

# POLITICAL VIOLENCE

POLS-3429W

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## **What This Course Is Not.**

This is not a course focused on merely keeping track of current episodes of political violence. Political violence unfortunately happens every day around the world, and a quick Google search will bring you text and video accounts of a wide variety of types of political violence -- both past and present -- if it is purely image and account that you are seeking.

## **What This Course Is.**

1. This course is an exploration of the timeless question, "Why does political violence occur?" To properly consider this specific type of violence, we will begin our inquiry with a philosophically and psychologically-oriented consideration of the root question, "Why are people aggressive/violent?" We then move on to see how the psychological perspective might inform individual-level analyses of political violence such as terrorism and politicide. From there, we will examine repressive state behaviors (human rights violations, in particular) from the state and regime-type levels of analysis. We will finish by looking at the phenomenon of intrastate conflict.
2. As a "W" section, this class serves as workshop with the intent of professionalizing your writing. This will be done in several ways. First, you will write drafts of each writing assignment. I will conference with you about each draft, and you will do a rewrite for a final grade. Also, I will be talking about writing throughout the semester -- giving you some advice and strategies to improve your writing. Finally, the analytical nature of the writing assignments themselves is designed to help professionalize your prose.

## **REQUIRED BOOKS:**

Baker, James R. and Arthur P. Ziegler, Jr., eds. 1988. *William Golding's Lord Of The Flies Casebook Edition: Text, Notes, and Criticism*. New York: Perigee.

Geneva Declaration Secretariat . 2011. *Global Burden of Armed Violence 2011: Lethal Encounters*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Mitchell, Neil J. 2012. *Democracy's Blameless Leaders: From Dresden to Abu Ghraib, How Leaders Evade Accountability for Abuse, Atrocity, and Killing*. New York: New York University Press.

Pinker, Steven. 2011. *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined*. New York: Penguin Books.

Regan, Patrick. 2009. *Sixteen Million One: Understanding Civil War*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.

Staub, Ervin. 1989. *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

**OTHER REQUIRED READINGS:**

A selection of required internet-accessible readings is noted on the Course Schedule in this syllabus.

**Three Written Assignments (60%)**

You will complete three written assignments, listed below. Each will be due at a date listed on the Class Schedule in this syllabus. Each of these three assignments will constitute 20% of your course grade.

1. Is inter-personal violence inevitable? If yes, how might a peaceable polity be achieved? If no, why is there so much violence in societies?
2. Why do governments violate physical integrity rights? What can be done to lessen or stop these violations?
3. Why does violent intrastate conflict occur? What can be done to curtail intrastate conflict?

These assignments are designed to allow you to demonstrate: (a) your knowledge of class materials, (b) your ability to use these materials in an analytical fashion to create a cohesive argument, and (c) your writing abilities.

You will be given a style-guide at the beginning of the semester to guide your formatting and citation. *Each draft must be six pages of text, minimum, typed and double-spaced according to the style requirements.*

**Rewrites**

You will write two drafts of each of these three assignments. After you turn in your first draft of an essay, you will schedule a conference with me about how to improve the next draft. *I reserve the right to make you rewrite the first draft (as a first draft) if I feel it contains no thought or effort whatsoever.* There will be a 15-point penalty in such cases. During our conference, I will go over your first draft with you, page-by-page, discussing both content and style.

I have found this conferencing method to be more effective in improving student writing than my simply handing back your paper with my notes written on it and expecting you to fully understand the nature and reason of my comments, just from those notes. By meeting in person, you have an opportunity to ask for satisfactory clarification about my critiques. I believe that this makes it both more clear what I want you to do and, most-importantly in the long term for your writing, *why* I want you to do it. Finally, I have found that these meetings also reduce students' defensiveness about having their work critiqued, and this leads to second-draft improvement, as well.

Re-writes are due one week after your conference with me. Along with your rewrite, you must turn in the original, marked-up paper copy of the first draft. *No rewrite will be accepted for credit unless accompanied by the original paper copy of the first draft.* At our conference for each draft, I will give you the firm due-date for the rewrite.

### **Final Portfolio (30%)**

Your Final Portfolio serves as the capstone to, and final exam for, the course. It is a holistic judgment upon your work during the semester, both in terms of your abilities and growth as a writer, as well as your abilities and growth as a student of political violence.

Your portfolio will contain 3 items:

1. Final drafts of the *TWO* of your three written assignments for this course that you feel are your best work. These two final drafts may be improved from the versions you turned in for a grade earlier in the semester. They may not be wholly-new (replacement) essays.
2. A five-page self-evaluative essay (same formatting as written assignments) discussing:
  - a. What things about these two pieces of writing make you believe they represent your best work. For example: The analyses? The quality of prose? A specific skill achieved (e.g. research skills, analysis, usage of data, etc.)?
  - b. An honest reflection on those parts of writing/researching for which you require improvement.

Your final portfolio is due by the end of the final exam time-block for this section determined by the University registrar: 5:30pm on [registrar's date]. Late penalties begin accruing at [exam end-time plus one minute here] that same day, rounded up to the hour, at a penalty of 1 point per hour. Portfolios turned in later than [exam end-time] on [day of exam] will not be accepted.

The final portfolio will be submitted electronically-only (no exceptions) to your instructor (me) at [david.l.richards@uconn.edu](mailto:david.l.richards@uconn.edu) as either a *single* Word file, or as a *single* PDF. If you need instruction in combining files or creating PDFs, I am glad to help. Come to office hours sometime *well-before the final is due* with your laptop (so we can be sure you can do this yourself on your own machine) and I will show you how to do these tasks. If you don't use/have a laptop, no worries – come anyway and I'll teach you using my office PC.

### **Participation (10%)**

This course, like most others, is best as a conversation (or debate, should that be the case), not as a one-way lecture. I will provide many opportunities for you to participate – it is up to you to meet that challenge. Be aware of the fact that, to participate, you must be in attendance.

### **UConn W-Course Grading Policy**

You cannot pass this course unless you receive a passing grade for its writing components.

**CLASS SCHEDULE:**

Below is a list of topics, each with its assigned readings. The topics and readings are in the order they will be covered throughout the semester, but no date is attached to any of them. This grants us flexibility within a topic to explore some matters in more depth than we do others. This style of block listing also grants you flexibility to explore connections among the readings by giving you their tonal center, or common thread. You will know where we are in the readings by what we are talking about in class.

**Important Dates:**

Draft #1, Essay #1 Due: mm/dd

Draft #2, Essay #2 Due: mm/dd

Draft #3, Essay #3 Due: mm/dd

Portfolio Due: mm/dd, time

**Readings FAQ**

- Q: Where do I find non-book readings?  
A: *They are available in the "Materials" folder on HuskyCT.*
- Q: What do I do if I can't find a reading on HuskyCT?  
A: *Google the citation and get it from UConn libraries. All these materials are online.*
- Q: How do I know which readings on the class schedule are required and which are optional?  
A: *Required readings are in black. Optional readings are in blue.*
- Q: There is a LOT of reading! How am I supposed to do all of this?  
A: *You will realistically have to learn how to be selective in your attentions and to read for main points. Read in tremendous depth those pieces that interest you the most, but make sure you get at least the main point from all of the readings. Also, and this isn't news: don't save readings for the last minute. Keep at least one reading with you and read a few minutes whenever you get a chance. Those minutes add up.*
- Q: This article has statistics in it! I don't know statistics!  
A: *Stay calm, I will be giving you a primer in how to read the charts/tables in these pieces. You are not expected to know professional statistical methodology. Just try your best to discern what the conclusions were. One strategy is to read the discussion/conclusion of the article first and then go look at the tables. That way, you know what you are looking for. However, if the tables/figures are too hard, just focus on what the conclusions.*
- Q: Are the readings in order?  
A: *Yes, but PLEASE feel free to read ahead and around if your curiosity and/or ambition take you there.*

## HUMAN NATURE & VIOLENCE

### Pt. I

- Thomas Hobbes, 1651, *Leviathan*, Chpts. XIII – XIV, XVII-XIX, XXI  
[<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/3207/3207-h/3207-h.htm>]
- John Locke, 1690, *Second Treatise on Government*, Chpts. 2-4, 9-13, 16, 18, 19  
[<http://www.gutenberg.org/files/7370/7370-h/7370-h.htm>]
- Golding, William. *Lord of the Flies*, pp. 5 – 208.
  - Coskren, Thomas. "Is Golding Calvinistic?" in *Lord of the Flies*, pp. 273 – 280.
  - Mueller, William. "An Old Story Well Told" in *Lord of the Flies*, pp. 265-272.
  - Rosenfeld, Claire. "Men of a Smaller Growth: A Psychological Analysis of William Golding's *Lord of the Flies*", in *Lord of the Flies*, pp. 280 – 297.

### Pt. II

- Staub, Ervin. 1989. *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence*. New York: Cambridge University Press. CHAPTERS 2, 3, 5
  - Zimbardo, Philip G. 2005. "The Psychology of Power and Evil: All Power to the Person? To the Situation? To the System?" Whitepaper.
- Baumeister, Roy F., Brad Bushman, and W. Keith Campbell. 2000. "Self-Esteem, Narcissism, and Aggression: Does Violence Result from Low Self-Esteem or from Threatened Egotism?" *Current Directions in Psychological Science* 9.1: 26-29.
  - Bushman, B., and Baumeister, R. 1998. "Threatened egotism, narcissism, self-esteem, and direct and displaced aggression: Does self-love or self-hate lead to violence?" *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*. 75.1: 219-229.
- Goetz, Aaron T. 2010. "The Evolutionary Psychology of Violence." *Psicothema* 22.1: 15-21.
- Harrington, Evan R. 2004. "The Social Psychology of Hatred." *Journal of Hate Studies* 3:49-82.
- Pinker, Steven. 2011. *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined*. New York: Penguin Books. CHAPTERS 2, 8, 9
- Dawes, John, Patricia Murphy, Lu Farber, Colin Murray Parkes, Stuart Farber, Patrice O'Connor, Kjell Kallenberg, Robert Weiss, Herman Meijburg, Jean Quint Benoliel, Herman J de Monnik, and Betty Snyder. 2005. "Breaking Cycles of Violence." *Death Studies* 29.7: 585-600.
  - Lumsden, Malvern. 1997. "Breaking the Cycle of Violence." *Journal of Peace Research* 34.4: 377-383.

### Pt. III

- Fabbro, David. 1978. "Peaceful Societies: An Introduction" *Journal of Peace Research* 15.1: 67 – 83.
- Bonta, Bruce D. 1996. "Conflict Resolution among Peaceful Societies: The Culture of Peacefulness." *Journal of Peace Research* 33.4: 403-420.
- Pinker, Steven. 2011. *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined*. New York: Penguin Books. CHAPTERS 1 & 3
- Staub, Ervin. 1989. *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence*. New York: Cambridge University Press. CHAPTERS 4, 6, 8, 12

## LEVELS AND TYPES OF VIOLENCE

- Geneva Declaration Secretariat . 2011. *Global Burden of Armed Violence 2011: Lethal Encounters*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Pinker, Steven. 2011. *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined*. New York: Penguin Books. CHAPTERS 5 & 6

## HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS BY GOVERNMENTS

- Poe, Steven C., and C. Neal Tate. 1994. "Repression of Human Rights to Personal Integrity in the 1980s: A Global Analysis." *American Political Science Review* 88.4: 853-872.
  - Staub, Ervin. 1989. *The Roots of Evil: The Origins of Genocide and Other Group Violence*. New York: Cambridge University Press. CHAPTER 14
  - Poe, Steven C., C. Neal Tate, and Linda Camp Keith. 1999. "Repression of the Human Right to Personal Integrity Revisited: A Global Cross-national Study Covering the Years 1976-1993." *International Studies Quarterly* 43.2: 291-313.
- Pinker, Steven. 2011. *The Better Angels of Our Nature: Why Violence Has Declined*. New York: Penguin Books. CHAPTER 7
- Richards, David L. and Ronald D. Gellenny. 2007. "Good Things to Those Who Wait? National Elections and Respect for Human Rights." *Journal of Peace Research* 44.4: 505-523.
  - Abouharb, M. Rodwan, and David Cingranelli. 2006. "The Human Rights Effects of World Bank Structural Adjustment, 1981–2000." *International Studies Quarterly* 50.2: 233-262.
- Harff, Barbara. 2003. "No Lessons Learned from the Holocaust? Assessing Risks of Genocide and Political Mass Murder since 1955." *American Political Science Review* 97.1: 57-73.
- Englehart, Neil A. 2009. "State Capacity, State Failure, and Human Rights." *Journal of Peace Research* 46.2: 163-180.

## LEADERS & AGENCY

- Mitchell, Neil J. 2012. *Democracy's Blameless Leaders: From Dresden to Abu Ghraib, How Leaders Evade Accountability for Abuse, Atrocity, and Killing*. New York: New York University Press.

## INTRASTATE CONFLICT & TERRORISM

- Regan, Patrick. 2009. *Sixteen Million One: Understanding Civil War*. Boulder, CO: Paradigm Publishers.
- Fearon, James D., and David D. Laitin. 2003. "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War." *American Political Science Review* 97.1: 75-90.
- Goodwin, Jeff. 2006. "A Theory of Categorical Terrorism." *Social Forces* 84.4: 2027-2046.
- Victoroff, Jeff. 2005. "The Mind of the Terrorist: A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches." *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49.1: 3-42.
  - Horgan, John. 2008. "From Profiles to Pathways and Roots to Routes: Perspectives from Psychology on Radicalization into Terrorism." *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 618.X: 80-94.

## **CLASS RULES:**

### **Lateness**

Habitual lateness to class is ***tremendously rude***; it is unprofessional and disrespectful of other students and of the professor. Habitual lateness to class is disruptive. The instructor reserves the right to penalize habitual lateness via deduction of points from exam grades.

### **Phones / Other Electronic Devices:**

- You do not have permission to record ANY sounds or images from/during class.
- Turn off the ringer of your phone/electronic devices BEFORE class begins. You will not be in trouble for a single accident of forgetting to turn off your phone and having it ring in class -- once in a while, everyone (*including the professor*) forgets to turn off his/her phone. So, if your phone rings in class, *please have the decency to turn it off and not let it ring* and ring until the caller hangs up or voicemail kicks in.
- Chronic cases of disruption via electronic devices will be referred to the Office of Student Services & Advocacy.
- You MAY use a laptop during lectures
  - You **MAY NOT** use laptops during video/film showings, as the backlighting is distracting to other students.
  - If the professor feels too much laptop activity is being devoted to non-course activities (e.g., texting, Facebook, Youtube, etc), permission to use laptops will be revoked.
- Use of earbuds/earphones is prohibited.
- NO electronic devices of any kind are to be powered up or on during an exam/quiz. Violation of this rule will result in a zero on the exam/quiz.
- NO electronic devices of any kind are to be visible during an exam/quiz. Violation of this rule will result in a zero on the exam/quiz.
- If you are caught using any kind of electronic device during an exam, you will automatically receive a zero on the exam.

### **E-Mail:**

Notices, important dates, reading changes, and the like will be announced via e-mail. You are responsible for checking your UCONN e-mail every day, especially before classes.

### **Communicating With & Making Appointments With Yours Truly**

As those of you who have previously taken me for a course already know, e-mail is the single-best way to reach me. Make sure to use ADVAPP to make appointments.

### **Makeup Exams:**

Makeup exams present severe equity problems for everyone involved in the course. Makeup exams will ONLY be scheduled for those with DOCUMENTED medical, University-sanctioned activity, or direct family member's death- associated excuses. ***There are NO exceptions to the makeup exam rule.*** For example, exams missed because of vacation, weddings, oversleeping, sickness not bad enough to get a doctor's excuse, etc, cannot be made up.

### **Assignment Lateness and Incompletes:**

Assignments are due at the beginning of the assigned class period. The ONLY exception is for those with a documented medical excuse or documented direct family member's death. University-sanctioned events and activities are planned in advance and, accordingly, do not qualify as valid justifications for late work. For example, excuses such as "I couldn't get my file off the library computer", "I overslept," "The printer

broke," "I ran out of toner," "The computer crashed", or any other, will not be accepted. Late penalties begin accruing immediately after I have collected papers from all those in attendance at the beginning of class, rounded up to the hour, at a penalty of 2 points per hour.

### **Academic Integrity**

In this course we aim to conduct ourselves as a community of scholars, recognizing that academic study is both an intellectual and ethical enterprise. You are encouraged to build on the ideas and texts of others; that is a vital part of academic life. You are also obligated to document every occasion when you use another's ideas, language, or syntax. You are encouraged to study together, discuss readings outside of class, share your drafts during peer review and outside of class, and go to the Writing Center with your drafts. In this course, those activities are well within the bounds of academic honesty. However, when you *use* another's ideas or language—whether through direct quotation, summary, or paraphrase—you must formally acknowledge that debt by signaling it with a standard form of academic citation. Even one occasion of academic dishonesty, large or small, on *any* assignment, large or small, will result in failure for the entire course and referral to Student Judicial Affairs. For University policies on academic honesty, please see UConn's *Responsibilities of Community Life: The Student Code* and the Office of Community Standards: <http://www.community.uconn.edu>

### **Students With Disabilities**

Students who think that they may need accommodations because of a disability are encouraged to meet with me privately early in the semester. Students should also contact the Center for Students with Disabilities as soon as possible to verify their eligibility for reasonable accommodations. For more information, please go to <http://www.csd.uconn.edu/>.

### **GRADE CALCULATION:**

Your final grade will be calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{FINAL GRADE} = [.20 (\text{Essay \#1}) + .20 (\text{Essay \#2}) + .20 (\text{Essay \#3}) + .30 (\text{Portfolio}) + .10 (\text{Participation})]$$

Final class grades will be assigned as such:

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	60-66
F	59 or below



## WHAT DOES AN “A,” “B,” “C,” etc., REALLY MEAN?

### “A” Excellent Student

- Provides points for discussion/debate which no one had thought of before
- Adds significant new insights into the topic at hand
- Asks pointed and challenging questions that stimulate other questions
- Stimulates critical thinking imaginative and realistic enthusiasm, interest and curiosity
- Brings in relevant outside experience related directly to discussions/material
- Persuasively argues a point and changes the opinions of classmates
- Displays logical outside-the-box thinking
- Solves problems from multiple perspectives
- Professional communication skills
- Intuitively understands and shares insights from “between the lines”

### “B” Good to Very Good Student

- Presents useful knowledge in depth clearly and concisely
- Will defend & debate a position when appropriate; respectfully challenges ideas when disagrees
- A good team player in small groups; constructive leader or facilitator
- Actively and consistently contributes information to a discussion
- States a point from the material, then develops its meaning in more detail
- Willing to ask questions when a point is unclear; comes up with supporting ideas
- Thinks between the lines; sees implications
- Logical, well documented recommendations
- Applies outside knowledge
- Plays “devil’s advocate” in a useful manner

### “C” Average Student

- Pays attention and offers supporting data to discussions
- Participates in small group discussions at the same level as others in the group
- Offers some thoughts, ideas, questions each class period
- Attentive listener and responds in a professional manner
- Has read the material for the day and is generally prepared for class
- Answers questions correctly when called upon

### “D” Below Average Student

- Repeats what has already been said in class
- Obviously not well prepared for the class
- Comments do not move analysis forward; doesn’t ask for help when needed
- Weak or incomplete notes; generally negative attitude
- Misses obvious points
- Limited participation in small group discussions
- Packs up to leave before the end of class
- Demonstrates a lack of understanding of material

### “F” Poor Student

- Does not participate in classroom discussion or small group discussion
- Talking to neighbors during presentations by classmates or teacher; passing notes
- Very weak or no notes
- Being late or disruptive in class and/or other such unprofessional behavior
- Works on homework for another class during class time
- Not listening to others; sleeping or dozing off; disrespectful to colleagues
- Unreceptive to the consideration of alternative approaches; dogmatic and close minded
- Asks questions for which he/she already knows the answer
- Acts as a free-rider in small group activities