PCJ460H – Syllabus

Professor Paola Salardi

TRUDEAU CENTRE FOR PEACE, CONFLICT AND JUSTICE STUDIES
MUNK SCHOOL OF GLOBAL AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC POLICY
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

PCJ460H
Causes and Consequences of Civil Wars and Violence
Fall 2018

Class Time: Tuesdays 3pm-5pm
Class Location: UC 330 (University College)

Instructor: Professor Paola Salardi
Room: 1 Devonshire Place (At Trinity Site), Room #259S
Email: paola.salardi@utoronto.ca
Office hours: Thursday 10am-12pm, by appointment only, sign up at https://calendly.com/paola-salardi

Teaching Assistant: Alesha Porisky
Email: alesha.porisky@utoronto.ca

Course Description: Welcome to the PCJ460H! The goal of this course is to introduce you to current debates and issues related to civil wars and political violence. The course is broadly divided into three parts. The first part will cover core debates related to the conceptualization of civil conflicts and wars and to their causes and triggers. We will begin by understanding how conflict and violence are conceptualized and measured, and then we will look carefully at the causes and triggers of conflict – that is, what motivates individuals and groups to fight. In the second part of the course we will turn our attention to the consequences of conflict for people’s lives, focusing on education, health, and labour outcomes, and on social capital and political participation. The final sessions of the course will be focused on more active participation by students who will lead presentations based on influential research in the field. Throughout the course we will focus primarily on applied econometric studies, focusing on both the macro- and micro-levels. This will introduce you to important strands of research, while also seeking to expose you to new approaches to research: how quantitative research methods are applied to investigate conflicts, how to assess the quality and implications of econometric conflict research and how to run research in conflict-affected areas.

Welcome on board!
1. Organization of the course

The course is organized in lectures. Lectures will be held by the instructor every week for two hours. To facilitate the understanding of the research methods applied to the selected articles, several tutorials will be built into the lectures, led by the instructor. All of this is laid out in the detailed timetable for the course in section 5 of this document. However, variation from the detailed timetable may sometimes be announced during lectures and online on Quercus.

Lectures will mainly focus on the main debates around the key topics covered by the course, grounded in the analysis and explanation of key articles. These lectures will be supplemented by several ad hoc tutorials, which are designed both to review key concepts and to offer a deeper understanding of the methodologies applied in the compulsory reading.

On top of tutorials, students will have access to office hours as a source of additional support. Office hours will be held by both the instructor and by the TA. The instructor’s and TA’s office hours are listed at the beginning of this syllabus, and any variation will be sent by email and posted on Quercus.

U of T’s learning portal (a.k.a. Quercus) is here: https://q.utoronto.ca/
Announcements, lecture slides, readings, tutorial assignments, additional readings, past exams and grades will be posted on Quercus.

Teaching materials

This is an article-based course (not a textbook-based course): to succeed in this course you are required to read at least two academic articles to prepare for each class. On top of these articles, lectures slides will be provided via Quercus prior to the date of the lecture. You are expected to read both the lecture slides and the related articles before class: in my experience this strategy puts you in a position to better understand the reading and to grasp key concepts much more easily. It is important to attend all of the lectures, as they are interconnected.

The articles assigned for each lecture are listed in the preliminary list of readings in section 6 of this document. All of the compulsory reading will be posted on Quercus prior to the beginning of each week. Additional suggested readings are listed in the reading list and can be easily found though the U of T electronic library: https://onesearch.library.utoronto.ca/. Please note that the reading list might be revised based on your feedback and impressions as the course proceeds – and I would welcome your feedback in office hours so that I can continue to improve the course.
2. Student evaluation

This is the grading scheme:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Deadlines</th>
<th>Length</th>
<th>Weight</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Reflection</td>
<td>Tuesday, October 23 by 11:59pm, To be submitted via Turnitin.com</td>
<td>1,000-word essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Class Presentation</td>
<td>Slides must be submitted the day before the presentation by 11:59 pm by email to the instructor</td>
<td>15-minute presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Response Papers</td>
<td>Due by 11:59pm the day before class, in the week after the paper/presentation you are responding to To be submitted via Turnitin.com</td>
<td>750 words each</td>
<td>10% each</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Written Test</td>
<td>Tuesday, December 4 at 3pm</td>
<td>1.5 hours</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Critical Reflection**

The Critical Reflection is a 1,000-word essay on which you need to work in the first six weeks of your class. At the beginning of Week 3 I will post on Quercus a list of titles for the Critical Reflection. These titles will be based on the course material covered during the first five weeks of the term. The goal of the critical reflections is *not to simply summarize the readings, nor is it to simply identify a range of questions raised by the readings*. Instead, the goal is to write a short essay that addresses the questions analytically: What does the course material tell us about the topic, are the arguments persuasive or problematic, what questions are left unresolved and/or what issues and implications does the research raise? A good critical reflection will have a clear structure, with a brief, clear introduction and argument, a clear review of key material in the body of the paper and a conclusion that pulls together the argument and key issues. The goal of the assignment is to expose you to the challenge of understanding a topic of your choosing in a more detailed and critical way, and then of presenting a clear and succinct analysis in writing.

To deliver a good critical reflection you will need to refer not only to the compulsory adding from the syllabus relevant to your topic, but to also independently review the broader literature on the topic. As such you are encouraged to independently identify at least three additional articles on the topic. The articles need to be peer-reviewed academic articles published in social science journals (not just economics, but also history, anthropology, political science, psychology, sociology, etc.). Book chapters are also welcome. Newspaper articles or non-academic articles can be used in addition to the at least 3 additional academic articles.

The deadline for submission of your Critical Reflection is on Tuesday, October 23, at 11:59pm. The essay should be prepared as a Word (or Open Office) Document with a clear indication on the first page of your full name, your UTORid, your Student Number and the
title of your Critical Reflection. The essay must be no longer than 1,000 words. Please write using size 12 Times New Roman font, with 1.5 line spacing. The penalty for late submission will be 3% per day, so please submit on time. You will need to submit via Turnitin.com.

In-Class Presentation

The In-Class Presentation is designed to give you an opportunity to work in-depth on a specific research paper related to our course material, delve deeply into the quantitative research methods employed, and develop presentation skills.

Selection of the research paper: At the end of this document in section 6 you will find a list of six different research papers. At the beginning of Week 4 you will be asked to indicate which paper you would prefer to work on, via a Google Forms survey. Based on those preferences, you will be assigned to one of the research papers on a first come first served basis. You will be notified of your research paper, and group, before our class in Week 5.

Group Assignment: About seven students will be working on each research paper, divided into two randomly assigned smaller groups of three-four students. Your work with that smaller group of students will result in a 15-minute in-class presentation in Week 10, 11 or 12. The in-class presentation will require you, as a group, to present a detailed analysis of the paper, its conclusions and its limitations to the class. This will involve addressing several issues very succinctly:

- What is the research question/s of the paper, and why is it important?
- What is already known about the topic/what is the most important existing research on the topic?
- What is the empirical strategy of the paper?
- What are the key findings of the paper? This should include presentation and explanation of the key table(s) of findings.
- What are the implications of the findings for thinking about conflict, and policy to respond to conflict?
- What are the weaknesses and limitation of the paper? Where is more research needed?

To do this successfully you will need not only to review your own research paper, but to independently review the broader literature on your topic in detail, in order to better understand where your article fits in the literature, its limitations and directions for research. Your group will be expected to independently identify related literature in order to gain a greater mastery of the material, and a list of references, containing at least 3 sources, should be included along with the slides that you submit prior to class.

In-Class Presentations: Three classes (10, 11 and 12) will be devoted to your 15-minute presentations, which will be worth 20% of your final grade. You will be assigned to a presentation slot at the same time that you are assigned to your group, so that you will know well in advance. Please note that the presentation slides must be submitted the day before the presentation by 11:59pm by email to the instructor. Again, the penalty for late submission will be 3% per day, so please submit on time. It is expected that each student
should contribute equally to the presentation – it reflects badly on all of the presenters if one person does not make a solid contribution. A successful presentation depends not only on the quality of the information, but also on communicating that information very clearly to your classmates. Here are some key points to keep in mind.

1) *You need to be extremely well rehearsed*, so that you speak clearly, and remain within the time limit. You should meet as a group beforehand and rehearse the presentation out loud at least three times, to make sure you are on time and clear. I will be extremely strict about the 15-minute time limit, cutting you off as soon as you exceed the limit, as being able to stay on time is a very important skill.

2) *Think of your presentation as a short oral essay.* You are not simply summarizing the literature, but are trying to tell a story and make an argument about what we already know, what the research shows, and what is missing. You need to be very precise about the key messages.

3) *Have positive body language and speaking style:* By speaking clearly, with good volume, with energetic body language and by trying to communicate directly with your audience (relying as little as possible on your notes), you will be much more effective as a speaker, and your audience will retain much more information.

Note that it is very important that you attend *all* of the presentations and not just the class when you are presenting. Because everyone is presenting on related topics you can learn a lot from both the substance and the style of the different presentations, while it is also important to attend in order to support and respect your colleagues. The final exam may include material from the student presentations, while, as described below, you will need to write Response Papers responding to the presentations made by other groups. Finally, class attendance will be taken in each class. If you are absent from your own presentation you will be assigned a 0 for the assignment, unless you have an approved medical or personal reason for your absence, as described below.

**Response Papers**

While it is independently important that you attend *all* of the presentations, whether you are presenting or not, you will also be required to complete a short Response Paper after two classes in which you *are not* presenting – that is, *two Response Papers in total.* The goal of the Response papers is to respond critically to the content of one of the presentations from two presentation sessions different to yours.

The Response Paper will require you to respond to one of the presentations from that week, commenting not on the style of the presentation but on its substance. Specifically, you will be asked to comment on their description of the question and literature, on their presentation of the identification strategy and empirical findings and on their suggestions for future research. If relevant you should point out errors or gaps in their analysis, and issues that you felt should have been addressed.
The goal of the assignment is twofold: (1) To allow you an opportunity to assess in detail particular research papers and their research findings, and (2) to build your skills in listening to, understanding and responding to oral presentations. This is a critical skill in the field of social sciences, and in the broader labour market, but one which we practice comparatively rarely. More detailed instructions for the Response Papers will be circulated via Querus later in the term.

Each Response Paper will be due by 11:59pm on the day before class, the week after the paper/presentation you are responding to – that is, if you are commenting on a presentation done in Week 10, your response paper will be due at 6:00pm the day before the class in Week 11. The Response Papers should be prepared as a Word (or Open Office) Document with a clear indication on the first page of your full name, your UTORid, your Student Number and the title of your Response Paper. Each paper needs to be no longer than 750 words. Please write using size 12 Times New Roman font, with 1.5 line spacing. The penalty for late submission will be 3% per day, so please submit on time. You will need to submit via Turnitin.com.

**Final Written Test**

The Final Written Test will consist of a series of questions drawing on the entirety of the course material covered in the reading, during lectures, during the student presentations and during tutorials. Because the compulsory readings are the core teaching materials, having a good understanding of them will be key to being able to write a good final test.

The final test will combine few technical questions, based on economic models and results discussed in class, and more open-ended short essay questions. For the former, you might, for example, be asked to describe the model of civil conflict presented by a particular author, might be asked to explain a specific table of results, or might be asked to provide very short answers about the implications of a model or set of results. For the latter, you might, for example, be asked to describe key debates around a topic analysed in class.

The final test is scheduled during normal class time on December 4, our last class at 3pm. The duration of the test is 1.5 hours. Your final test will count for 35% of your total final grade. Failure to attend it will result in being assigned zero to the portion of your final grade.
3. Relevant dates

Tuesday, September 11: First Day of Class  
**Tuesday, October 23: Critical Reflection**  
Tuesday, November 6: No class (Reading week)  
**Tuesday, December 4: Final Written Test**

4. Other important information

**Course accessibility:** Students with diverse learning styles and needs are always welcome in this course. In particular, if you have a disability or health consideration, which may require accommodation, please feel free to approach me in person and/or the Accessibility Service ([http://accessibility.utoronto.ca/](http://accessibility.utoronto.ca/) or call 416-978-8060).

**Academic integrity:** Academic integrity is an important priority here at the University of Toronto. Our academic community honors the values of honesty, trust, respect, fairness and responsibility in order to protect you and your degree. Read Section B of the University of Toronto’s Code of Behavior on Academic Matters, as all students are expected to know and to respect this Code: [http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Polices/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf](http://www.governingcouncil.utoronto.ca/Assets/Governing+Council+Digital+Assets/Polices/PDF/ppjun011995.pdf).

**Email policy:** Email is NOT an appropriate forum for asking questions. If you want to discuss the course material you should meet with your instructor, or your TA, in person during office hours. If you have any personal matter or concern please similarly come to speak to me in person during office hours. On the other hand, if there are any issues with the course that you think I should know about, such as mistakes in a specific announcement, missing information about an approaching tutorial that have not been posted, feel free to email me – I would be most grateful, though I may not always be able to reply.

**Turnitin.com:** Normally, students will be required to submit their course essays to Turnitin.com for a review of textual similarity and detection of possible plagiarism. In doing so, students will allow their essays to be included as source documents in the Turnitin.com reference database, where they will be used solely for the purpose of detecting plagiarism. The terms that apply to the University’s use of the Turnitin.com service are described on the Turnitin.com website.

Class ID: 18998995  
Password: PCJ460H

If you object to using Turnitin.com you must contract the relevant course instructor well ahead of time (i.e. at least two weeks before your essay is due) to establish appropriate alternative arrangements for submission of your written assignments. This will involve devising alternative methods for verifying the originality of your work, likely including
submitting rough work along with your essay and having a brief interview about the work with the relevant instructor.

Illness and Extensions: In the case that you submit an assignment late because of illness we will follow the FAS policy for granting extensions. In general extensions will only be granted for serious illness immediately before or on the date of the submission deadline. Medical certificates, documenting the illness, must be submitted within one week of the deadline – or, in the case of serious illness prior to the deadline, must be submitted before the due date. Medical certificates need to adhere to the following characteristics in order to be acceptable:

- Only the official Verification of Student Illness or Injury by the University of Toronto will be accepted, fully completed by a Physician, Surgeon, Nurse Practitioner, Dentist, or Registered Psychologist. You can find the certificate to be completed at this link: [http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/index.php](http://www.illnessverification.utoronto.ca/index.php)
- You need to have visited the physician during the illness in question, not after the fact, and the medical note needs to be dated accordingly.
- The certificate needs to be submitted to the instructor in person, in class or during normal office hours. Suspicious certificates will be forwarded to the Office of Student Academic Integrity (OSAI) for further investigation.
### 5. Detailed Timetable

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Session</th>
<th>Topic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>September 11</td>
<td>Lecture #1</td>
<td>Introduction to the course&lt;br&gt;Global Trends in Conflict and Violence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>September 18</td>
<td>Lecture #2</td>
<td>Overview of the Economics of Conflict&lt;br&gt;Tutorial 1: Introduction to Research Methods</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>September 25</td>
<td>Lecture #3</td>
<td>Conceptualization of Conflict and Violence&lt;br&gt;Tutorial 2: The Structure of Economic Data</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>October 2</td>
<td>Lecture #4</td>
<td>Causes and Triggers of Civil Wars (part I)&lt;br&gt;Tutorial 3: Linear Regression Models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>October 9</td>
<td>Lecture #5</td>
<td>Causes and Triggers of Civil Wars (part II)&lt;br&gt;Tutorial 4: Limited Dependent Variable Models</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>October 16</td>
<td>Lecture #6</td>
<td>Consequences of Exposure to Violence (part I)&lt;br&gt;Tutorial 5: General Overview of the Evaluation Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>October 23</td>
<td>Lecture #7</td>
<td>Consequences of Exposure to Violence (part II)&lt;br&gt;Tutorial 6: The Identification of Causal Treatment for Conflict Exposure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>October 30</td>
<td>Lecture #8</td>
<td>Consequences of Exposure to Violence (part III)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>November 6</td>
<td>Reading week</td>
<td>(No class)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>November 13</td>
<td>Presentations’ session (I)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>November 20</td>
<td>Presentations’ session (II)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>November 27</td>
<td>Presentations’ session (III)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Extra</td>
<td>December 4</td>
<td>Final Written Test</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
6. Preliminary List of Readings

Important note: Any changes to the reading list will be highly publicised both during lectures in class, by email and with announcements on Querus. The readings listed under each lecture are compulsory. In turn, I have provided a short list of additional optional readings for each topic, if you wish to dig deeper into the topic.

Lecture 1: Global Trends in Conflict and Violence

Additional Suggested Readings

Lecture 2: Overview of the Economics of Conflict

Lecture 3: Conceptualization of Conflict and Violence

Additional Suggested Readings for Lectures 2 and 3

Lecture 4: Causes and Triggers of Civil Wars (I)

Lecture 5: Causes and Triggers of Civil Wars (II)

Additional Suggested Readings for Lectures 4 and 5
Lecture 6: Consequences of Exposure to Violence (I)


Lecture 7: Consequences of Exposure to Violence (II)


Lecture 8: Consequences of Exposure to Violence (III)


Additional Suggested Readings for Lectures 6, 7 and 8


**Essential Readings for In-Class Presentations:**