Causes and Consequences of Civil Wars and Violence - PCJ460HF

Fall 2020, LEC: Tuesdays 10:00am – 12:00pm, Eastern Time Zone (GMT-4)
TUT: Thursdays 10:00am-11:00am, Eastern Time Zone (GMT-4)

Instructor: Professor Paola Salardi
1 Devonshire Place, Munk 259S (South House)
Email: paola.salardi@utoronto.ca
Office Hours: TBA. Will be announced on Quercus.

Delivery: Online Only. Synchronous and asynchronous using Quercus, Zoom and Google Forms.

TA: Dario Toman
dario.toman@mail.utoronto.ca
Office Hours, TBA via Quercus.

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Course Description

Welcome to 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 exposing 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 aboard!

Course Format

The online course is organized in lectures and tutorials both delivered in a synchronous online format – i.e. both instructor and TA will deliver over Zoom in real time. Lectures will be held every week for two hours with the instructor, while some sessions might be offered in an asynchronous format – meaning, pre-recorded video will be available instead of online meetings. All of this is laid out in the Class Schedule. However, variation from the detailed timetable may sometimes be announced during online sessions and always advertised on Quercus through announcements.

Lectures will focus on the main debates around the key topics covered by the course, and grounded in the analysis and explanation of key articles. Lectures will be supplemented by several one-hour tutorials, which are designed to both review key concepts, and to offer you a deeper understanding of more complex sections of the compulsory reading. The TA will also go through examples of the types of questions that will be on your final written test, thus helping you to prepare effectively. The tutorials are also your chance to ask questions about the course material that might not have been discussed further during lectures.

Weekly Quercus Discussion Boards will be opened to allow students to ask any questions they need. The TA and the instructor will be monitoring the discussion boards and offer support and answers through it. Alongside tutorials and online discussions, students will have access to online office hours as a source of additional support. Office hours will be held by both the instructor and the TA. The instructor’s and TA’s office hours will be advertised online, and any variation will be sent by email and posted on Quercus.

U of T’s learning portal (a.k.a. Quercus) can be accessed here: https://q.utoronto.ca/. Students are expected to check Quercus regularly as announcements, lecture slides, readings, tutorial assignments, additional readings, online discussion boards, feedback questionnaires, past exams and grades will be posted on Quercus.

Evaluations and Course Grade
The final course grade reflects your level of demonstrated achievement of the course learning objectives. Evaluations provide feedback on your progress towards the final course grade. Your submissions through Turnitin will be via the Quercus course site. As you submit your assignment on Quercus, you will have the option to consent to having your work checked for plagiarism through Turnitin.com.

If you elect to opt-out of using Turnitin.com, you must contact the course instructor well in advance (i.e. at least two weeks before your assignment 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.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>EVALUATIONS</th>
<th>WEIGHT</th>
<th>DEADLINE</th>
<th>SUBMISSION VIA</th>
<th>Turnitin.com</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Critical Reflection (1000 words)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>Friday October 30, 2020 11:59pm EST</td>
<td>Quercus</td>
<td>Y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Online Group Presentation (15 minutes)   | 20%    | Presentation: TBA  
Slide Deck:  
Day Before Presentation  
11:59pm EST | Presentation: Zoom  
Submit Slide Deck: Quercus | N/A           |
| Response Papers (750 words each)         | 10% each | Day Before Class  
(The week after the paper/presentation you are responding to.)  
11:59pm EST | Quercus | Y            |
| Final Online Test (1.5 hours)            | 25%    | Tuesday December 8, 2020 10:00am EST | Crowdmark | N/A           |
| Attendance and Participation             | 15%    | Ongoing                        | Zoom Quercus Discussion Board | N/A           |

**Evaluation Criteria**
**Critical Reflection:**

The Critical Reflection is a 1,000-word essay which you will work on during the first six weeks of classes. 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 reading from the syllabus relevant to your topic, but also 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 three additional academic articles.

The deadline for submission of your Critical Reflection is on **Friday, October 30, at 11:59pm EST**. 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 Quercus.

**Online Group Presentation:**

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

**Selection of the Research Paper:**

At the end of the Class Schedule, you will find a list of six different academic 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 academic papers on a first come, first served basis. You will be notified of your academic paper, and group, before our class in Week 5.

**Group Assignment:**

About seven-eight students will be working on each academic paper, divided into two randomly assigned smaller groups of three-four students. Your work within that smaller group will result in a 15-minute in-class presentation in Weeks 9, 10 or 11 to be delivered online synchronously. This means that students will be presenting to their peers over Zoom in real time. Through screen-sharing and coordinating speaking time in advance, students will be able to present their academic papers to the rest of the class synchronously. The online 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 future research. Your group will be expected to independently identify related literature in order to gain a greater mastery of the material. A list of references containing at least three sources should be included along with the slides that you submit prior to class.

**Online Presentations:**

Three classes (Weeks 9, 10 and 11) 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 know well in advance. Please note that the presentation slides must be submitted the day before the presentation by 11:59pm EST via Quercus. 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 online 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:** It is very important that you attend all of the online presentations and not just the session 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 test 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, attendance will be taken in each class. If you are absent
from your own presentation you will be assigned a grade of 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 online 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 on its substance, rather than its style. 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
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 posted via Quercus.

Each Response Paper will be due by 11:59pm EST 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 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 Quercus.

**Final Online Test:**

The Final Online Test will consist of a series of questions drawing on the **entirety** of the course material covered in the reading, during lectures, during the online group 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 a 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, asked to explain a specific table of results, or 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 regular class time on **December 8** but will be administered online through Crowdmark. The duration of the test is 1.5 hours. Your final test will count for 25% of your total final grade. Failure to attend it will result in being assigned 0 to the portion of your final grade, unless you have an approved medical or personal reason for your absence, as described below.

**Attendance and Participation:**
The Attendance and Participation component of your grade is based not only on your attendance in class (online attendance for the entire duration of the class will be recorded every week) and the quality of your active participation during these online sessions, but also your participation in events and seminars outside of normal class hours. These events and seminars are part of being a member of the PCJ community and are recognized as an important complement to your courses. Unfortunately this year our calendar of events is affected by the restrictions imposed due to COVID-19 and as such, only the PCJ Fellow talks will be considered for this course. Specifically, the breakdown of this 15% will be as follows:

- 5% attendance at the PCJ Fellow talks – at least one out of the three scheduled talks;
- 10% participation to the course

**Late Penalty**
The penalty for late submission will be 3% per day, so please submit on time. For more information, see section on Illness and Extensions.

**Required Readings**
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. In addition to 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. However as these Zoom sessions will be live-streamed and recorded, the recordings will be made available for further viewing. Furthermore, some of these lectures might be pre-recorded and students will be asked to watch these videos before interacting in online meetings.

The articles assigned for each lecture are listed in the Class Schedule. All of the compulsory reading will be posted on Quercus prior to the beginning of each week. Additional suggested readings are listed in Recommended Readings list below 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.

**Recommended Readings (Optional)**
Below are additional readings for those who are eager to dig deeper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SESSION</th>
<th>RECOMMENDED READINGS</th>
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### Weeks 4 & 5


### Weeks 6, 7 & 8


### Class Schedule
**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 (see Recommended Readings), if you wish to dig deeper into the topic.

Weeks that will require asynchronous, pre-recorded lecture viewings are TBA.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK 1</th>
<th>L: (15/09/20)</th>
<th>T: (17/09/20)</th>
<th>DELIVERY</th>
<th>TOPIC AND KEY CONCEPTS</th>
<th>REQUIRED READINGS</th>
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*Submit Research Paper Topic for Group Presentation via Google Forms*
| Week 6 | L: (20/10/20) | T: (22/10/20) | Online Only, Synchronous, Zoom Link via Quercus. | **Consequences of Exposure to Violence:**  

| Week 7 | L: (27/10/20) | T: (29/10/20) | Online Only, Synchronous, Zoom Link via Quercus. | **Consequences of Exposure to Violence:**  
• Michaelsen, Maren M. and Paola Salardi (2017), “Violence, Psychological Stress and Educational Performance during the “War on Drugs” in Mexico”, *mimeo*.

| Week 8 | L: (03/11/20) | T: (05/11/20) | Online Only, Synchronous, Zoom Link via Quercus. | **Consequences of Exposure to Violence:**  

| **Critical Reflection Due Friday October 30, 2020**

| Week 9 | L: (17/11/20) | No Tutorial | Online Only, Synchronous, Zoom Link via Quercus. | **Presentations:**  
*Session I* | **Essential Readings for Online Group Presentations:**  

| Week 10 | L: (24/11/20) | No Tutorial | Online Only, Synchronous, Zoom Link via Quercus. | **Presentations:**  

| Week 11 | L: (01/12/20) | No Tutorial | Online Only, Synchronous, Zoom Link via Quercus. | **Presentations:**  

| Week 12 | (08/12/20) | Online using Crowdmark | No Tutorial | **Final Written Test** | • N/A
Email Policy
Email is NOT an appropriate forum for asking questions. If you want to discuss the course material you should meet with the instructor or the TA, during online office hours. If you have any personal matter or concern, feel free to send me an email and I will try to reply at my earlier convenience. In addition, 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 upcoming tutorial that have not been posted, again feel free to email me – I would be most grateful, though I may not always be able to reply immediately.

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 form by the University of Toronto will be accepted, fully completed by a Physician, Surgeon, Nurse Practitioner, Dentist, or Registered Psychologist.
- 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. Suspicious certificates will be forwarded to the Office of Student Academic Integrity (OSAI) for further investigation.

Course Drop Deadlines
The last date to cancel F courses is November 9, 2020. If you need to drop a course, please contact your Registrar’s Office and the PCJ Program and Events Coordinator, Jona Malile, at pcj.program@utoronto.ca.

Grading and Assessment
Final grades in the course are given as percentage grades, which correspond to a letter grade that is used to calculate GPA according to the University of Toronto marking scheme. For more information, see the Faculty of Arts and Science Academic Handbook, section 10. They reflect your overall performance in achieving the stated Course Learning Outcomes. Assessment on interim evaluations can take many forms and are intended to give you an indication of where you stand relative to others. This will allow you to make adjustments to your approach, your expectations, and your performance. Please contact your instructor if you would like more guidance on your individual course performance.

Turnitin.com
Normally, students will be required to submit their 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 Attendance
Students are expected to attend every class, online for this course. Those who miss more than one-sixth of a course due to illness or personal circumstances should inform their instructor and Registrar’s Office immediately.

Accessibility Services
Academic accommodations are provided when you experience disability-related barriers that prohibit demonstration of your knowledge and skills. To receive accommodations, students must register with Accessibility Services. Accommodations are provided to level the playing field upon which you can establish your success. You are encouraged to inform yourself about options in this regard at the website for Accessibility Services.
Academic Accommodations
Occasionally students will need to apply for an academic accommodation due to disability, illness, religious observance or personal emergency. All requests for an academic accommodation due to disability are handled by the University of Toronto’s Accessibility Services, as specified in the Faculty of Arts and Science Academic Handbook, section 13. All requests for non-disability related accommodations are handled by the instructor, or the PCJ Program Director. For disability-related accommodations, Accessibility Services staff will determine suitable accommodations on a case-by-case basis based on recommendation from health providers and with student input. If a non-disability related accommodation request is approved, a resolution will be determined by the instructor and may take the form of an alternate deliverable, deadline extension, re-weighted course grade calculation, make-up exam, or another solution deemed appropriate by the instructor. If an accommodation request is not approved, the missed or late deliverable will be subject to an academic penalty. The extent of the penalty is at the discretion of the instructor.

Mental Health and Wellness
Feeling Distressed? Are you in crisis? There’s Help. Call Good2Talk: 1-866-925-5454. Free, confidential helpline with professional counselling, information and referrals for mental health, addictions and well-being, 24/7/365. Are you in immediate danger? For Personal Safety - Call 911, then Campus Community Police*

Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters
Please read the University's Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters. It applies to all your academic activities and courses. The Code prohibits all forms of academic dishonesty including, but not limited to, cheating, plagiarism, and the use of unauthorized aids. Violating the Code may lead to penalties up to and including suspension or expulsion from the University. You are expected to know the Code and inform yourself of acceptable academic practices – ignorance of the Code or the acceptable academic practices is not a valid defense if you are accused of a violation.

Academic Integrity
Case write-ups, papers, assignments, and all other deliverables must be original work, giving credit to the work of others where appropriate. This applies to individual and group deliverables. All members of a group are accountable for the academic integrity of their submissions. You are encouraged to consult the following sites to ensure that you follow the appropriate rules. Ignorance of these rules is not a defense in cases of violations, which can result in very serious academic sanctions. Please visit the University of Toronto Academic Integrity and the UofT Writing Centre Resources websites for further detail and help on the proper use of citations.

Group Work and Behaviour
You are expected to treat teamwork the same way as you would in any professional organization. This includes, but is not limited to:

• Contributing substantially and proportionally to each project
• Committing to a standard of work and level of participation agreed upon by the group
• Ensuring familiarity with the entire content of a group deliverable so that you can sign off on it with your name in its entirety as original work
• Accepting and acknowledging that assignments that are found to be plagiarized in any way will be subject to sanctions for all group members under the University’s Code of Behaviour on Academic Matters linked above
• Ensuring that all team members voice their opinions, thoughts, and concerns openly and in an inclusive and considerate environment
• Taking personal responsibility for voicing your own thoughts to enhance and contribute to the team learning

If you encounter difficulties with any group member that cannot be resolved within the group, please contact your instructor for guidance. Your instructor may refer you to the PCJ Program Director for further assistance.

Use of Technology
Course offerings at the University have moved online, creating new ways to connect and collaborate with your professors and peers. Like any professional organization, the Munk School expects all of its members to behave responsibly and with courtesy and respect for others when using technology. The Munk School is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another’s differences. Please read the University’s Student Code of Conduct and policy on the Appropriate Use of Information and Communication Technology.

Class Recordings
To facilitate learning, lecture recordings will be posted to Quercus. These recordings are intended to be used as a student study aid and are not a substitute for regular attendance. Recordings may not be reproduced or posted or shared anywhere other than the official course Quercus site and should only be used by students currently registered in the course. Recordings may be uploaded to students’ laptops for personal use. Students agree not to distribute lecture recordings via any distribution channels without permission from the instructor.

Students are encouraged to participate in online lectures, as you would in an in-person session. Should students wish not to be visible on video recordings, we recommend that you turn off your camera. Your voice, however, may be captured as an audio recording if you ask a question in class. If you have any concern about your voice being recorded, please speak to your instructor to determine an alternative means of participating.

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