Overview
This is one of two graduate courses on international conflict and security. It is not a prerequisite for the other course (POLS 512), nor does it assume that you have taken that course. It does assume that you have taken World Politics (POLS 510) or an equivalent course at another institution. While some in the field might make a distinction between the study of security studies (usually a normative focus with strong policy implications) and conflict processes or peace science (usually a positive focus with reliance on game theory and quantitative analysis), the division of topics between the two courses (512 and 585) is based more on instructor strengths than any meaningful divides. We will spend much of this course studying emerging research related to intrastate conflict, but will also touch on a number of other relevant topics to the subfield of international conflict and security.

There are three requirements for this course:

Class Participation (20%)
The course will rely heavily on class discussion, so each student is expected to come to class with all the required reading completed. The recommended readings are exactly that, but note that serious students of international politics who do not do any of the recommended reading or related outside reading will be doing themselves a tremendous disservice in preparation for the final paper, comprehensive exams and research beyond.

Each week, a student will present on the readings from the week. The presenter should speak for 10-15 minutes on the overall context and contribution of the readings. There should be two components of the discussion. First, the presenters should relate the week’s readings to each other. How do they agree? How do they differ? How do they build on each other? Do some of the readings touch on completely different topics? Second, the presenters should discuss how these readings fit into the broader literature. Using the literature reviews in the assigned readings, what are the major pieces of the literature on which these pieces build? What are the major pieces of the literature that these readings call into question? Also, doing a search of the major political science journals and reading the abstracts, what are some of the important pieces of the literature that were either contemporaries of the assigned reading or came after? The purpose of this exercise is to gain experience in doing literature reviews and to introduce the class to major pieces of the literature that we do not have time to discuss in depth.

Short Response Papers (30% total)
During the weeks in which the students do not present, they are required to write a 2-3 page (double spaced) critique of one of the readings for that week. The students should first identify the question being addressed and the core argument. They will then briefly give an overall assessment of the reading, in terms of its general strengths and weaknesses. The bulk of the paper will be devoted to providing recommendations to
make the research stronger. What are the key shortcomings, and how might one address them? The exercise is meant to strengthen the student’s ability to not just poke holes in an argument but to be able to critically think about addressing the problems that arise. The students should try to avoid “low hanging fruit” such as mere recommendations for control variables and instead focus on bigger issues related to theoretical development and research design.

*Research Paper (50%)*
At the end of the semester, students will turn in a research paper between 30 and 40 pages in length (double spaced, including the bibliography). The paper must address a theoretical question, make a contribution to the literature, provide a coherent argument, evaluate in depth an historical case and provide the sketch for a research design. On **February 8**, students will turn in an abstract of their paper topic and research question, including an overview of the research contribution. On **March 21**, students will turn in an annotated bibliography that includes the full citation and 1-2 sentences of summary of the works relevant to the research project. This will be approximately six pages in length. The final paper is due on **May 9**, by 5:00pm.

**Schedule**
Most of the required readings are available on DiscoverE, EUCLID, Google Scholar or JSTOR. The book chapters and shorter book excerpts can be found on Reserves Direct through EUCLID.

**1/18: Introduction to Intrastate Conflict**


Recommended:


**1/25: Civil War Onset**


2/1: Ethnic Conflict


Recommended:


2/8: Civil War Termination
Abstract of paper topic due


Recommended:


2/15: Transnational Dynamics of Intrastate Conflict


Recommended:


**2/22: Resources and Intrastate Conflict**


2/29: The Use of Violence


Recommended:


3/7: Terrorism


Recommended:


3/21: Peacekeeping

Annotated bibliography for paper due


Recommended:


**3/28: Mediation**


Recommended:


4/4: Class is cancelled, while Professor Beardsley attends the ISA conference.

4/11: Proliferation


Recommended:


4/18: The Capitalist Peace


Recommended:


4/25: Peace Agreements & Legal Dispute Resolution


Recommended:


**5/9: Final Papers due by 5:00.**