GENERAL COURSE INFORMATION

Title: Civil Wars
Number of Credits: 3
Type of Course: Elective Course
Semester: Spring
Language: English
Instructor: Laia Balcells
Email: laia.balcells@duke.edu
Office Hours: Upon request

COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this class we will undertake an in-depth and overarching examination of domestic armed conflict. The goal is to understand the causes of civil wars, their dynamics and characteristics, and their consequences. We will start by defining civil war and discussing why should we study it as a distinct phenomenon from other forms of political violence and/or international war. We will explore micro and macro level approaches to the causes of civil wars, considering classical works in economics and political science, as well as some recent contributions. We will consider the relationship between the international system and civil wars, bridging the literature on internal conflict with that of international relations. We will look into the different types of civil wars, paying special attention to forms of warfare and to the relationship between ethnicity and conflict. We will then dig into civil war dynamics: tactics and repertoires of violence in conflict (including violence against civilians), characteristics of armed group organizations, the varying relationship between armed groups and the state, and rebel governance during wartime. Finally, we will explore the determinants of civil war duration and termination, peacekeeping and peacebuilding, and the political and economic consequences of conflict.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Learn about the causes of political violence and civil wars
- Understand the dynamics of violence during civil wars
- Understand the political and economic consequences of civil wars

EVALUATION AND CLASS METHODOLOGY
The final grade will be determined by four factors: class participation (20%), two short essays (60%), one class presentation (20%):

- Class participation (20%): Regular attendance is mandatory and students are expected to have done the required readings and actively participate in class discussion.

- Two short essays (60%): Students will be asked to write two short essays (2-3 double spaced pages) on two readings which will be selected from the bibliography in the syllabus. It is also possible to write an essay about a movie related to the topic of the class, with the permission of the professor.

- Class presentation (20%): Students will be asked to prepare a class presentation on one of their essays and/or a case study related to civil wars. The presentation should last 15-20 minutes. All presentations will take place during lectures 4 and 5.

**LECTURES AND READINGS**

**Lecture 1**: 24/05/2016 (4-8pm)

Part 1: Civil War as one form of political violence. We will undertake an overview to the varieties of political violence (e.g. terrorism, riots, protests) and the relationship between them and civil wars.

**Required readings**


**Recommended Readings**


Part 2: Causes of civil war. We will go over the main theories on the causes of civil war, both at the micro and the macro-level.

Required readings


Recommended readings


Lecture 2 25/05/2016 (4-8pm)

We explore different theories of violence against civilians during civil war. We will watch the movie “The Battle of Algiers” and discuss it in light of the aforementioned theories.

Required readings
Kalyvas, Stathis N. 2006. *The Logic of Violence in Civil War.* NY: Cambridge University Press. (chapters 1,4,5,6,7)


**Recommended readings**


**Lecture 3 27/05/2016 (4-6pm)**

The international system and civil wars. We will discuss the relationship between international relations and domestic civil strife, with a particular emphasis on the Cold War period and its end.

**Required readings**


**Recommended readings**


**Lecture 4  30/05/2016 (4-8pm)**

We will discuss civil war duration and civil war termination. What makes civil wars longer than others? Why do some civil wars end in settlement while others end in victory? What is the role of peacekeeping and peacebuilding missions, and their consequences?

*Class presentations

**Required Readings**


**Recommended readings**


**Lecture 5  01/06/2016 (4-8pm)**

We will discuss the political and economic consequences of civil war. We will explore both the short and the long-term consequences of violence, displacement, and economic disruption generated by civil strife. At the micro-level, we will also look into the effects of being a combatant in a civil war.

*Class presentations

**Required readings**

Costalli, Stefano and Andrea Ruggeri. 2014. “Forging political entrepreneurs: Civil war effects on post-conflict politics in Italy.” *Political Geography* 44:


**Recommended readings**


