Learning Objectives

The purpose of this course is the systematic theoretical and empirical study of civil conflict. The readings are focused on the most recent empirical work in this area, though a handful of the more traditional and case-oriented research will arise throughout the course. A major component of this course is the production of a research paper, which will apply and extend the topics into an original piece of research.

Required Texts

All text needed for this course can be found online at:
http://www.uky.edu/~clthyn2/CWreadings.zip

Class Format

The students will play a key role in leading the class. Each reading/chapter will be assigned to a student in the week prior to class. The student will be expected to email me a written summary of his/her assigned chapter/article by the time class begins (1 page max). I will make copies of these summaries available to all of the students to help you prepare for the comprehensive exam. The student will also be responsible for leading the discussion for the article, so s/he should come to class prepared to pose at least 3 critical questions for class discussion.

In addition to weekly summaries, each week one student will present to the class about a dataset that s/he finds particularly interesting. The hope is that the data chosen for presentation will be the same as the data that the student will use with his/her research paper. Students can present the data in any format they wish (i.e., you do not need to write anything for this). Good places to start finding datasets include:

- PRIO: http://www.prio.no/Data/Armed-Conflict/
- UCDP: http://www.pcr.uu.se/research/ucdp/datasets/
- COW: http://www.correlatesofwar.org/
Grading

Research Paper (75%)
Choose a research question on civil conflict for which a significant difference of opinion exists, and research this based on either the historical evidence of two or more cases, or else on the basis of existing statistical data sets. The final product should take the form of a conference paper or journal article. The paper should be about 25-30 pages in length, contain a review of the relevant literature, and be written in the professional style of the American Political Science Association. You may use whatever methodology you feel is most appropriate to the issue and which you feel qualified to implement. I will not be impressed by incompetent quantitative analysis, nor will I penalize competent historical or case-study approaches.

The paper will be due in several stages:

Friday, September 20th (by 3:00 p.m. in my inbox/email):
Research design, 5-7 pages identifying your research question, a brief description of the literature relevant to your question, the method of analysis you intend to employ, and any data or historical sources you will use to evaluate your hypotheses.

Friday, October 25th (by 3:00 p.m. in my inbox/email):
First draft, at least 15 pages in length with initial drafts of all of the front-end elements in the paper (i.e., the research question, literature review, and theory should be well-developed). This should include a good start on your empirical tests.

Friday, December 6th (by 3:00pm in my inbox/email):
Second draft, with all required elements of the paper due. I will distribute drafts to all students once they are collected. The reading assignment for 12/12/13 will be to read all student papers and provide them with at least one page of suggestions for revisions.

Thursday, December 12th:
Presentation of paper in class. Each presentation should last 10-12 minutes, leaving about 5 minutes for questions.

Monday, December 16 (by 5:00pm in my inbox/email):
You should address questions and comments raised during in-class presentations when preparing your final paper. The paper is due in multiple stages so that I and other students in the class will have an opportunity to give you some feedback along the way. The paper will be given a final grade when I read the final draft, but I will take into consideration the quality of the research design, first draft, second draft, and in-class presentation when determining the final paper grade.

Final paper grades will be calculated based on the following:
A= Paper is ready for presentation at a good conference (e.g., ISA or APSA). Paper could be submitted to a journal with less than 20 hours of additional work.
B= Paper might be ready for a small/weak conference, but would be somewhat embarrassing to present at a good conference. This could be published with considerable work.
C= Paper is not ready to present anywhere. The likelihood of this ever being published is low.
E= Not graduate-level work.

Class Participation and Attendance (25%)
The quality of a graduate level seminar depends to a large extent on the efforts of the students. I expect that you will come to class each week prepared to discuss the required readings. While you are reading the assigned course material, I encourage you to consider the following questions:
   a) What is the research question?
   b) What is the researcher's theoretical argument?
   c) What methods/approach does the author use to try to answer the question?
   d) Is this approach suitable for the question or theory?
   e) If the author provides empirical tests, are the operational measures of the concepts appropriate?
   f) What are the most significant research findings & how do these relate to other course readings?
   g) To what degree do you think the researcher has answered his/her research questions?

All course work must be completed at the end of the term. Students will not get an incomplete in this class for any reason. Students should not even ask about taking an incomplete or consider it as an option.

Disabilities/ Medical Conditions
If you have a documented disability that requires academic accommodations, please see me as soon as possible. In order to receive accommodations in this course, you must provide me with a Letter of Accommodation from the Disability Resource Center (Room 2, Alumni Gym, 257-2754, email address jkarnes@email.uky.edu) for coordination of campus disability services available to students with disabilities.

Missed exams and assignments
Make-up exams/assignments (for missed/late examinations/assignments) will only be given for documented excused absences as defined by the University (Senate Rule V.2.4.2) and are scheduled as needed. All missed work will result in a score of zero unless an acceptable written excuse is presented within 48 hours of the due date.

Plagiarism and Cheating
Students are advised to retain all notes and drafts for all work until after they receive their final grade. Students should also be aware that the instructor takes matters of plagiarism and cheating very seriously and is prone to imposing the most severe penalty allowed by university rules, which includes, but is not limited to, issuing an automatic grade of 0.0 for the entire course. All assignments, projects, and exercises completed by students for this class should be the product of the personal efforts of the individual(s) whose name(s) appear on the corresponding assignment. Misrepresenting others’ work as one’s own in the form of cheating or plagiarism is unethical and will lead to those penalties outlined in the University Senate Rules (6.3.1 & 6.3.2). The Ombud site also has information on plagiarism.
SECTION 1. INTRODUCTION

Week 1  
What is a civil war? Why should we care about civil wars? (08/29/13)


Week 2  
Other Types of Anti-government Action (09/05/13)

SECTION 2. WHAT CAUSES CIVIL WAR?

Week 3
Rebel Motivations I: Psychological and Grievance Explanations (09/12/13)


Week 4
Rebel Motivations II: Ethnic and Economic Factors (09/19/13)

Week 5
Opportunity Structures (09/26/13)


Week 6
International Dimensions (10/03/13)

SECTION 3. THE DURATION AND OUTCOME OF CIVIL WARS

Week 7
Civil War Bargaining (10/10/13)


Week 8
Termination and Recurrence (10/17/13)

Week 9
Breaking the Two-player Set-up (10/24/13)


Week 10
International Factors (10/31/13)


SECTION 4. BUILDING AND SUSTAINING PEACE

Week 11
Power-sharing and Partition (11/07/13)


Week 12
Peacekeeping (11/14/13)


SECTION 5. KILLING AND COUPS

Week 13
Killing during Civil Wars (11/21/13)


Week 14
Coups d'état (12/05/13)


Week 15
Research Presentations (12/12/13)