POLS 3930-20: Peace Studies
Spring 2023
Mon-Wed-Fri: 11:00 am-11:50 pm (in-person)

Dr. Post Basnet
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Office Hours: Friday 2:00 pm- 5:00 pm (or by appointment)
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Class: Xavier Hall #122

COURSE DESCRIPTION
Welcome to POLS 3930-20! We assume that most people in the world would prefer to live in peace and avoid conflict, repression, and war. However, the reality is that war, repression, and other forms of violence are all too common features of politics within and between states. It is difficult to find a day in which there is not a war of some sort going on somewhere in the world. This paradox defines the main purpose of this course: How can we end violent conflicts, build durable peace, and live in social harmony? In this course, we seek to understand the causes of armed conflict as well as the conditions and processes that contribute to the termination of armed conflict and then explore the ways to build durable peace within and between nations. This is a political science course, and we will mainly look at the existing literature on the conflict and peace processes in the fields of international relations and comparative politics. However, the field of peace studies also encompasses theories from other fields such as sociology, economics, philosophy, history, and psychology. Insights from other disciplines will enrich the field of peace studies and broaden our understanding of the causes of war and conditions for peace.

COURSE OBJECTIVES
Students are responsible for reading and completing all requirements of the course in a timely manner, working to remain attentive and engaged in the course, and assisting in maintaining a positive learning environment for everyone.

By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1) Assess the current trends of armed conflict around the world and explain why political violence is more prevalent in some countries and under some circumstances than others.
2) Assess the factors that explain why these problems occur and describe the most important findings from social science research on these problems.
3) Understand the conditions and processes that contribute to the resolution and termination of armed conflicts.
4) Analyze and synthesize the various approaches that have been used to end conflicts, build durable peace and determine which solutions work best under various conditions.

**GRADING POLICY**

**Discussion Board Posts:** Students will participate in the discussion of the topics we cover in the class. I will post a question on Canvas and students are required to respond to the question. An acceptable post will respond specifically to the prompt, will be written in at least five full sentences, and will be respectful. In addition, you must respond to at least one post from one of your classmates. Your response must engage the original post on a substantive level (not only “I agree” or “good point”), consist of at least three full sentences, and be respectful. Six posts will constitute 20% of your final grade. There will be a 5% per day penalty for late work.

**Exams:** There will be two exams that will constitute 40% of your final grade. The exams will have a mixture of multiple-choice and open-ended questions, which will measure your understanding of the topics covered in this course.

**Two short papers:** There will be two short papers based on the weekly readings – one before and one after the mid-term. The two papers constitute 10% of your final grades.

**A policy paper:** Students will write a policy paper on a conflict of their choosing. You can choose any country from around the world. It should be 8-10 pages long and double spaced with a list of references. We will discuss the details in the first week of the class. Please pick a topic as early as possible and visit the instructor’s office in the third week of the semester to discuss it in detail. You need to follow a proper citation format. The paper will constitute 20% of your final grade. There will be a 5% per day penalty for late work.

**Participation:** Students are expected to finish the course readings before the class period for which they are assigned and participate actively in class discussions. I expect you to contribute to classroom discussions through questions and comments. Your attendance and participation are vital for the success of this course. Attendance and classroom participation will constitute 10% of your final grade.

**Your total grades:**

Two Exams: midterm-15%, final- 20%
Discussion: 20%
Short Papers: 10%
Policy Paper: 20%
Classroom Participation: 15%

Your final grades will be assigned that correspond to the following numeric scale:
Citation Format
For the papers in this course, students will follow the American Political Science Association (APSA) citation style guidelines.

A. How to cite authors in the text:
Use author’s last name and date of the publication. Don’t cite authors directly unless it is necessary. Summarize what these authors say and cite them.

Kalyvas (2006) demonstrates that civil war violence has much less to do with collective emotions, ideologies, and cultures than currently believed. Instead of being an effective counterinsurgency strategy, state repression may solve the collective action problem for the rebels and fuel a nascent insurgency (Mason and Krane, 1989).

B. Format for Reference list:
1. Book:

2. Article or Chapter in an Edited Book or Collection:

3. Journal Article:

4. Newspaper article:

Academic Integrity and Honesty:
Academic integrity is honest, truthful and responsible conduct in all academic endeavors. The mission of Saint Louis University is “the pursuit of truth for the greater glory of God and for the service of humanity.” Accordingly, all acts of falsehood demean and compromise the corporate endeavors of teaching, research, health care, and community service via which SLU embodies its mission. The University strives to prepare students for lives of personal and professional integrity, and therefore regards all breaches of academic integrity as matters of serious concern.
The governing University-level Academic Integrity Policy was adopted in Spring 2015, and can be accessed on the Provost’s Office website at: https://www.slu.edu/provost/policies/ academic-and-course/policy_academic-integrity_6-26-2015.pdf.

Additionally, each SLU College, School, and Center has adopted its own academic integrity policies, available on their respective websites. All SLU students are expected to know and abide by these policies, which detail definitions of violations, processes for reporting violations, sanctions, and appeals. Please direct questions about any facet of academic integrity to your faculty, the chair of the department of your academic program, or the Dean/Director of the College, School or Center in which your program is housed.

**Disability Services Academic Accommodations:**

Students with a documented disability who wish to request academic accommodations must formally register their disability with the University. Once successfully registered, students also must notify their course instructor that they wish to use their approved accommodations in the course.

Please contact the Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources (CADR) to schedule an appointment to discuss accommodation requests and eligibility requirements. Most students on the St. Louis campus will contact CADR, located in the Student Success Center and available by email at accessibility_disability@slu.edu or by phone at 314.977.3484. Once approved, information about a student’s eligibility for academic accommodations will be shared with course instructors by email from CADR and within the instructor’s official course roster. Students who do not have a documented disability but who think they may have one also are encouraged to contact to CADR. Confidentiality will be observed in all inquiries.

**Title IX:**

Saint Louis University and its faculty are committed to supporting our students and seeking an environment that is free of bias, discrimination, and harassment. If you have encountered any form of sexual harassment, including sexual assault, stalking, domestic or dating violence, we encourage you to report this to the University. If you speak with a faculty member about an incident that involves a Title IX matter, **that faculty member must notify SLU’s Title IX Coordinator and share the basic facts of your experience.** This is true even if you ask the faculty member not to disclose the incident. The Title IX Coordinator will then be available to assist you in understanding all of your options and in connecting you with all possible resources on and off campus.

Anna Kratky is the Title IX Coordinator at Saint Louis University (DuBourg Hall, room 36; anna.kratky@slu.edu; 314-977-3886). If you wish to speak with a confidential source, you may contact the counselors at the University Counseling Center at 314-977-TALK or make an anonymous report through SLU’s Integrity Hotline by calling 1-877-525-5669 or online at http://www.lighthouse-services.com/slu. To view SLU’s policies, and for resources, please visit the following web addresses: [https://www.slu.edu/about/safety/sexual-assault-resources/index.php](https://www.slu.edu/about/safety/sexual-assault-resources/index.php).

**Face Masks (Until further notice):**
Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, key safeguards like face masks have allowed SLU to safely maintain in-person learning. If public health conditions and local, state, and federal restrictions demand it, the University may require that all members of our campus community wear face masks indoors.

**Therefore, any time a university-level face mask requirement is in effect, face masks will be required in this class.** This expectation will apply to all students and instructors, unless a medical condition warrants an exemption from the face mask requirement (see below).

**When a university-wide face mask requirement is in effect,** the following will apply:

- Students who attempt to enter a classroom without wearing masks will be asked by the instructor to put on their masks prior to entry. Students who remove their masks during a class session will be asked by the instructor to resume wearing their masks.
- Students and instructors may remove their masks briefly to take a sip of water but should replace masks immediately. The consumption of food will not be permitted.
- Students who do not comply with the expectation that they wear a mask in accordance with the University-wide face mask requirement may be subject to disciplinary actions per the rules, regulations, and policies of Saint Louis University, including but not limited to those outlined in the *Student Handbook*. Non-compliance with this policy may result in disciplinary action, up to and including any of the following:
  - dismissal from the course(s)
  - removal from campus housing (if applicable)
  - dismissal from the University
- To immediately protect the health and well-being of all students, instructors, and staff, instructors reserve the right to cancel or terminate any class session at which any student fails to comply with a University-wide face mask requirement.

**When a university-wide face mask requirement is not in effect,** students and instructors may choose to wear a face mask or not, as they prefer for their own individual comfort level.

**ADA Accommodations for Face Mask Requirements:**

Saint Louis University is committed to maintaining an inclusive and accessible environment. Individuals who are unable to wear a face mask due to medical reasons should contact the Office of Disability Services (students) or Human Resources (instructors) to initiate the accommodation process identified in the University’s *ADA Policy*. Inquiries or concerns may also be directed to the Office of Institutional Equity and Diversity. Notification to instructors of SLU-approved ADA accommodations should be made in writing prior to the first class session in any term (or as soon thereafter as possible).

**Student Success Center:**

In recognition that people learn in a variety of ways and that learning is influenced by multiple factors (e.g., prior experience, study skills, learning disability), resources to support student success are available on campus. The Student Success Center assists students with academic-related services and is located in the Busch Student Center (Suite, 331). Students can visit
https://www.slu.edu/life-at-slu/student-success-center/ to learn more about tutoring services, university writing services, disability services, and academic coaching.

**University Writing Services:**

Students are encouraged to take advantage of University Writing Services in the Student Success Center; getting feedback benefits writers at all skill levels. Trained writing consultants can help with writing projects, multimedia projects, and oral presentations. University Writing Services offers one-on-one consultations that address everything from brainstorming and developing ideas to crafting strong sentences and documenting sources. For more information, visit https://www.slu.edu/life-at-slu/student-success-center/ or call the Student Success Center at 314-977-3484.

**Basic Needs Security:**

Students in personal or academic distress and/or who may be specifically experiencing challenges such as securing food or difficulty navigating campus resources, and who believe this may affect their performance in the course, are encouraged to contact the Dean of Students Office (deanofstudents@slu.edu or 314-977-9378) for support. Furthermore, please notify the instructor if you are comfortable in doing so, as this will enable them to assist you with finding the resources you may need.

**CLASS SCHEDULE AND READINGS**


Additional Readings Available on Canvas.

**PART I: OVERVIEW OF PEACE AND CONFLICT PATTERNS**

**1. Peace and Conflict in the Contemporary World**

January 17, 19

We will briefly talk about what “peace” means and why we should study peace. Then, we will discuss the patterns of armed conflict in the world since World War II. Has the world changed a lot? We can clearly identify three big changes. First, civil wars have replaced interstate wars as the major form of conflict. Second, the locus of conflict has shifted from the major power system (Europe, North America, China, Japan) to the poor regions of the world (Asia, Africa, and Latin America). Third, the number of on-going conflicts in the world went up from 1945 through 1994 and then declined steadily. What led to the change in the form, severity, and number of wars? The decline is largely a function of the international community brokering peace agreements to end wars around the world. The trend shows how systemic change affects the form and probability of war within and between nations.
2. Justification of Violence in Domestic Politics

January 23, 25, 27

When and why do people justify the use of violence to achieve political goals? Pacifists argue that violence of any sort can never be justified and advocate peaceful means for the desired sociopolitical change. Realists, on the other hand, argue that violence grows out of human nature - our fear of others and our desire to dominate others. We will discuss this question by exploring the perspectives of three prominent world leaders – Gandhi who led the anti-colonial movement in India, Mandela who led the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa, and King who led the civil rights movement in the US.

Required Readings:
- Martin Luther King, Jr. “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”
  http://www.stanford.edu/group/King/frequentdocs/birmingham.pdf
- Nelson Mandela, “I Am Prepared to Die”
  http://db.nelsonmandela.org/speeches/pub_view.asp?pg=item&ItemID=NMS010&txtstr=prepared%20to%20die

Multimedia:
- Gandhi - The Philosophy of Non-violence
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TkHTbkPoEQ8
- Nelson Mandela, Anti-Apartheid Activist and World Leader | Biography
3. **Just War Doctrine**

January 30, February 1, 3

While pacifists contend that we should never resort to violence, others argue that there are moments when the use of violence is justified. “Just war doctrine” specifies conditions under which the use of violence is justified in the international system. Calhoun discusses the principles of just war doctrine as well as the extent to which this doctrine is supposed to constrain a leader’s ability to wage a war, while Kegley and Raymond apply this doctrine to the case of the US- Iraq war in 2003. They contrast preventive war with preemptive war and its implications for just war doctrine. We also look at whether the US attack on Iraqi soil that killed an Irani general in 2020 fits Just War criteria.

**Required Readings:**
- “Growing doubts on legality of US strike that killed Iranian general”, CNN

**Multimedia:**
“What is Just War?”
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qcvX2qfdHkA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qcvX2qfdHkA)

**Suggested Reading:**

**PART II: CONFLICT BETWEEN AND WITHIN STATES**

4. **Theories of Interstate War: Conflict Between Nations**

February 6, 8 (February 10, Wellness Day, No Class)

We will explore the existing theories of interstate war. Theories help us make sense of the world around us. We will look at the occurrences of war through the levels-of-analysis framework that organizes the theories of interstate conflict mainly into three groups. These three levels are system level (characteristics of the system, e.g. bipolar, multipolar, unipolar world orders), state
level (characteristics of states, e.g. peace between democracies) and individual level
(characteristics of leaders).

**Required Readings:**
- The Roots of the Ukraine War: How the Crisis Developed

**Suggested Readings:**

Discussion Board- 2

### 5. Theories of Civil War: Conflict within Nations

February 13, 15, 17

Since the end of World War II, revolution, and other forms of war within nations have been more prevalent than interstate war between nations. In this section, we will examine the forms of civil war and the factors that make a nation vulnerable to civil war as well as the conditions that make individuals willing to participate in organized armed rebellion against their own government.

**Required Readings:**

**Multimedia:**
- Syria’s War: Who is fighting and why?
  [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFpanWNgfQY](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JFpanWNgfQY)

**Suggested Readings:**
- Ross, ML. 2004. “What do we know about natural resources and civil war?” *Journal of peace*
research, 41(3), 337-356.

*SHORT PAPER- DUE, FEBRUARY 21*

6. Terrorism and Ethnic/Religious Conflict

February 20, 22, 24

Ethnic conflict has become common in those parts of the world governed by colonial powers in the past. Borders were drawn with little or no regard for the geographic distribution of ethnic population or shared language, religion, and cultural heritage. The first part of this section will explore how ethnic divisions lead to conflict. We will study two secessionist wars – one in Sri Lanka and another in Rwanda. Similarly, terrorism has been used as a political tool by both opposition groups and states. Ethnopolitical organizations that lack organizational strength to launch full scale wars have used terrorism for the desired political change. Transnational groups opposed to the liberal order led by the US have used terrorism against the US. We will discuss types of terrorist groups, their motives, and why they choose terrorist violence to achieve their goals.

Required Readings:

Multimedia:
How could the Rwandan genocide happen? - BBC Africa
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SVnOGsJY5RQ

Suggested Readings:

Discussion Board-3
PART III: CONFLICT MANAGEMENT AND PEACE AFTER CONFLICT

7. How Wars End

February 27, March 1, 3

Civil war has become the dominant form of war after World War II and affected the countries in the global south. However, one promising trend in the post-cold war era has been the frequency with which civil wars have been settled through mediation and negotiated settlements. In this section we will explore the conditions that make wars “ripe for resolution” and the initiatives that third parties can take to resolve conflict. We will contrast this research with Luttwak’s “give war a chance” thesis.

Required Readings:

Suggested Readings:

8. Exam#1 & Review

Exam-1 Review: March 6
Exam-1: March 8

March 13-17: Spring Break

9. Negotiating Peace

March 10, 20, 22, 24

A critical barrier to bringing conflicts to an end is getting the protagonists to the bargaining table in the first place. We will examine the question of (1) “ripeness”: when a conflict is ripe for third party mediation, (2) “credible commitments”: getting the protagonists to disarm and demobilize, and (3) “spoilers”: preventing factions on both sides who opposed a negotiated settlement from sabotaging the negotiations by resuming conflict.
**Required Readings:**

**Suggested Reading:**

**Discussion Board-4**

### 10. Peacekeeping and Post-Conflict Peacebuilding

March 27, 29, 31

Ending civil wars is an important step in resolving the conflict. We may also need successful peacebuilding efforts to resolve the issues. In this section, we will explore the steps that the international community can take to build a sustainable peace in the aftermath of war.

**Required Readings:**

**Suggested Reading:**

### 11. State Repression and Human Rights

April 3, 5 (April 7, Easter Break)

We will explore some human rights issues in this section. Enforcing basic human rights may address some of the underlying causes of conflict, ensure a sense of security to the people at risk
of state persecution and help people live in peace. Respect for human rights is important for both conflict prevention and conflict resolution.

**Required Readings:**
- Universal Declaration of Human Rights

**Suggested Readings:**

**Discussion Board-5**

**12. Transitional Justice and Sustaining Peace After Conflict**

April 12, 14 (April 10, Easter Break)

The groups that have been fighting against each other for years have to live together after the conflict formally comes to an end. So, achieving some degree of reconciliation between the former enemies is an important step toward postwar peacebuilding. Transitional justice mechanisms have evolved for this purpose. In this section, we will examine two such mechanisms: truth and reconciliation commissions and international criminal tribunals.

**Required Readings:**

**Multimedia:**
Truth & Reconciliation Committee: The Difficulty of Forgiveness -full video-
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9k4deBth2K8

**Suggested Readings:**

**Discussion Board-5**
PART IV: CHALLENGES TO PEACE

13. New Challenges to Democracy

April 17, 19, 21

In this section, we will examine some of the new challenges to democracy and peace in the contemporary world. The world keeps changing and we need to adapt to these changes or tackle them. Some of the challenges include disruptions caused by globalization, technological advances and economic changes.

Required Readings:

Multimedia:
Protestors storm Brazilian capital
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ImMXbRet1r4
Far right online: the rise of extremist gamers
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dsUyhbnaQNQ

Suggested Readings:
https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2020-11-24/fukuyama-how-save-democracy-technology

Discussion Board-6

*SHORT PAPER-2 DUE, APRIL 23*


April 24, 26, 28

In this section, we will examine the role of grassroots social movements in constraining national leaders from being engaged in violence. We will explore the conditions that favor the success of non-violent movements in sociopolitical transformation. We will also study some political movements including the "color" revolutions of Eastern Europe and the Arab Spring.
**Required Readings:**

**Multimedia:**
The success of nonviolent civil resistance: Erica Chenoweth at TEDxBoulder
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJSehRIU34w](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YJSehRIU34w)

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**15. Student Presentations**

May 1,3,5
Presentation 1 – May 1
Presentation 2 – May 3
Presentation 3 – May 5

*POLICY PAPER DUE, MAY 7*

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**16. Exam#2 & Review**

Exam Review: May 8

*FINAL EXAM ON MAY 15, 8-9:50*