Course Description
This course is designed to give graduate students a broad overview of issues in political violence. Drawing on works from comparative politics, international relations, economics, and sociology, this course covers a diverse array of inter-related topics, including political order, collective action and mobilization, the dynamics of repression and collective violence, civil war and insurgency onset, counterinsurgency, civilian victimization, and international elements of intrastate political violence. The course readings will also include a diverse range of methodological approaches to questions within these areas, including case studies, ethnographic research, quantitative and statistical analyses, and formal and mathematical modeling.

There are no formal prerequisites for the course. However, students will benefit from having completed basic graduate field seminars in either comparative politics or international relations, as much of the literature we will cover presumes some basic knowledge in these areas. In addition, many of the readings use formal or quantitative methods. Familiarity with these methods is therefore beneficial. Students who are unfamiliar with these methods may find some of the readings challenging and should be sure to make every effort to ask questions and familiarize themselves with these methods.

Requirements
Participation (20%): Students are expected to complete the assigned readings each week. Student-led discussion of the readings will occur in each class meeting. All students should come prepared with comments regarding the assigned readings.

Summary & Response (30%): Each week, each seminar participant will write a brief response to the set of readings assigned for the week. We will discuss the details of these responses on the first day. In brief, for each reading you will: 1) identify the central puzzle or question the piece addresses; 2) provide a brief (1-2 sentence) summary of the argument/thesis; 3) develop 3-4 questions or critiques about each reading. These summaries should be emailed to me by 5:00 PM on the Monday before class.

Dataset Review & Critique (20%): Regardless of your preferred method of inquiry and analysis, the field of conflict processes relies heavily on large-N datasets. It is best to become familiar with these early in your career. For this assignment, you will choose one topic or area of inquiry (e.g., repression, dissent, conflict violence, non-state actor characteristic, etc.). You will then identify, summarize, and critique two distinct datasets that could be used to analyze relationships within these areas of study. Your discussion (7-8 pages) should clearly describe the datasets, provide a brief literature review of previous studies that have used the datasets, and critique the datasets. Finally, you should develop two research questions or empirical puzzles within your
selected area of inquiry that you might address at a future date. Then, explain how (or if) one (or both) of the datasets you have selected could help you answer these questions and what additional information would be useful to help your more fully address these questions or puzzles. This assignment is due in class March 31st.

Final Paper (30%): Participants will also write an original research paper addressing an issue related to the course. These papers should articulate a clear research question or puzzle, develop a theory or coherent set of arguments, specify clear hypotheses, and appropriately test these hypotheses. You are welcome to employ any method of evaluation; however, you must make an effort to empirically test a clearly articulated theoretical expectation. Papers are due by Friday May 1st at 5:00 pm.

Schedule of Readings

1. Introduction: Politics, Violence and Political Order (January 13)

*Staniland, Paul (2012) “States, Insurgents and Wartime Political Order”, Perspectives on Politics 10(2)

Recommended:
*Hobbes, Leviathan (chpts. XIII, XVII and XVIII)

2. Collective Action and Contentious Politics (January 20)


Recommended:
3. Coercion & Dissent Dynamics (January 27)

*Lichbach, Mark (1987) “Deterrence or Escalation? The Puzzle of Aggregate Studies of Repression and Dissent”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 31(2)

Recommended:
*Opp, Karl-Deiter and Wolfgang Roehl (1990) “Repression, Micromobilization and Political Protest”, *Social Forces* 69(2)

4. Structural Causes of Civil War (February 3)


Recommended:
5. Mobilizing for Rebellion (February 10)


Recommended:
*Mason, David (1989) “Nonelite Responses to State-sanctioned Terror”, Western Political Quarterly 42(4)

6. Agency and Collective Action (February 17)


7. Allegiance, Recruitment and Civilian Support (February 24)

*Blair, Graeme, Christine Fair, Neil Malhotra and Jacob Shaprio. 2013. “Poverty and Support for Militant Politics: Evidence from Pakistan.” American Journal of Political Science 57(1)
Recommended:

8. Resources, Organization and Group Behavior I (March 3)


March 10: Spring Break

9. Resources, Organization and Group Behavior II (March 17)


10. Violence against Civilians I (March 24)


Recommended:

11. Violence against Civilians II (March 31)

*Abrahms, Max (2012) “The Political Effectiveness of Terrorism Revisited”, *Comparative Political Studies* 45(3)

Recommended:
*Balcells, Laia (2011) “Continuation of Politics by Two Means: Direct and Indirect Violence in Civil War”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55(3)

12. Transnational Dimensions of Civil Conflict (April 7)


Recommended:

13. Peacekeeping and Civil War Termination (April 14)


Recommended:

14. Counterinsurgency (April 21)

* Albertus, Michael and Oliver Kaplan (2013) “Land Reform as Counterinsurgency Policy: Evidence from Colombia”, *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 57(2)

Recommended:
* US Army (2014) *US Army/Marine Corps Counterinsurgency Field Manual*

15. Gender and Conflict (April 28)

* Caprioli, Mary (2005) “Primed for Violence: The Role of Gender Equality in Predicting Internal Conflict”, *International Studies Quarterly* 49(2)
* Mason, David (1992) “Women’s Participation in Central American Revolutions: A Theoretical Perspective”, *Comparative Political Studies* 25(1)

Recommended:
*Cohen, Dara (2013) “Female Combatants and the Perpetration of Violence: Wartime Rape in Sierra Leone”, *World Politics* 65(3)
*Melander, Eric (2005) “Gender Inequality and Intrastate Armed Conflict”, *International Studies Quarterly* 49(4)