

**Terrorism, Crime, and Public Policy (aka. Empirical Studies in Conflict and  
Terrorism)  
JLC-672  
Spring 2018**

**Instructor:** Dr. Thomas Zeitzoff, Assistant Professor.

**Schedule:** Mondays 5:30-8:00PM, Kerwin 103

**Office:** Kerwin 252

**Office hours:** Mondays and Thursdays 3-4:30PM, or by appointment.

**Email:** zeitsoff@american.edu

**Course Description**

This course will explore the causes, tactics, and consequences of terrorism and political violence. Given the increasing availability and use of quantitative data to study political violence, we will largely focus on quantitative papers that are empirical in nature, and in particular those on the cutting edge (published in the last 5 years). The pitch of this course will be towards a PhD-level seminar, with the end goal being to produce a piece of quantitative research.

**Objectives (things you will know after taking this class)**

1. Understand research design and methodological issues related to the study of political violence
2. Be able to discuss and critically engage with cutting edge political violence research, and empirical methods.
3. Use and apply data analysis skills to violence topic of your own choosing.

**Readings**

There are no required books for this course. All of the readings and materials are available on the course website, or at a given url where indicated. You are required to do all the readings—both theoretical and for the presentation background—for each class.

**Cellular Phones Policy**

Laptops will be permitted in class, however, cellular phones will not.

**Sharing of Course Content**

Students are not permitted to make visual or audio recordings, including live streaming, of classroom lectures or any class related content, using any type of recording devices (e.g., smart phone, computer, digital recorder, etc.) unless prior permission from the instructor is obtained, and there are no objections from any of the students in the class. If

permission is granted, personal use and sharing of recordings and any electronic copies of course materials (e.g., PowerPoints, formulas, lecture notes and any classroom discussions online or otherwise) is limited to the personal use of students registered in the course and for educational purposes only, even after the end of the course.

Exceptions will be made for students who present a signed Letter of Accommodation from the Academic Support and Access Center. See: How Do I Request Accommodations?

< <http://www.american.edu/ocl/asac/Accommodations.cfm> >

To supplement the classroom experience, lectures may be audio or video recorded by faculty and made available to students registered for this class. Faculty may record classroom lectures or discussions for pedagogical use, future student reference, or to meet the accommodation needs of students with a documented disability. These recordings are limited to personal use and may not be distributed (fileshare), sold, or posted on social media outlets without the written permission of faculty.

Unauthorized downloading, file sharing, distribution of any part of a recorded lecture or course materials, or using information for purposes other than the student's own learning may be deemed a violation of *American University's Student Conduct Code* and subject to disciplinary action (see Student Conduct Code VI. Prohibited Conduct).

### **Academic Integrity**

I take issues of cheating and plagiarism very seriously. Please familiarize yourself with the AU Academic Integrity Code. I regard violations of this code seriously and will immediately refer the matter to the dean. If you have any questions about the course, or more general requirements about the code, please do not hesitate to talk to me.

### **Assessment**

\*\*Note: Each unexcused absence will result in the loss of 0.35 GPA points on your final grade. More than three unexcused absences will result in failure for the course\*\*

### **Participation (20%)**

Success in the course depends on regular attendance and discussion. Students must do ALL of the assigned readings before class and be prepared to answer questions and ask them. Attendance alone is insufficient to succeed. Discussion will be evaluated on both quality and quantity of comments, particularly during the presentations. You should also be prepared for the fact that I may call on you randomly--so come prepared.

### **Discussants (30%)**

Many of you will serve as discussant at least 2-3 times throughout the semester. These will be short 10-12 minute presentations about each week's readings, followed by 10-15 minutes of general discussions. Each discussant should include:

1. Define the Research Questions/Puzzle
2. Discuss Relevant Literature
3. Hypotheses Tested

4. Method and Data Used
5. Findings/Conclusion
6. Issues/Further Questions

If you want to Google Slides/PPT, you need to use your own computer. If you don't use slides, you need to write up a 1-pg summary of the discussant. After each class, discussant slides will be posted on Blackboard.

### **Final Project (50%)**

Part of the goal of this class is to help students produce research of their own. As part of that undertaking, each student will conduct their own research project collecting data (N=40) related to political violence, and analyzing it using linear regression to write up a 10-12 page data analysis project. We will discuss this more in class.

- Rough Draft 2-3pg outline (10%)
- Final Paper Analysis + Code/Data (20%)
- Final Presentations (20%)

**\*\*NOTE: LATE WORK WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED\*\***

### **Classroom Courtesy**

Classroom courtesy is an essential component of creating an effective learning environment. All students have the right to learn without unnecessary distractions. These distractions include: cellphones, talking during lectures (unless recognized by the instructor), reading newspapers, falling asleep, etc. If you need a cell phone for emergency purposes, leave it on vibrate.

Entering and leaving are also significant sources of distraction. It is your responsibility to be on time and to stay for the entire period. In circumstances where you need to leave early, tell the professor beforehand. Repeated disruptions of class will lead to a reduction in your final grade.

Most importantly, class discussions of the issues in political science, criminology, and justice, can lead to strong feelings and heated debate. Because this is a college classroom, all discussion must be respectful and scholarly.

### *Scholarly Comments*

- Are respectful of diverse opinions and open to follow up questions and/or disagreement
- Are related to class and/or the course material
- Focus on advancing the discussion about issues related to the course and/or course material rather than personal beliefs, and

- Are delivered in normal tones and a non-aggressive manner.

### *Unacceptable Comments*

- Are personal in nature. This includes attacks on a person's appearance, demeanor, or political beliefs.
- Include interrupting the professor or other students. Raise your hand and wait to be recognized.
- Often use the discussion to argue for political positions and/or beliefs. If political discussions arise, they must be discussed in a scholarly way (see above).
- May include using raised tones, yelling, engaging in arguments with other students and being threatening in any manner.
- Include ignoring the professor's authority to maintain the integrity of the classroom environment.

### **Syllabus Change Policy**

This syllabus is a guide for the course and is subject to change with advanced notice. These changes may come via e-mail. Make sure to check your university-supplied email regularly. You are accountable for all such communications.

### **Students Resources**

If you experience difficulty in this course for any reason, please do not hesitate to consult with me. In addition to the resources of the department, a wide range of services is available to support you in your efforts to meet the course requirements.

***Academic Support Center*** (x3360, MGC 243) offers study skills workshops, individual instruction, tutor referrals, and services for students with learning disabilities. Writing support is available in the ASC Writing Lab or in the Writing Center, Battelle 228.

***Disability Support Services*** (x3315, MGC 206) offers technical and practical support and assistance with accommodations for students with physical or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability and might require accommodations in this course, please notify me with a letter from DSS or ASC early in the semester so that we can make arrangements to address your needs.

***Counseling Center*** (x3500, MGC 214) offers counseling and consultations regarding personal concerns, self-help information, and connections to off-campus mental health resources.

**Writing Center** in 228 Battelle-Tompkins offers free, individual coaching sessions to all AU students. In your 45-minute session, a student writing consultant can help you address assignments, understand the conventions of academic writing, and learn how to revise and edit your own work. The Center offers appointments on the hour from 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Monday through Thursday; 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. Friday, and 3 to 6 p.m. on

Sundays. Call [202- 885- 2991](tel:202-885-2991) to arrange a session.

**Center for Diversity & Inclusion** is dedicated to enhancing LGBTQ, Multicultural, First Generation, and Women's experiences on campus and to advance AU's commitment to respecting & valuing diversity by serving as a resource and liaison to students, staff, and faculty on issues of equity through education, outreach, and advocacy. It is located on the 2nd floor of Mary Graydon Center: [202-885-3651](tel:202-885-3651), email is [cdi@american.edu](mailto:cdi@american.edu).

**Dean of Students Office** (x3300, 408 Butler Pavilion) offers one-on-one meetings to discuss academic, adjustment, and personal issues that may be interfering with a student's ability to succeed academically. The DOS office also verifies documentation for students who have medical or mental health issues that cause them to be absent from class.

### **Emergency Preparedness**

In the event of a declared pandemic (influenza or other communicable disease), American University will implement a plan for meeting the needs of all members of the university community. Should the university be required to close for a period of time, we are committed to ensuring that all aspects of our educational programs will be delivered to our students. These may include altering and extending the duration of the traditional term schedule to complete essential instruction in the traditional format and/or use of distance instructional methods. Specific strategies will vary from class to class, depending on the format of the course and the timing of the emergency. Faculty will communicate class-specific information to students via AU e-mail and Blackboard, while students must inform their faculty immediately of any absence due to illness. Students are responsible for checking their AU e-mail regularly and keeping themselves informed of emergencies. In the event of a declared pandemic or other emergency, students should refer to the AU Web site ([american.edu/emergency](http://american.edu/emergency)) and the AU information line at [\(202\) 885-1100](tel:202-885-1100) for general university-wide information, as well as contact their faculty and/or respective dean's office for course and school/college-specific information.

#### Week 1 (January 22) Introduction

- Blattman, Christopher, and Edward Miguel. "Civil war." *Journal of Economic literature* (2010): 3-57.
- Lyall, Jason. "Does indiscriminate violence incite insurgent attacks? Evidence from Chechnya." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 53.3 (2009): 331-362.
- Winship, Christopher, and Stephen L. Morgan. "The estimation of causal effects from observational data." *Annual review of sociology* 25.1 (1999): 659-706.

#### Week 2 (January 29) Causes of Violence

- Zhukov, Yuri M. "Trading hard hats for combat helmets: The economics of rebellion in eastern Ukraine." *Journal of comparative economics* 44.1 (2016): 1-15.
- Miguel, Edward, Shanker Satyanath, and Ernest Sergenti. "Economic shocks and civil conflict: An instrumental variables approach." *Journal of political Economy* 112.4 (2004): 725-753.
- Blair, Graeme, C. Christine Fair, Neil Malhotra, and Jacob N. Shapiro. "Poverty and support for militant politics: Evidence from Pakistan." *American Journal of Political Science* 57, no. 1 (2013): 30-48. Miguel and Satyanath
- Wimmer, Andreas, Lars-Erik Cederman, and Brian Min. "Ethnic politics and armed conflict: A configurational analysis of a new global data set." *American Sociological Review* 74.2 (2009): 316-337.

### Week 3 (February 5) Mobilization and Collective Action

- Krueger, Alan B., and Jitka Malečková. "Education, poverty and terrorism: Is there a causal connection." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 17.4 (2003): 119-144.
- Toft, Monica Duffy, and Yuri M. Zhukov. "Islamists and nationalists: Rebel motivation and counterinsurgency in Russia's North Caucasus." *American Political Science Review* 109.2 (2015): 222-238.
- Ginges, Jeremy, Scott Atran, Douglas Medin, and Khalil Shikaki. "Sacred bounds on rational resolution of violent political conflict." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* 104, no. 18 (2007): 7357-7360.
- Tezcür, Güneş Murat. "Ordinary people, extraordinary risks: Participation in an ethnic rebellion." *American Political Science Review* 110.2 (2016): 247-264.

### Week 4 (February 12) Organization and Networks

#### \*\*Assign Final Project\*\*

- Oppenheim, Ben, Abbey Steele, Juan F. Vargas, and Michael Weintraub. "True believers, deserters, and traitors: Who leaves insurgent groups and why." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59, no. 5 (2015): 794-823.
- Jha, Saumitra, and Steven Wilkinson. "Does combat experience foster organizational skill? Evidence from ethnic cleansing during the partition of South Asia." *American Political Science Review* 106.4 (2012): 883-907.
- Gordon, Grant. "Payment and Predation: The Politics of Wages and Violence in the Congolese Army." *Columbia University Manuscript* (2015).

### Week 5 (February 19) Tactics and Strategies

- Pape, Robert A. "The strategic logic of suicide terrorism." *American political science review* 97.3 (2003): 343-361.
  - **Critique:** Ashworth, Scott, Joshua D. Clinton, Adam Meirowitz, and Kristopher W. Ramsay. "Design, inference, and the strategic logic of

- suicide terrorism." *American Political Science Review* 102, no. 2 (2008): 269-273.
- **Response to the Critique:** Pape, Robert A. "Methods and findings in the study of suicide terrorism." *American Political Science Review* 102, no. 2 (2008): 275-277.
  - **Rejoinder to the Response to the Critique:** Ashworth, Scott, Joshua D. Clinton, Adam Meirowitz, and Kristopher W. Ramsay. "Design, Inference, and the Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism: A Rejoinder." *Unpublished manuscript* (2008).
  - Shapiro, Jacob N., and Nils B. Weidmann. "Is the phone mightier than the sword? Cellphones and insurgent violence in Iraq." *International Organization* 69.2 (2015): 247-274.
  - Matanock, Aila, and Paul Staniland. "How and Why Armed Groups Participate in Elections." (2017).

#### Week 6 (February 26) Predicting and Measuring Violence

- Blair, Robert A., Christopher Blattman, and Alexandra Hartman. "Predicting local violence: Evidence from a panel survey in Liberia." *Journal of Peace Research* 54, no. 2 (2017): 298-312.
- Hirose, Kentaro, Kosuke Imai, and Jason Lyall. "Can civilian attitudes predict insurgent violence? Ideology and insurgent tactical choice in civil war." *Journal of Peace Research* 54.1 (2017): 47-63.
- Van der Windt, Peter, and Macartan Humphreys. "Crowdseeding conflict data." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (2014).
- Huff, Connor, and Joshua D. Kertzer. "How the Public Defines Terrorism." *American Journal of Political Science* (2017).

#### Week 7 (March 5) Legacies of Violence

- Voigtländer, Nico, and Hans-Joachim Voth. "Persecution perpetuated: the medieval origins of anti-Semitic violence in Nazi Germany." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 127.3 (2012): 1339-1392.
- Getmansky, Anna, and Thomas Zeitzoff. "Terrorism and voting: The effect of rocket threat on voting in Israeli elections." *American Political Science Review* 108.3 (2014): 588-604.
- Bauer, Michal, Christopher Blattman, Julie Chytilová, Joseph Henrich, Edward Miguel, and Tamar Mitts. "Can war foster cooperation?." *The Journal of Economic Perspectives* 30, no. 3 (2016): 249-274.
- Rozenas, Arturas, Sebastian Schutte, and Yuri Zhukov. "The Political Legacy of Violence: The Long-Term Impact of Stalin's Repression in Ukraine." (2017).

#### Week 8 (March 12) Spring Break

**\*\*NO CLASS SPRING BREAK\*\***

### Week 9 (March 19) Leaders

#### \*\*Rough Draft Due\*\*

- Horowitz, Michael C., and Allan C. Stam. "How prior military experience influences the future militarized behavior of leaders." *International Organization* 68.3 (2014): 527-559.
- Glowacki, Luke, Alexander Isakov, Richard W. Wrangham, Rose McDermott, James H. Fowler, and Nicholas A. Christakis. "Formation of raiding parties for intergroup violence is mediated by social network structure." *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences* (2016): 201610961.
- Abrahms, Max, and Philip BK Potter. "Explaining terrorism: Leadership deficits and militant group tactics." *International Organization* 69.2 (2015): 311-342.

### Week 10 (March 26) One-on-One Meetings

### Week 11 (April 2) Gendered Violence

- Cohen, Dara Kay. "Explaining rape during civil war: Cross-national evidence (1980–2009)." *American Political Science Review* 107.3 (2013): 461-477.
- Thomas, Jakana L., and Kanisha D. Bond. "Women's Participation in Violent Political Organizations." *American Political Science Review* 109.3 (2015): 488-506.
- García-Ponce, Omar. "Women's Political Participation in the Aftermath of Civil War: Evidence from Peru." *Job Market Paper, New York University* (2015).
- Hudson, Valerie M., and Hilary Matfess. "In Plain Sight: The Neglected Linkage between Brideprice and Violent Conflict." *International Security* 42.1 (2017): 7-40.

### Week 12 (April 9) Radicalization and Propaganda

- Benmelech, Efraim, and Esteban F. Klor. *What Explains the Flow of Foreign Fighters to ISIS?*. No. w22190. National Bureau of Economic Research, 2016.
- Yanagizawa-Drott, David. "Propaganda and conflict: Evidence from the Rwandan genocide." *The Quarterly Journal of Economics* 129.4 (2014): 1947-1994.
- Mitts, Tamar. "From Isolation to Radicalization: The Socioeconomic Predictors of Support for ISIS in the West." (2017).
- Gohdes, Anita R. "Pulling the plug: Network disruptions and violence in civil conflict." *Journal of Peace Research* 52.3 (2015): 352-367.
- King, Gary, Jennifer Pan, and Margaret E. Roberts. "How the Chinese government fabricates social media posts for strategic distraction, not engaged argument." *American Political Science Review* 111.3 (2017): 484-501.

### Week 13 (April 16) Organized Crime and Violence

- Dell, Melissa. "Trafficking networks and the Mexican drug war." *The American Economic Review* 105.6 (2015): 1738-1779.
- Alesina, Alberto, Salvatore Piccolo, and Paolo Pinotti. *Organized crime, violence, and politics*. No. w22093. National Bureau of Economic Research, 2016.



- Lessing, Benjamin. "Logics of violence in criminal war." *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 59.8 (2015): 1486-1516.
- Daly, Sarah Zukerman, Paler Laura, and Samii Cyrus. "Wartime Networks and the Social Logic of Crime." *Typescript, University of Notre Dame, University of Pittsburgh: New York University* (2016).

Week 14 (April 23) Guest Lecture TBD

Week 15 (April 30) Final Presentations

**\*\*Final Projects/Presentations Due\*\***