

# **POLI 405 Capstone Seminar: Civil War and Rebellion**

**Spring 2018**

Maybank Hall 316  
TR 10:50-12:05

Professor Christopher Day  
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## **Course Syllabus**

Civil wars are the most common form of contemporary warfare. Correspondingly, the study of civil war and rebellion has experienced a recent surge within the social sciences. Civil war is armed combat within the boundaries of a state between parties subject to a common authority. Rebellion is when armed actors revolt against state authority. We care about civil war and rebellion because of the death and destruction they cause directly through violence, and indirectly through population displacement, epidemics, famine, state breakdown, economic collapse, and regional instability. Using case studies from around the world, this Capstone Seminar will focus on different theoretical, empirical, and methodological approaches to studying civil wars and their main actors. Students will conduct independent research on specific topics such as the onset, duration, and termination of civil wars, the organization and behavior of rebels and militias, regime counterinsurgency strategies, the success or failure of international peace operations, and what happens to countries after war.

The Capstone Seminar is designed to be a culminating experience for Political Science majors. That is, the experience is an opportunity to use the toolkit of skills students have spent several years developing in other courses within the major – skills in reading, writing, critical thinking and analysis, effective communication, and above all in independent research. Class assignments will allow students to engage with the prevailing academic theories that explain a range of different questions that sit within the broader scholarship on civil war and rebellion. Students will also spend the semester generating and answering their own original research question.

The seminar proceeds in six parts. Part I will bookend the course with an intensive development of a conceptual and analytical framework that students will apply to theories and cases over the course of the semester. Parts II-V will deeply examine different research agendas within the study of civil war and rebellion. Part II will look at Civil War and Part III Rebellion. Part IV will examine Violence while Part V will study the concept of “Wartime Orders.” In Part VI, the course will culminate in a set of workshops designed to help students with their research project.

## Course Objectives and Methodology

Political Science student learning outcomes:

- Students will demonstrate mastery of the independent research process
- Students will display skills in critical analysis and effective communication

The course is taught through readings, class discussions, lectures, and film:

- *Readings.* In this Capstone, students will read several entire books along with several companion scholarly articles. These books represent some of the most recent scholarship on civil war and rebellion. Students are expected to have completed the readings *before* these class sessions. Keeping up with the readings will be vital to your overall course performance, and it will be difficult to catch up if you fall behind. The knowledge acquired in the readings will be cumulative. That is, each week you will be introduced to new ideas that will become part of the "tool-box" you will use to analyze readings and lectures in subsequent weeks.
- *Discussions.* Seminars are based on class discussions about readings and student research and students are expected to participate heavily.
- *Lectures.* Although lectures will not be a fundamental part of this Seminar, each major topic will have a corresponding lecture that will essentially serve as the "textbook" for the class, undergirding the readings and class discussions with key terms, concepts, cases, and historical context.
- *Films.* Students will view documentaries in class. Periodically students will be asked to view films outside of class and be prepared to discuss them.

## Course Requirements

Evaluation will be based on the following exercises:

*"Why it Matters" Paper (5%)* Right off the bat at the beginning of Part I, students will write a 1,000-word essay on why the study of civil war and rebellion matters from scholarly, normative, and policy perspectives. This paper is **due January 16**

*Response Papers (30%)* During Parts II-V of this Seminar, students will write 1,000-word response papers that critically analyze and unify the central arguments of the book and companion pieces for that particular part of the course. I will provide a separate guideline for this exercise. Students will choose **any three of the four weeks** when Response Papers are due, which are on the following dates:

- **2/15:** Response Paper #1
- **3/1:** Response Paper #2
- **3/15:** Response Paper #3
- **4/ 5** Response Paper #4

*Independent Research Project (50%)* The primary exercise of this Capstone is developing and writing a research paper. This paper will pose a research question and explain why it matters, will situate this question with a body of prevailing literature, will propose an original hypothesis, will generate data that either confirms or refutes this hypothesis, and will discuss its implications. The breakdown of the research paper's components is as follows:

- **2/6:** Research Design
- **3/6:** Revised Research Design (10%)
- **4/10:** First Draft (10%)
- **4/10-4/19:** Workshop Participation (10%). *Note that students who participate in the Moore Conference will not be required to present for the Capstone Workshop*
- **5/1:** FINAL DRAFT (20%)

*Class Participation (15%)* In this Capstone Seminar class participation plays an outsized role in student evaluation. Participation in the intellectual life of the campus is also part of this grade and students will receive credit for attending the following events:

- **3/29:** Political Science Spring Convocation
- **4/13:** Moore Conference

## Course Policies

### *Grading Scale*

A	93-100	A-	90-92	B+	88-89	B	83-87	B-	80-82
C+	78-79	C	73-77	C-	70-72	D+	68-69	D	63-67
D-	60-62	F:	Below 60						

*Attendance Policy.* Attendance is **REQUIRED**. Tardiness is not cool.

*Submission of Work.* Students are expected to submit their work on the day it is due in hard copy form. In the event that students cannot submit work on time because of Life Circumstances, they must inform the professor **at least 24 hours beforehand**, and provide a concrete date for submission. After this date, work will not be accepted. Also, please note that **“My computer crashed” = “My dog ate my homework”**.

*Honor Code.* All students are expected be familiar with the College of Charleston Honor Code, and to abide by it. Violations will not be tolerated and will be dealt with appropriately. More is found here: <http://studentaffairs.cofc.edu/honor-system/studenthandbook/index.php>

*Learning Disabled.* If you have a documented learning disability, please let me know as soon as possible so special arrangements can be made for certain class requirements.

*Other Special Circumstances.* I normally will do business with anyone who lets me know in advance of any special circumstances. But please note that the expression “it is better to ask for forgiveness than permission” was not invented by a College Professor.

*Center for Student Learning.* The Center for Student Learning's (CSL) academic support services give assistance in study strategies and course content. They offer tutoring, Supplemental Instruction, study skills appointments, and workshops. Students of all abilities have become more successful using these programs throughout their academic career and they are available to you at no additional cost. For more information regarding these services please visit the CSL website at <http://csl.cofc.edu> or call (843) 953-5635.

### **Required Readings**

Stathis Kalyvas *The Logic of Violence in Civil War* (Cambridge University Press 2006)

Ana Arjona *Rebelocracy: Social Order in the Colombian Civil War* (Cambridge University Press 2017)

Laia Balcells *Rivalry and Revenge: The Politics of Violence during Civil War* (Cambridge University Press 2017)

Peter Krauss *Rebel Power: Why Nationalist Movements Compete, Fight, and Win* (Cornell University Press 2017)

Philip Roessler *Ethnic Politics and State Power in Africa: The Logic of the Coup-Civil War Trap* (Cambridge University Press 2016)

All other readings will be available on OAKS.

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<https://www.facebook.com/CofCPoliticalScienceClub?ref=hl>

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<https://www.facebook.com/CollegeOfCharlestonAfricanStudiesProgram>

## **Course Outline and Readings**

## **Part I: Setting the Scene**

### **1. January 9-11: Introduction**

Reading TBA.

### **2. January 16-1:8 Concepts**

Kalyvas Introduction, Chapters 1-3: 1-86

**“Why It Matters” paper due Tuesday 1/16**

### **3. January 23-25: Actors and Agendas**

Kalyvas Chapters 4-5: 87-145

### **4. January 30-February 1: Data and Methods**

Kalyvas, Chapters 8-9: 210-329

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## **Part II: Civil War**

### **5. February 6-8: Identity and Grievances**

Roessler: 1-204

Roger Peterson, *Understanding Ethnic Conflict: Fear, Hatred, and Resentment in Twentieth Century Eastern Europe* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 2006): 1-61

**\*\*\*Research Design First Draft due Thursday 2/6\*\*\***

### **6. February 13-15: Resources and Regional Networks**

Roessler: 205-320

Henning Tamm, “The Origins of Transnational Alliances: Rulers, Rebels, and Political Survival in the Congo Wars,” *International Security* 41, no. 1 (Summer 2016): 147-181

**Response Paper #1 due Thursday 2/15**

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## **Part III: Rebellion**

## **7. February 20: Rebel Organization**

\*\*\*No class Thursday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> for Model African Union\*\*\*

Krauss: 1-99

Jocelyn Viterna, "Pulled, Pushed, and Persuaded: Explaining Women's Mobilization into the Salvadoran Guerrilla Army," *American Journal of Sociology* 112, no.1 (July 2006): 1-45

## **8. February 27-March 1: Rebel Behavior**

Krause: 100-200

Kristin M. Bakke, Kathleen Gallagher Cunningham and Lee J. M. Seymour, "A Plague of Initials: Fragmentation, Cohesion, and Infighting in Civil Wars," *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 2 (June 2012): 265-283

**Response Paper #2 due Thursday 3/1**

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## **Part IV: Dynamics of Violence**

### **9. March 6-8: Violence Against Civilians**

Balcells: 3-86

Kalyvas Chapters 6-7: 146-209

\*\*\*Revised Research Design Due 3/6\*\*\*

### **10. March 13-15: Mass Killing and Genocide**

Balcells: 87-193

Scott Straus, "Retreating from the Brink: Theorizing Mass Violence and the Dynamics of Restraint," *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 2 (June 2012): 343-362

**Response Paper #3 due Thursday 3/15**

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**11. \*\*\*No Class March 19 – March 23 for Spring Break\*\*\***

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**Part V: Political Order in Civil War**

**12. March 27-29: Wartime Order and Rebel Governance**

Arjona: 1-158

Paul Staniland, “States, Insurgents, and Wartime Orders,” *Perspectives on Politics* 10, no. 2 (June 2012): 243-264

**13. April 3-5: Peacetime and Post-Conflict Order**

Arjona: 159-312

Christopher Day and Michael Woldemariam, “From Rebellling to Ruling: Insurgent Victory and State Capture in Africa.” Working Paper.

**\*\*Response Paper #4 due Thursday 4/5**

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**Part VI: Capstone Research Paper Workshops**

**14. April 10-12: Workshops**

- Workshop Panel I 4/10
- Workshop Panel II 4/12

**\*\*\*First Draft of Research Paper due Tuesday 4/10\*\*\***

**15. April 17-19: Workshops**

- Workshop Panel III 4/17
  - Workshop Panel IV 4/19
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**Final Research Paper due: 5/1 in 114 Wentworth Room 105 @ 11:00am**

**NOTE: Additional readings may be assigned and the course outline may be adjusted to serve the needs of the class.**