

PLS 445-545

Political Violence

Nazarbayev University
Spring 2022
Fridays 9:00 AM to 11:50 AM
Online and Block 8, Room 154

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Office Hours by Appointment

Course Description:

This course seeks to acquaint students with the academic literature on political violence. This course examines topics such as state failure, civil war, terrorism, insurgency, counterterrorism, counterinsurgency, ethnic conflict, separatism, military interventions, unresolved conflicts, state collapse, state reconstitution, as well as various critical threats to types of nondemocratic rule. This is an advanced writing-intensive course offered at the undergraduate and graduate levels. Course requirements for the class differ according to the level at which it is offered. This course is designed to enhance students' overall knowledge of political violence from a comparative perspective.

Course Readings:

The following textbook is available at the Nazarbayev University Library in hard copy. The textbook is also available as an e-book with the following access code but with limited logins for NU students (<https://ezproxy.nu.edu.kz:2122/10.1017/CBO9780511790713>). All other assigned readings are available to students by syllabus hyperlink, the NU Library, or NU online databases.

Robert H. Bates, *When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late-Century Africa* (Cambridge University Press, 2008).

Course Requirements:

PLS 445 – Undergraduate Level

1. Three take-home quizzes will be assigned over the course of the semester. The class days on which take-home quizzes are assigned will be chosen by the professor. Students will be tasked with responding to a question related to the assigned readings for the next upcoming class. Students should incorporate ALL the assigned readings for the next upcoming class into their written responses. Quizzes are to be submitted by 9:00 AM via Moodle on the Friday of the next class meeting and should consist of 1,250 words (approximately 5 pages). Students who do not submit

their quizzes by the start of class will automatically lose 25 points. Students who do not submit their quizzes 24 hours after the deadline will receive a score of 0. Students must use footnotes for citations (any style), 1-inch margins, double-spaced pages, and any legible 12-point size font.

Take-home quizzes are worth 50 points and graded according to the following rubric:

Grading	Assessments
45-50	Student's understanding of the assigned readings is very extensive and clear; written response is cogent and creative; usage of proper citation format; question posed by the professor is answered by student in its entirety.
40-44	Student's understanding of the assigned readings is commendable yet also somewhat incomplete; written response is intelligible but lacks creativity; citation format is evident but not fully consistent either; question posed by the professor is largely answered by student.
35-39	Student's understanding of the assigned readings is intelligible but is evidently lacking; written response demonstrates that the student possesses a cursory grasp of the assigned readings; citation format is inconsistent and rather unprofessional; question posed by the professor is answered in a satisfactory manner.
30-34	Student's understanding of the assigned readings is poor and lacking; written response is largely unintelligible; question posed by the professor is largely unanswered by the student.
0-29	Student's understanding of the assigned readings is very poor or nonexistent; written response is virtually unintelligible; question posed by the professor is not answered at all.

2. Students will be tasked with signing up for and watching TWO assigned videos relating to certain aspects of political violence and composing TWO policy briefs of 1,000 words each (approximately 4 pages) based on the videos (**not assigned articles**) and a question posed by the professor. Briefs are worth 25 points apiece and students can only write TWO briefs. Students must use 1-inch margins, double-spaced pages, and any legible 12-point size font. **Footnotes are not required.** Briefs are to be submitted via Moodle by 9:00 AM on the Friday for which viewing the video has been assigned. Policy briefs submitted after the deadline will receive a score of 0.

3. Students will be tasked with writing a short essay of 2,000 words (approximately 8 pages) in the form of a critical reaction memo focusing on all the assigned readings for a given week. Students must sign-up for the week on which they intend to write their memos. No more than **THREE** students may write their memos on a given week and no one is permitted to write on

Weeks 1, 3, 6, 10, or 13. Students must use footnotes for citations (any style), 1-inch margins, double-spaced pages, and a legible 12-point size font. Students only need to analyze and synthesize **ALL** the assigned readings for a week. **It is not necessary to conduct a review of other scholarly works outside of the syllabus.** Reaction memos are to be submitted by the start of class via Moodle on the Friday of the week in which students have signed up for to write their memos. Students who do not submit their work on time will lose 50 points. Students who do not submit their work 24 hours after the deadline will receive a score of 0. A **bibliography** is required as well.

4. Students will be tasked with writing a research essay of 3,000 words (approximately 12 pages) on a topic concerning some aspect of political violence. Students will select a single country for analysis, formulate a research question which relates to some aspect of political violence, and conduct single-case study research. **All long essays require an introduction, research question, literature review, hypothesis, research findings, and a conclusion.** Students need to correspond with the professor to discuss topic ideas and must receive topic approval. **Students are required to include scholarly references not listed on the syllabus in their essays.** Students must use footnotes for citations (any style), 1-inch margins, double-spaced pages, and any legible 12-point size font. Research essays are to be submitted by **April 25, 2022 at 5 PM** via Moodle. Students who do not submit their long essays by the deadline will lose 50 points. Students who do not submit their work 24 hours after the deadline will receive a score of 0. A **bibliography** is required as well.

Both the reaction memo and the research essay will be graded according to the following rubric:

Grading	Assessment
135-150	Student writes in a very coherent and creative manner; usage of proper citation format; paper has a full introduction and a conclusion; few or no grammatical and/or spelling errors in student's work; student references scholarly articles/texts outside of syllabus readings and critically analyzes the works of other scholars.
120-134	Student writes in an intelligible manner but his/her work is also lacking in creativity; citation format is evident but not fully consistent either; cursory introduction and conclusion; noticeable grammatical/spelling errors; student references some scholarly articles/texts outside of syllabus in the form of a literature review to supplement his/her work; critical analysis of scholarly works is adequate.
105-119	Student barely writes in a satisfactory manner; paper is largely lacking in terms of an introduction and conclusion; citation format is inconsistent; grammatical/spelling errors are prevalent; references to scholarly articles/texts outside of syllabus are quite lacking; critical analysis of other scholarly works is inadequate.

90-104	Student writes in a largely unintelligible manner; citation format suffers from serious flaws; brief/no introduction and/or conclusion; many grammatical/spelling errors; virtually no references to articles/texts outside of syllabus or critical analysis of other scholarly works.
0-89	Student writes in an unintelligible manner; citation format is nearly nonexistent; multiple grammatical/spelling errors; few/no references to scholarly articles/texts outside of syllabus; critical analysis is wholly inadequate in scope.

Grading:

3 Take-Home Quizzes	150 (50 Points Each)
2 Video Policy Briefs	50 (25 Points Each)
Critical Reaction Memo	150
Research Essay	150
Total	500 Points

Scale:

	A: 475-500	A-: 450-474
B+: 425-449	B: 400-424	B-: 375-399
C+: 350-374	C: 325-349	C-: 300-324
D+: 275-299	D: 250-274	F: 249 and below

PLS 545 – Graduate Level

1. Graduate student participation is essential. Graduate students will be tasked with writing **TWO** discussion questions each for a total of **10 weeks** during the semester. Students may choose the weeks for which to write their discussion questions. Questions should demonstrate that a student has read the assigned readings and possesses the ability to engage in a thoughtful discussion about the assigned readings. Questions should incorporate several assigned readings and challenge authors' conclusions. This exercise is designed to enhance students' critical analytical skills. Students are to submit their questions via **EMAIL** by 9:00 AM the day **BEFORE** class meets.

2. Students will write a book review for the assigned textbook for this course. Students are to respond to a question posed by the professor about the book for which they have signed up as well as provide a critical analysis of its main argument. Book reviews will consist of 1,500 words (approximately 6 pages). Students must use footnotes for citations (any style), 1-inch margins, double-spaced pages, and any legible 12-point size font. **It is required to incorporate other reviews of the assigned book into your own book review for this assignment.** Book reviews are to be submitted via Moodle by 9:00 AM on the Friday that the class meets to discuss the book (**April 8, 2022**). Any book reviews submitted after the deadline will receive a grade of 0.

Book reviews will be graded according to the following rubric:

Grading	Assessment
45-50	Student's understanding of the text's main argument is very extensive and clear; written response is cogent and creative; usage of proper citation format; question posed by the professor is answered by student in its entirety; critical analysis of the text is exemplary.
40-44	Student's understanding of the text's main argument is commendable yet also somewhat incomplete; written response is intelligible but lacks creativity; citation format is evident but not fully consistent either; question posed by the professor is largely answered by student; critical analysis of the text is adequate.
35-39	Student's understanding of the text's main argument is intelligible but is evidently lacking; written response demonstrates that the student possesses a cursory grasp of the text's main argument; citation format is inconsistent and rather unprofessional; question posed by the professor is answered in a satisfactory manner; critical analysis of the text is lacking.
30-34	Student's understanding of the text's main argument is poor and lacking; written response is largely unintelligible; question posed by the professor is largely unanswered by student; critical analysis of the text is not satisfactory.
0-29	Student's understanding of the text's main argument is very poor or nonexistent; written response is virtually unintelligible; question posed by the professor is not answered at all; student does not critically analyze the text.

3. Students will be tasked with signing up for and watching TWO assigned videos relating to certain aspects of political violence and composing TWO policy briefs of 1,000 words each (approximately 4 pages) based on the videos (**not assigned articles**) and a question posed by the professor. Briefs are worth 25 points apiece and students can only write TWO briefs. Students must use 1-inch margins, double-spaced pages, and any legible 12-point size font. **Footnotes are not required.** Briefs are to be submitted via Moodle by 9:00 AM on the Friday for which viewing the video has been assigned. Policy briefs submitted after the deadline will receive a score of 0.

4. Students will be tasked with writing a short essay of 2,500 words (approximately 10 pages) in the form of a critical reaction memo focusing on all the assigned readings for a given week. Students must sign-up for the week on which they intend to write their memos. No more than

THREE students may write their memos on a given week and no one is permitted to write on Weeks 1, 10, or 13. Students must use footnotes for citations (any style), 1-inch margins, double-spaced pages, and any legible 12-point size font. Students only need to analyze and synthesize **ALL** the assigned readings for a week. **It is not necessary to conduct a review of other scholarly works outside of the syllabus.** Reaction memos are to be submitted by the start of class via Moodle on the Friday of the week in which students have signed up for to write their memos. Students who do not submit their work on time will lose 50 points. Students who do not submit their work 24 hours after the deadline will receive a score of 0. A **bibliography** is required as well.

5. Students will be tasked with writing a research essay of 3,500 words (approximately 14 pages) on a topic concerning some aspect of political violence. Students will select a single country for analysis, formulate a research question which relates to some aspect of political violence, and conduct single-case study research. **All long essays require an introduction, research question, literature review, hypothesis, research findings, and a conclusion.** Students need to correspond with the professor to discuss topic ideas and must receive topic approval. **Students are required to include scholarly references not listed on the syllabus in their essays.** Students must use footnotes for citations (any style), 1-inch margins, double-spaced pages, and any legible 12-point size font. Research essays are to be submitted by **April 25, 2022 at 5 PM** via Moodle. Students who do not submit their long essays by the deadline will lose 50 points. Students who do not submit their work 24 hours after the deadline will receive a score of 0. A **bibliography** is required as well.

Both the reaction memo and the research essay will be graded according to the following rubric:

Grading	Assessment
135-150	Student writes in a very coherent and creative manner; usage of proper citation format; paper has a full introduction and a conclusion; few or no grammatical and/or spelling errors in student's work; student references scholarly articles/texts outside of syllabus readings and critically analyzes the works of other scholars.
120-134	Student writes in an intelligible manner but his/her work is also lacking in creativity; citation format is evident but not fully consistent either; cursory introduction and conclusion; noticeable grammatical/spelling errors; student references some scholarly articles/texts outside of syllabus in the form of a literature review to supplement his/her work; critical analysis of scholarly works is adequate.
105-119	Student barely writes in a satisfactory manner; paper is largely lacking in terms of an introduction and conclusion; citation format is inconsistent; grammatical/spelling errors are prevalent; references to scholarly articles/texts

	outside of syllabus are quite lacking; critical analysis of other scholarly works is inadequate.
90-104	Student writes in a largely unintelligible manner; citation format suffers from serious flaws; brief/no introduction and/or conclusion; many grammatical/spelling errors; virtually no references to articles/texts outside of syllabus or critical analysis of other scholarly works.
0-89	Student writes in an unintelligible manner; citation format is nearly nonexistent; multiple grammatical/spelling errors; few/no references to scholarly articles/texts outside of syllabus; critical analysis is wholly inadequate in scope.

Grading:

20 Discussion Questions in 10 Weeks	100 (Each Question is Worth 5 Points)
Book Review	50
2 Video Policy Briefs	50 (25 Points Each)
Critical Reaction Memo	150
Research Essay	150
Total	500 points

Scale:

	A: 475-500	A-: 450-474
B+: 425-449	B: 400-424	B-: 375-399
C+: 350-374	C: 325-349	C-: 300-324
D+: 275-299	D: 250-274	F: 249 and below

Student Attendance Notice and Assignment Extension Policy:

All enrolled students need to attend ALL seminar meetings listed on the syllabus. **Any enrolled student who misses more than 1 class seminar without a valid excuse will receive a grade of F for the course.** If sick, students are required to submit a valid medical note to SSH within 1 week of missing a class. Students who fall ill on/near the due dates of assignments also need to contact the professor. Extensions can only be given with proof of valid medical documentation.

Academic Integrity:

Students are required to ensure that the work which they submit for grading in this class is their own. Students must provide citations in the form of footnotes when referencing the works of other scholars within designated assignments. Instances of cheating and/or plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in the student receiving a score of **0** for an assignment. All instances in which plagiarism is suspected will be referred to SSH for disciplinary committee review. Copying, rephrasing of text without citations, as well as submitting unoriginal work constitutes plagiarism.

Class Schedule:

Week 1: Introduction (1-28)

D. Delaney, "Cutting, Running, or Otherwise? The US Decision to Withdraw from Somalia," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 15.3 (2004): 28-46.

VIDEO: "Ambush in Mogadishu," *PBS Frontline* (1998).

Week 2: State Failure (2-4)

Robert D. Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy," *The Atlantic* (1994).

Charles Tilly, "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime," in P. Evans, D. Rueschemeyer and T. Skocpol, eds. *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge University Press, 1985), pp. 169-191 (available at <https://ezproxy.nu.edu.kz:2122/10.1017/CBO9780511628283>).

Jack Goldstone, "Pathways to State Failure," *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 25 (2008).

Jeffrey Herbst, "Let Them Fail: State Failure in Theory and Practice," in *When States Fail: Causes and Consequences*, Robert I. Rotberg, ed. (Princeton University Press, 2004), pp. 302-318.

VIDEO: "Firestone and the Warlord," *PBS Frontline* (2014).

Week 3: Civil Wars (2-11)

Stathis Kalyvas, "The Ontology of "Political Violence": Action and Identity in Civil Wars," *Perspectives on Politics* 1.3 (2003): 475-494.

Carles Boix, "Economic Roots of Civil Wars and Revolutions in the Contemporary World," *World Politics* 60.3 (2008): 390-437.

David E. Cunningham, "Blocking Resolution: How External States Can Prolong Civil Wars," *Journal of Peace Research* 47.2 (2010): 115-127.

Barbara F. Walter, "Why Bad Governance Leads to Repeat Civil War," *Journal of Conflict Research* (2014): 1-31.

C.J. Sullivan, "Embattled Authoritarians: Continuity and Collapse in Central and Southwest Asia," *Asian Security* 16.3 (2020): 363-378.

VIDEO: "Obama at War," *PBS Frontline* (2015).

Week 4: Terrorism (2-18)

A. Kydd and B. Walter, "The Strategies of Terrorism," *International Security* 31.1 (2006): 49-80.

Robert A. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism," *American Political Science Review* 97.3 (2003): 343-361.

Max Abrahms, "Why Terrorism Does Not Work," *International Security* 31.2 (2006): 42-78.

Assaf Moghadam, "Motives for Martyrdom: Al-Qaida, Salafi Jihad, and the Spread of Suicide Attacks," *International Security* 33.3 (2008-2009): 46-78.

Or Honig and Ido Yahel, "A Fifth Wave of Terrorism? The Emergence of Terrorist Semi-States," *Terrorism and Political Violence* (2017): 1-19.

VIDEO: "The Rise of ISIS," *PBS Frontline* (2014).

Week 5: Counterterrorism (2-25)

Matthew Kroenig and Barry Pavel, "How to Deter Terrorism," *The Washington Quarterly* 35.2 (2012): 21-36.

Jeffrey S. Bachman, "The Lawfulness of U.S. Targeted Killing Operations Outside Afghanistan," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 38.11 (2015): 899-918.

Brian G. Williams, "The CIA's Covert Predator Drone War in Pakistan, 2004-2010: The History of an Assassination Campaign," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 33.10 (2010): 871-892.

VIDEO: "Terror in Europe," *PBS Frontline* (2016).

Week 6: Insurgency (3-4)

J.D. Fearon and David Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War," *APSR* 97.1 (2003): 75-90.

Ivan Arreguin-Toft, "How the Weak Win Wars: A Theory of Asymmetric Conflict," *International Security* 26.1 (2001): 93-128.

Larry Diamond, "What Went Wrong in Iraq," *Foreign Affairs* 83.5 (2004): 34-56.

Seth G. Jones, "The Rise of Afghanistan's Insurgency: State Failure and Jihad," *International Security* 32.4 (2008): 7-40.

Seth G. Jones and Patrick B. Johnston, "The Future of Insurgency," *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 36.1 (2013): 1-25.

VIDEO: "Kill/Capture," *PBS Frontline* (2011).

Week 7: Counterinsurgency (3-11)

Andrew F. Krepinevich, "How to Win in Iraq," *Foreign Affairs* 84.5 (2005).

K. Eikenberry, "The Limits of Counterinsurgency in Afghanistan," *Foreign Affairs* 92.5 (2013).

B.G. Poole, "COIN and the Rule of Law in Afghanistan," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* (2021).

Daniel Byman, "Friends Like These: Counterinsurgency and the War on Terrorism," *International Security* 31.2 (2006): 79-115.

Amitai Etzioni, "COIN: A Study of Strategic Illusion," *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 26.3 (2015).

Daniel Byman, "'Death Solves All Problems': The Authoritarian Model of Counterinsurgency," *The Journal of Strategic Studies* 39.1 (2016): 62-93.

VIDEO: "Bush's War," *PBS Frontline Part I* and *Part II* (2008).

Week 8: Ethnic Violence, Separatism, and Mass Killings (3-18)

Henry E. Hale, "Divided We Stand: Institutional Sources of Ethnofederal State Survival and Collapse," *World Politics* 56.2 (2004): 165-193.

Lars-Erik Cederman, Andreas Wimmer, and Brian Min, "Why Do Ethnic Groups Rebel? New Data and Analysis," *World Politics* 62.1 (2010): 87-119.

Svante E. Cornell, "Autonomy as a Source of Conflict: Caucasian Conflicts in Theoretical Perspective," *World Politics* 54.2 (2002): 245-276.

Alan J. Kuperman, "Rwanda in Retrospect," *Foreign Affairs* 79.1 (2000): 94-118.

John Mueller, "The Banality of Ethnic War," *International Security* 25.1 (2000): 42-70.

VIDEO: "Ghosts of Rwanda," *PBS Frontline* (2004).

Week 9: Military Intervention (4-1)

Edward N. Luttwak, "Give War A Chance," *Foreign Affairs* 78.4 (1999).
Benjamin Valentino, "The True Costs of Humanitarian Intervention," *Foreign Affairs* 90.6 (2011).
Alan J. Kuperman, "A Model Humanitarian Intervention? Reassessing NATO's Libya Campaign," *International Security* 38.1 (2013): 105-136.
Alexander B. Downes and Jonathan Monten, "Forced to Be Free? Why Foreign-Imposed Regime Change Rarely Leads to Democratization," *International Security* 37.4 (2013): 90-131.
Mark Galeotti, "Hybrid, Ambiguous, and Non-Linear? How New is Russia's 'New Way of War'?" *Small Wars and Insurgencies* 27.2 (2016): 282-301.

Week 10: State Collapse: Gradual and Sudden (4-8)

Robert H. Bates, *When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late-Century Africa* (2008).

Week 11: Proto-States and Unresolved Conflicts (4-15)

D. Byman and C. King, "The Mystery of Phantom States," *The Washington Quarterly* 35.3 (2012).
Svante E. Cornell, "Autonomy as a Source of Conflict: Caucasian Conflicts in Theoretical Perspective," *World Politics* 54.2 (2002): 245-276.
Charles King, "Eurasia Letter: Moldova with a Russian Face," *Foreign Policy* 97 (1994-1995).
Ivan Katchanovski, "The Separatist War in Donbass: A Violent Break-Up of Ukraine?" *European Politics and Society* 17.4 (2016): 473-489.
Charles J. Sullivan, "Sidestepping a Quagmire: Russia, Syria, and the Lessons of the Soviet-Afghan War," *Asian Affairs* 49.1 (2018).
Charles J. Sullivan, "White Flags: On the Return of the Afghan Taliban and the Fate of Afghanistan," *Asian Affairs* 52.2 (2021).

Week 12: Critical Threats in Non-Democratic Systems (4-22)

N. Taleb and G.F. Treverton, "The Calm Before the Storm," *Foreign Affairs* 94.1 (2015).
Zaryab Iqbal and Christopher Zorn, "The Political Consequences of Assassination," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 52 (2008): 385-400.
Jason Brownlee, "Hereditary Succession in Modern Autocracies," *World Politics* 59.4 (2007).
Michael Colaresi and Sabine C. Carey, "To Kill or to Protect: Security Forces, Domestic Institutions, and Genocide," *Journal of Conflict Research* 52.1 (2008): 39-67.
Hanne Fjelde, "Generals, Dictators, and Kings: Authoritarian Regimes and Civil Conflict, 1973-2004," *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 27 (2010): 195-218.
L. Way, "Belarus Uprising: How a Dictator Became Vulnerable," *Journal of Democracy* (2020).

Week 13: Bonus Week (10 Points): Readings on the Future of Political Violence (4-24)

S. Hettena, "Erik Prince's Private Wars," *Rolling Stone* (October 25, 2020).
W.D. Hartung, "Profits of War: Corporate Beneficiaries of the Post-9/11 Pentagon Spending Surge," *Watson Institute and the Center for International Policy* (September 13, 2021).
S. McFate, "The Return of Mercenaries, Non-State Conflict, and More Predictions for the Future of Warfare," *Medium* (January 22, 2019).