Women’s Participation in Violent Political Organizations.” *American Political Science Review*.

Week 6 (Feb 25 – 27)

Organization and Governance of NSVAs

- Weinstein, Jeremy. 2007. *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*. Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 5: Governance)

- Mampilly, Zachariah Cherian. 2011. *Rebel Rulers: Insurgent Governance and Civilian Life During War*. Cornell University Press. (SELECTED CHAPTERS).

Week 7 (March 3 – 5)

Organization and Governance of NSVAs

- Johnston, Patrick. 2008. "The Geography of Insurgent Organization and Its Consequences for Civil Wars: Evidence from Liberia and Sierra Leone." *Security Studies* 17(1): 107–37.

- Staniland, Paul. 2014. *Networks of Rebellion: Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse*. SELECTED CHAPTERS.

Week 8 (March 10 – 12)

IN CLASS EXAM 1: Thursday, March 12th

No new readings – catch up and review for Exam 1

Week 9 (March 17 – 19)

NO CLASSES: SPRING BREAK

Week 10 (March 24 – 26)

NO CLASSES: ISA 2020

Week 11 (March 31 – April 2)

Organization and Tactics of NSVAs

- Phillips, Brian. 2015. "How Does Leadership Decapitation Affect Violence? The Case of Drug Trafficking Organizations in Mexico" *Journal of Politics*.

- Jordan, Jenna. 2009. "When Heads Roll: Assessing the Effectiveness of Leadership Decapitation." *Security Studies*.

Week 12 (April 7 – 9)

Tactics/Treatment of Civilians by NSVAs

- Heger, Lindsay. 2014. "Votes and Violence: Pursuing terrorism while navigating politics." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52(1).

- Kalyvas, S. N. 2006. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War*. Cambridge University Press. (SELECTED CHAPTERS)

Week 13 (April 14 – 16)

Tactics of NSVAs;

- Weinstein, Jeremy. 2007. *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*. Cambridge University Press. (Chapter 6: Violence).

NSVAs' Relationships with other Actors

- Fjelde, Hanne, and Desirée Nilsson. 2012. "Rebels Against Rebels Explaining Violence Between Rebel Groups." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 56(4): 604–28.

Week 14 (April 21 – 23)

NSVAs' Relationships with Other Actors

- Akcinaroglu, Seden. 2012. "Rebel Interdependencies and Civil War Outcomes." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*

- Carter, David B. 2012. "A Blessing or a Curse? State Support for Terrorist Groups." *International Organization* 66(1):129–51.

- Salehyan, Idean et al. 2011. "Explaining External Support for Insurgent Groups." *International Organization* 65(4): 709-744.

Week 15 (April 28 – 30)

Fragmentation of NSVAs

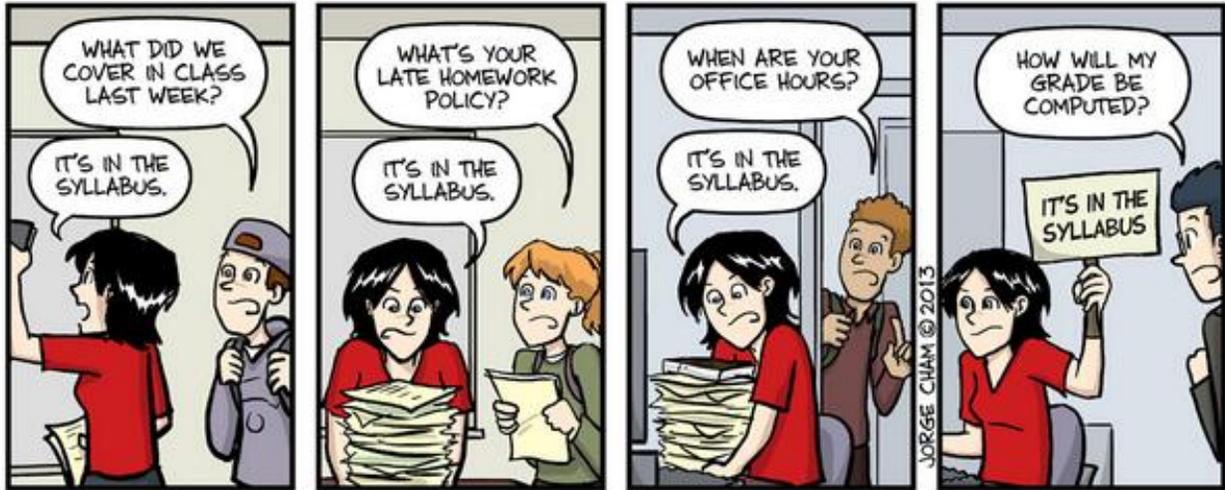
- Bakke, Kristin M., Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham, and Lee JM Seymour. 2012. "A Plague of Initials: Fragmentation, Cohesion, and Infighting in Civil Wars." *Perspectives on Politics* 10(2): 265–83.

- Woldemariam, Michael H. 2014. "Battlefield Outcomes and Rebel Cohesion: Lessons from the Eritrean Independence War." *Terrorism and Political Violence*.

Week 16 (May 5)

IN CLASS EXAM 2

- No Readings



IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

This message brought to you by every instructor that ever lived.

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