Civil Wars and International Interventions in Africa
POLS V3604

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Office 419, Lehman Hall
Office Hours: Thursdays, 3-5 p.m.

Undergraduate lecture class, Spring 2015
Tuesdays and Thursdays, 1:10-2:25 p.m.
504 Diana Center (Barnard campus)
Barnard & Columbia Colleges

You can schedule an appointment during my office hours by clicking here. Walk-ins are of course welcome – on a first come, first served basis. However, I give priority to people who have scheduled an appointment, so you are better off scheduling an appointment if you do not want to wait.

Teaching Assistants:
- Jonathan Blake, jsb2177@columbia.edu.
  - Office hours: Tuesdays, 2:30-4:30 p.m., Liz’ place in the Diana Center (Barnard campus).
  - To schedule an appointment, click here.
  - Discussion sections: Tuesdays, 10-10:50 a.m. (in Lehman 421, Barnard campus) and Tuesdays, 5:10-6 p.m. (in Lehman 302, Barnard campus).
- Aslihan Saygili, as4321@columbia.edu.
  - Office hours: Wednesdays 10:00-12:00pm, SIPA cafe in the International Affairs Building.
  - Discussion sections: Thursdays, 5:10-6 p.m. and 6:10-7 pm in Milbank 227 (Barnard campus).

Substance of the Course

Why does violent conflict persist in post-independence Africa? Why do so many of the countries that emerge from war lapse back into violence after five years? Why do most international interventions fail to bring peace to affected populations? This class focuses on recent conflict and post-conflict situations in Africa, and uses studies of these conflicts as a lens for understanding the distinct dynamics of violence and international interventions in civil wars.

The course has three goals. First, to provide participants with the intellectual tools to understand and analyze civil wars and international interventions. Throughout the course, participants will acquire a broad knowledge of the concepts, theoretical traditions, and debates in the study of civil war, emergency aid, peacekeeping, and peacebuilding. The course will also introduce participants to new issues in the field, such as the micro-foundations of peace settlements. Second, the course will provide participants with an in-depth understanding of the most salient civil conflicts and peace processes in recent African history, notably the Democratic Republic of Congo, Rwanda, Sudan and South Sudan. Third, the course will develop students’ research, analytical, and writing skills through assignments and papers.

Readings for this course are drawn from a variety of disciplines (political science, anthropology, and others), approaches (rational choice, constructivist), and methodologies (qualitative and quantitative). They include both theoretical works and case studies of recent conflicts. Classes will consist both of lectures and discussion.

Interested students can also attend three optional talks by guest speakers on topics related to international interventions and peacebuilding. These talks will be scheduled on Tuesdays from 5 to 6 p.m. They are meant to provide students with an opportunity to interact with policy-makers and practitioners, and to better understand how the debates studied in class play out in the “real” world.

Grading and Requirements

1) Attendance to all lectures and sections; participation to class discussions during the sections. (15% of the final grade).
This portion of the grade will be based primarily on your participation during the TA-led sections and your attendance to the lectures. It will assess whether you have completed and understood the readings, and whether you have attended the lectures and understood them.

2) Readings: Assignments are on the attached list. All the articles are available for free through Columbia library databases (just go on CLIO and type the title of the article in the search box, and then follow the instructions). The required books are available for purchase at the Columbia University Bookstore. In addition, all these books are on reserve at the Barnard and Butler libraries, under course number POLS V3614. Whenever authorized by copyright laws, I have placed specific book chapters on electronic reserves for the class (accessible through Coursework). And the whole Collier & Sambanis book is available online on the Columbia library site.

PLEASE NOTE: It is essential that students keep up with the weekly reading assignments. Readings are designed as building blocks for understanding topics in subsequent weeks. The readings are often difficult, it is therefore in the students’ best interest to attend all discussion sections, to ensure that they understand the main claims and the fine points of the readings. It is also essential that students attend all lectures. The lectures and the readings are complementary (the lectures will not substitute for the weekly readings and discussion sections, and vice-versa). The short, long, and final essays will test your understanding of the material covered both during lectures and in the readings.

3) A short essay (take-home, open-books, 15% of the final grade). The essay question will cover the material learned during the first month of classes. The paper must be typed; no handwritten material will be accepted. It must be a maximum of 4 pages double-spaced, with 1 inches margins, and in font Times New Roman 12. It should use the material covered in the readings and during the lectures and the discussion sessions. The essay question will be given on February 17 and the paper will be due on February 24.

4) A long essay (take-home, open-books, 30% of the final grade). The essay question will cover the material learned during the first part of the semester. The paper must be typed; no handwritten material will be accepted. It must be a maximum of 8 pages double-spaced, with 1 inches margins, and in font Times New Roman 12. It should use the material covered in the readings and during the lectures and the discussion sessions. The essay question will be given on March 12 and the paper will be due on March 24.

5) A final essay (take-home, open-books, 40% of the final grade). The essay question will cover the material learned during the entire semester. The paper must be typed; no handwritten material will be accepted. It must be a maximum of 8 pages double-spaced, with 1 inches margins, and in font Times New Roman 12. It should use the material covered in the readings and during the lectures and the discussion sessions. The essay question will be given on April 16 and the paper will be due on April 30.

The papers must be submitted when scheduled. Extensions will be granted only in case of documented medical or family emergency (please bring any form of documentation available). Late submissions will be penalized one-third of a letter grade per day after the deadline unless you contact me beforehand to request an extension.

Writing resources

The following websites provide many very useful pieces of advice for research and writing, which may become handy as you write your essays:
- http://www.nd.edu/~dlindley/handouts/handoutlinks.html (plenty of handouts on everything you need: how to make a theoretically informed argument, core theories and concepts used in IR, etc)
- http://www.library.ualberta.caguides/plagiarism/handouts/index.cfm (you can find hundreds of useful tips on research and writing)
- [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl) (the sections on “The Writing Process”, “General Academic Writing”, “Research and Citations”, and “Grammar and Mechanics” are especially helpful).
- [http://www.themonkeycage.org/2010/02/good_writing_in_political_scie.html](http://www.themonkeycage.org/2010/02/good_writing_in_political_scie.html) (tips for essay writing)
- [http://www.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/errors.html#errors](http://www.wsu.edu/~brians/errors/errors.html#errors) (common errors to avoid)

All students are strongly encouraged to use the Erica Mann Jong Writing Center to work on their writing skills. The Erica Mann Jong Writing Center is currently located in 18 Milbank; you can sign up for an appointment at [http://www.barnard.columbia.edu/writing/writingcenter.html](http://www.barnard.columbia.edu/writing/writingcenter.html). Columbia students are welcome to use the Barnard Writing Center for papers assigned in this course. For further information on writing resources at Barnard College and helpful strategies for writing assignments, please check [http://www.barnard.columbia.edu/english/writing.html](http://www.barnard.columbia.edu/english/writing.html).

**Conversion Scale**

- A+: 99 - 100
- A: 93 - 98.99
- A-: 90 - 92.99
- B+: 87 - 89.99
- B: 83 - 86.99
- B-: 80 - 82.99
- C+: 77 - 79.99
- C: 73 - 76.99
- C-: 70 - 72.99
- D: 60 - 69.99 (there is no D+ or D-)
- F: below 60

**Challenging grades**

Any student who believes a grade was given in error should follow the following procedure. S/he should wait a week before submitting a complaint. S/he should meet first with the TA who graded the paper and bring to the meeting a one-page typed document explaining why the student believes that s/he deserves a better grade and telling which grade s/he thinks s/he deserves. If the student and the TA still disagree about the grade after their meeting, the student should come to discuss the situation during my office hours. S/he should bring the one-page document annotated by the TA. Students should realize that a change in grade is very unlikely, and that I reserve the right to lower a grade as well as raise it.

Please note that this does not apply to your final grade. As stipulated by the Dean of Studies, “Course grades are final and may be changed only in the event of clerical error or if the work of all of your classmates is reevaluated. A course grade may not be improved by reexamination or by the submission of additional or revised work.”

**Barnard Honor Code:** Students affirm that all work turned in is their own, and that they have fully and accurately cited every written source, including web-based sources, used in their writing.

For each paper, all students (whether or not they are Barnard College students) must sign the Barnard College Honor Code statement, affirming that their written work is completely their own. Any student found to have violated the Honor Code will face the disciplinary rules of his or her home college.

Here are some very helpful websites for all your questions on intellectual property, citing and documenting sources, avoiding disasters, etc. (And of course don’t hesitate to ask me if you have any doubts or questions):

- [http://www.library.ucla.edu/bruinsuccess](http://www.library.ucla.edu/bruinsuccess) (the tutorial is fun and very useful)
- [http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/01) (another very helpful site on avoiding plagiarism)
- [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~sources](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~sources) (very detailed information about how and why to cite sources)
Use of laptops in the classroom: The use of laptops (or Ipads, or other kinds of electronic equipment) in the classroom is only permitted for taking notes on the class lectures and discussions. Students are forbidden to use laptops in the classroom to browse the Internet or work on something other than the material discussed in class. Any student who wants to use a computer (or other kind of electronic device) should give me a written document promising never to use his or her laptop (or ipad, etc) in class for something other than taking notes on class lectures / discussion. Students caught doing otherwise will be given a participation grade of F and will be forbidden to continue to use their laptops (or ipad, etc) during future class sessions. Students using laptops (or ipad, etc) should sit at the back of the classroom in order to not disturb their colleagues.

Here is the rationale for this policy. (Basically, students who multitask during classes learn less, and thus get lower grades. Worse, the students who sit next to the multitaskers learn even less and get even poorer grades, even when they try their best to focus on the lectures and discussions).

Students with disabilities: Students with disabilities who wish to take this course and who need disability-related accommodations are encouraged to make an appointment to see me as soon as possible. Disabled students who need test or classroom accommodations must be registered in advance with the Office of Disabilities Services (ODS) in 105 Hewitt (for Barnard students) or the Office of Disabilities Services at Columbia.

Pre-requisite: At least sophomore standing.

Sub-field & Requirements: The course fulfils the Barnard College’s General Education Requirement: Social Analysis (SOC). Alternatively, Columbia College and Barnard College political science majors can count this class toward their international relations sub-field requirement OR their comparative politics sub-field requirement.

Enrollment restriction: 70 students.

Learning Objectives

Students who complete this course will learn how to:
1. Evaluate and critique the theories about the causes of violence and the determinants of international interventions
2. Integrate and apply conceptual tools and theories from various disciplines, in particular political science, in order to analyze issues related to civil wars and international interventions
3. Develop rigorous and convincing political science arguments
4. Demonstrate knowledge of several salient cases of conflicts and peace processes in recent African history
5. Express themselves effectively in writing
6. Perform independent research on political science, human rights, and/or African studies topics
Jan. 20 – Introduction and key concepts

Assignment: please read the first four pages of this syllabus very carefully and don’t hesitate to ask in class if you have any clarifying questions.

Recommended


PART 1: EXPLAINING VIOLENCE IN AFRICAN CIVIL WARS

Jan. 22 - Can we understand violence? The “new barbarism” idea & the “new wars old wars” debate


Recommended


Jan. 27 – The role of the state I: legacies of colonialism


Recommended


**Jan. 29 – The role of the state II: regime type & state violence**


**Recommended**

Gourevitch, Philip. 1998. *We wish to inform you that tomorrow we will be killed with our families: stories from Rwanda*. New York: St Martin’s Press.


**Feb. 3 – The role of the state III: state failure & warlordism**


**Optional**: 5 p.m., Guest Speaker: Stephen Jackson, Mediation Support Unit, Department of Political Affairs, United Nations, on peacemaking and peacekeeping. (406 Barnard Hall)

**Recommended**


**Feb. 5 & 10 – Identity and Violence**


**Recommended**


**Feb. 12, 17, and 19 – Research and Writing**

Feb. 12: How to think and write like a political scientist: Advice on research and writing for political science papers.

Feb. 17: Training by Yusuf Caruso, Columbia University Librarian in charge of the Africa collections, on how to find good research resources on African civil wars. End of class: distribution of topics for the short essay & explanation of requirements and grading criteria.

No readings this week, review the readings for the first few weeks of the semester.

Optional: 5 p.m., Guest Speaker: Natalie Rea, founder and board member of the International Legal Foundation, on post-conflict justice. (406 Barnard Hall)
Feb 19: no lecture class, prof at the ISA. Use the time to work on your essays and, if necessary, meet with your TAs (they will hold informal office hours in the classroom during class time, so that they can answer any questions you have).

Recommended


See Also: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/557/01/

Various sources on citations, bibliographies, and footnotes available at: http://sipa.columbia.edu/resources_services/student_affairs/academic_policies/code_of_conduct.html

Feb. 24 & 26 - Economic explanations of civil war violence


Short essays due at the beginning of class on Feb. 24. No extension except in case of documented medical or family emergency.

Recommended


March 3 – Insurgencies


**Recommended**


Documentary *Kony, the M23 and the Real Rebels of Congo*. 2012. VICE. [www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSEaTQMI5AA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSEaTQMI5AA)

March 5 & 10 – Micro-level dynamics of violence (and applied case study on the Democratic Republic of Congo)


**Recommended**


**March 12 – Review session**

*No readings for today. Review the readings you did during the first part of the class.*

*Distribution of topics for the long essay a the end of class*

**PART II – TOPICS IN INTERNATIONAL INTERVENTIONS**

**March 24 – International interventions to Support Warring Parties**

*No readings for today, work on your essay.*

*Long essays due at the beginning of class. No extension except in case of documented medical or family emergency.*

**Recommended**


**March 26 – The Changing Nature of War and Peace**

*Attend one or two of the panels for the symposium on the Changing Nature of War and Peace organized at Adelphi University* (http://collaboration-project.adelphi.edu/newsevent/symposium-on-the-changing-nature-of-war-and-peace/). Adelphi University is located in Garden City, New York, approximately 1 hour travel from Columbia campus (http://about.adelphi.edu/campus-locations/visit/directions/).

Program of the symposium

- 8:30-9:15 a.m.: Keynote “The US and War from Vietnam to the Present.” (Lloyd Gardner)
- 9:25 - 11:35 a.m.: Panel on the Changing Conduct of War
- 12:15 - 2:25 p.m.: Panel on the Challenges of Conceptualizing Peace

*This is optional, because I know that you may not be able to take half a day away from campus, but it is highly recommended if you can make it, because it’s a great opportunity to hear from some of the leading voices on the topic that we study this semester.*

**March 31 & April 2 – Humanitarian Aid**


*Optional: 5 p.m., Guest Speaker: Nimmi Gowrinathan, Colin Powell Center for Global and Civic Leadership, on local perceptions of international peace efforts in Sri Lanka. (406 Barnard Hall)*

**Recommended**


**April 7 – From war to peace: organizing negotiations**


**Recommended**

Crocker, Chester A; Hampson, Fen Oslder; and Aall Pamela R. 2004 *Taming intractable conflicts: Mediation in the hardest cases*. USIP Press


**April 9 and 14 – Peacekeeping**


**Recommended**


**April 16 and 21: Peacebuilding**

Autesserre, Séverine. 2014. *Peaceland : Conflict Resolution and the Everyday Politics of International Intervention*. Cambridge University Press. Introduction (pp. 1-19), Peacebuilding and its effectiveness (pp. 20-24), and Part I (pp. 59-159).

*End of class on April 16: distribution of topics for the final essay.*

**Recommended**


Documentaries “The Road to Justice” (on Burundi, DR Congo, and Ouganda). Available at https://www.roadtojustice.eu

**April 23 and 28 – Case studies on DR Congo and South Sudan**


**Recommended readings on Congo**


**Recommended readings on South Sudan**


**April 30 – Concluding session**

Session devoted to catching up if we are behind, Q&As, and wrapping up the semester.

*Final essay due at the beginning of the class. No extension except in case of documented family or medical emergency.*