1 Instructor Information

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Email: mike_findley@byu.edu  Class Location: 793 SWKT

2 Course Overview, Format, and Objectives

Political processes can be both nonviolent and violent. Much of our study in political science focuses on nonviolent aspects of politics, such as elections. In this course, we address violent forms of politics with an emphasis on three aspects of violence: mechanisms of violence, terrorism, and civil wars. All three forms of violence are very costly to individuals, which suggests one of the key questions that will guide our reading and discussion: why do individuals and groups use violent means to pursue their goals? We will also address other topics, such as why individuals and groups choose certain forms of violence over others.

Although the substantive focus is on political violence, this course is primarily a writing class. You will write extensively throughout the entire semester and the finished product should be an excellent research paper. This course builds on Political Science 200 by requiring you to carry out the various stages of a research project. During the semester you will identify a research question, develop a theory to explain the question, establish an adequate strategy to test the theory, and then carry out the test. The assignments will be based on these stages of the paper and will build on each other. You will also practice writing to different audiences. In addition to your research and writing, you will also present your research to the class and review the work of your peers.

These activities and assignments address the learning outcomes of the political science major by, among other things, encouraging you to (1) gain a knowledge of violent political processes, theoretically and factually, (2) use appropriate methods of analysis and research, including qualitative and quantitative methods, historical comparison, and textual interpretation to answer political questions, (3) write professional grade research papers on political science questions, (4) communicate effectively by presenting ideas in high quality oral presentations, (5) properly cite sources using a recognized citation style, and (6) think critically, analytically, and synthetically. I encourage you to take time to look at the full set of political science learning outcomes, which can be accessed at: [https://learningoutcomes.byu.edu/](https://learningoutcomes.byu.edu/)

3 Requirements

3.1 Assignment Summary

During the semester you will be required to do the following:

**Email About the Syllabus:** Each of you needs to email me by Wednesday, September 10 to let me know that you read through the syllabus and that you understand all that is required of you. Note that I might change the readings for this course on an ad hoc basis. For the most
part this will not happen, but if so, I will give as much notice as possible. I will also refine and update the instructions for the assignments prior to the time when you need to complete them.

**Leading an In-class Discussion:** Each of you will lead the discussion in class once during the semester. You do not need to lead an entire 50 minute discussion, but you should be prepared for at least 20 minutes of discussion. You must submit an outline to me (through blackboard) at least three days before class so that I can provide feedback. Your role should be to pose some important questions, provide some possible answers, and involve the rest of the class in discussing the topics. More precisely, you should structure your discussion to do the following: (1) offer a brief summary of the reading, (2) discuss briefly what the paper does well, (3) discuss what the paper does poorly, (4) offer suggestions for future research, and (5) pose several insightful questions for the class to discuss throughout your discussion. This is worth 5% of your grade.

**Attendance and Participation:** I expect all students to attend class regularly and I encourage you to ask questions and make germane comments at any time during class. Please finish the assigned readings **by the date** they appear in the syllabus. Read critically and be prepared to comment on the readings **each session** as I will be grading on this each time. **If you can’t find a reading, or if a link from the syllabus becomes broken, you are responsible to contact me in advance so that you can be prepared.** Active attendance and participation are worth 5% of your grade. You should plan to participate each class session even if another student is leading the discussion that day. If anyone is uncomfortable sharing ideas in class, that is fine, but instead you need to send me short emails summarizing the key argument(s) and offering critical comments/questions. Also, if your participation is/becomes infrequent or uninformed, I will invite you to submit similar emails prior to each class session.

**Paper Assignments:** Each of you will write six papers that build on each other and will form a full-length research paper by the end of the semester. You will also be required to submit four peer-review assignments that will be graded along with your papers. You must also give two oral presentations on sections of your paper. The papers and assignments are listed below along with a brief description. *Appendix A contains more detailed instructions for each paper and assignment.*

1. **Grant Proposal:** You will write a two page (single spaced) proposal for a grant to conduct the research that you propose. (10%)

2. **Theory:** You will write a 5–6 page paper that lays out a causal argument about political violence. (15%)

3. **Introduction/Literature:** Once you have developed your theoretical ideas, this 5–6 page assignment requires you to examine and discuss what other people have written about your theory. (15%)

4. **Research Design:** Once your paper is written through the theoretical section, this 5–6 page assignment requires you to develop a testing strategy. You do not need to carry out the test yet, but you should detail how you will do it. (15%)

5. **Findings Paper:** In this 5–6 page paper, you will carry out the test of your argument and report on your findings. (15%)
6. **Final Paper:** The final research paper needs to integrate (not just paste together) all the sections written previously. The final paper should be approximately 25 pages in length. (20%)

All papers should be turned in on blackboard. Prior to your first assignment, I will post instructions on how to access and post to Blackboard. I know that most/all of you have used Blackboard, but you would be surprised at how often people think they are posting things correctly when, in fact, they are not.

3.2 **Exams**

There are no exams in this course.

3.3 **Important Dates and Grading Summary**

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<th>Assignment</th>
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<td>Wed, Sep 10</td>
<td>Email about syllabus</td>
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<td>Wed, Sep 17</td>
<td>Have 2–3 ideas prepared</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon, Sep 22</td>
<td>Grant proposal</td>
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<td>Wed, Oct 1</td>
<td>Theory paper</td>
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<td>Wed, Oct 15</td>
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<td>Mon, Dec 8</td>
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<td>Thu, Dec 18</td>
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3.4 **Required Readings**

All readings will be placed on e-reserve at the library and you will be responsible to read them. They are accessible here (password = fin450 or fin470): [http://docutek.lib.byu.edu/eres/default.aspx](http://docutek.lib.byu.edu/eres/default.aspx). If you are unable to access e-reserve, please visit with me as soon as possible.

4 **Course Policies**

4.1 **Note on Syllabus**

The readings for this course, and the dates we complete them, are subject to change. We will cover the material in the order that it appears, but might not always stay on schedule and readings might be added or subtracted. The assignments might also be revised and updated, with advance notice.
4.2 Note on Workload

This class will require a great deal of your time. You need to plan to devote a lot of effort throughout the semester in order to do well. Although it will be very time consuming, and at times frustrating, the end result should be worthwhile. Once you leave the course, you should have a well-written research paper that you can attempt to publish in a student journal, submit to a professional conference, or use for graduate school admissions or employment applications.

4.3 Late and Make-up Assignments

Assignments are due by the beginning of class on the date indicated in the schedule. Papers arriving late (i.e., later than 5 minutes into the class period) will be subject to a 1/3 grade reduction. For each successive late day, your grade will be reduced by 1/3 each day (i.e., an A will be lowered to an A− on the first day late, an A− to a B+ on the second day late, and so on). Because there are a number of assignments that build on each other, you must stay up to date. All assignments should be turned in through blackboard.

4.4 Assignment of Grades

Grades are assigned on the following scale: $A = 94–100$; $A− = 90–93$; $B+ = 87–89$; $B = 84–86$; $B− = 80–83$;...$F = 63$ or lower. If you have a complaint about how your paper was graded, I am happy to take a second look. You must type a formal appeal addressing the problem and explain clearly what you originally wrote, why you wrote it, and how you think your original response correctly answered the original question. Additionally, you must turn in the original paper along with your typed appeal.

4.5 Advanced Writing Requirement

You must receive at least a $C−$ grade on your research paper in order to fulfill the university’s advanced writing requirements. Students with lower grades will need to revise the paper until it reaches a $C−$ standard. I will not hesitate to assign low grades for low-quality papers in order to ensure that this requirement is met.

4.6 Senior Exam / Alternative Activity

If you are a Political Science major, you are required to take the senior exam. You will be contacted by the Political Science Department secretaries and it is your obligation to respond to their e-mail and submit your preferences for exam times. It is also your obligation to remember the exam, attend, and take the exam. If you fail to take the exam, you will be penalized 5 percent of your grade. If you do not make an honest and serious effort to take this exam, you will not receive class credit for having taken the exam. If you are not a Political Science major, you must complete a three hour activity that you and I will agree is an appropriate substitute for the senior exam. You must get my approval of this substitute activity before you do the activity. Political Science majors do not have the option of completing a substitute activity. To reiterate, all Political Science majors who do not take the exam or fail to take the exam seriously will be penalized 5 percent on their course grades.
4.7 Online Resources

We will use blackboard, which is accessible through the BYU home page, for turning in papers and other activities as announced in class. The syllabus, paper topics, and reading links will be posted on blackboard. Furthermore, you should post all of your papers and assignments to blackboard rather than submitting them in hard copy. Some additional articles might be posted on course reserve.

4.8 Classroom Civility

Regrettably, a handful of students occasionally demonstrate insensitivity to other students and to instructors by disrupting classes unnecessarily. Arriving late for class, reading newspapers in class, packing up bags prior to the end of class, and cell phone use are all disruptive activities. Browsing the internet, checking email, and playing games on laptops are also inappropriate in class because you should be listening and participating. Certainly, taking notes on a laptop is appropriate, but do not waste your time or mine by getting distracted by other activities on the web. Moreover, I will not tolerate incivility of one opinion to another. It is exciting and healthy to exchange a diversity of opinions, but in no case should anyone demean another because of his or her viewpoint. If you have any questions about what classroom civility entails, please contact me.

4.9 Other Policies

Plagiarism: While all students sign the honor code, there are still specific skills most students need to master over time in order to correctly cite sources, especially in this new age of the internet; as well as deal with the stress and strain of college life without resorting to cheating. Please know that as your professor I will notice instances of cheating on exams or plagiarizing on papers. General information about the honor code can be found at honorcode.byu.edu. Details about Academic Honesty at the Honor Code site can be found by moving your mouse over “Honor Code” in the second grey bar and then move down then right and click on “Other Clarifications”, then move your mouse down and click on “Academic Honesty.”

Writing submitted for credit at BYU must consist of the student’s own ideas presented in sentences and paragraphs of his or her own construction. The work of other writers or speakers may be included when appropriate (as in a research paper or book review), but such material must support the student’s own work (not substitute for it) and must be clearly identified by appropriate introduction and punctuation and by footnoting or other standard referencing.

The substitution of another person’s work for the student’s own or the inclusion of another person’s work without adequate acknowledgment (whether done intentionally or not) is known as plagiarism. It is a violation of academic, ethical, and legal standards and can result in a failing grade not only for the paper but also for the course in which the paper is written. In extreme cases, it can justify expulsion from the University. Because of the seriousness of the possible consequences, students who wonder if their papers are within these guidelines should visit the Writing Lab or consult a faculty member who specializes in the teaching of writing or who specializes in the subject discussed in the paper. Useful books to consult on the topic include the current Harbrace College Handbook, the MLA Handbook, and James D. Lester’s Writing Research Papers.

Discrimination: Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972 prohibits sex discrimination
against any participant in an educational program or activity that receives federal funds. The
act is intended to eliminate sex discrimination in education. Title IX covers discrimination
in programs, admissions, activities, and student-to-student sexual harassment. BYU’s policy
against sexual harassment extends not only to employees of the university but to students as
well. If you encounter unlawful sexual harassment or gender based discrimination, please talk
to your professor; contact the Equal Employment Office at 422–5895 or 367–5689 (24-hours); or
contact the Honor Code Office at 422–2847.

Access: Brigham Young University is committed to providing a working and learning atmo-
sphere which reasonably accommodates qualified persons with disabilities. If you have any
disability which may impair your ability to complete this course successfully, please contact the
University Accessibility Center (2170 WSC, 422-2767). Reasonable academic accommodations
are reviewed for all students who have qualified documented disabilities. Services are coordi-
nated with the student and instructor by the SSD office. If you need assistance or if you feel you
have been unlawfully discriminated against on the basis of disability, you may seek resolution
through established grievance policy and procedures. You should contact the Equal Employment
Office at 422–5895, D–282 ASB.

5 Tentative Course and Reading Schedule

5.1 Introduction and Overview of Political Violence

- **Sep 3:** Syllabus and Research Questions
- **Sep 8:** Hewitt 2008: 21–26 & 107–118; Sarkees, Wayman, and Singer 2003: 49–70; Gurr
  1994: 347–377
- **Sep 10:** Henderson & Singer 2002: 165–190; Brubaker and Laitin 1998: 423–452; Kalyvas
  2003: 475–494
- **Sep 15:** Nisbett 2002: all; Varian 1997: all; Loehle 1990: 123–129
- **Sep 22:** Grant Proposal Due; Discussion of writing intro/lit papers; Souva 2007: 557–561;
  Lave and March 1975: 9–42

5.2 Civil Wars and Intergroup Violence

- **Sep 29:** Kalyvas 2006: 16–51; Lichbach 1995: 3–32
- **Oct 1:** Theory Paper Due / Presentations
- **Oct 6:** Peer reviews due; discussion of writing intro/lit papers; peer review groups; Knopf
  2006: 127–132
- **Oct 8:** Fearon and Laitin 2003: 75–90; Collier and Hoeffler 2004: 563–595; Mueller 2000:
  42–70; Lake and Rothchild 1998: 3–32

• Oct 15: Intro/Lit Paper Due / Presentations

• Oct 20: Peer reviews due; discussion of writing research designs; peer review groups; Levy 2008: 1–18


5.3 Guerrilla Warfare, Insurgency, & Terrorism


• Oct 29: Research Design Paper Due / Presentations

• Nov 3: Peer reviews due; discussion of writing findings papers; peer review groups; Abelson 1995: 156–198


• Nov 10: Individual Research

• Nov 12: Individual Research

• Nov 17: Individual Research

• Nov 19: Individual Research

• Nov 24: Individual Research


• Dec 3: Findings Paper Due / Presentations

• Dec 8: Peer reviews due; Discussion of writing the final paper; peer review groups;

5.4 Alternative Forms of Political Violence


• Dec 18: Final Paper Due
References


[42] Starbuck, William. 1999. “Fussy Professor Starbuck’s Cookbook of Handy-Dandy Prescriptions for Ambitious Academic Authors.” Accessible online at: [http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~wstarbuc/Writing/Fussy.htm](http://pages.stern.nyu.edu/~wstarbuc/Writing/Fussy.htm)


A Tentative Paper Assignments

In what follows, I describe the assignments that you will need to complete for this course. Note that these may change somewhat, but I will give you advance notice. Before you work on each assignment, I will hand out any updates to clarify things that might be unclear in this version. The purpose of providing this now is so that you get a good sense of where we are going. I will also give other handouts throughout the semester on guidelines for writing and giving oral presentations.

Logistics: All papers need to be turned in by the beginning of class on the date they are due. I do not care what citation style you use, just be consistent and accurate. Although each assignment will be graded separately, you should turn in each assignment along with the other sections of the paper so that you and I can see how they fit together. You need to upload each paper and assignment to Blackboard and bring a hard copy to class. Here are some instructions for uploading your paper to Blackboard; please read and follow them as students always struggle to get things turned in with the “Turnitin” software:

1. Once you are logged into Blackboard and have clicked on the link for this class, click on the Assignments button on the left of the screen.

2. Select the title of the paper you will be submitting.

3. Click on the submit icon (with the green plus sign).

4. Submit paper through uploading the file by clicking the browse button and selecting the file.

5. Make sure your name appears correctly and fill in the paper title.

6. Click the “submit” button at the bottom.

7. The next screen gives you a preview of your submitted paper. Make sure you have uploaded the correct file. As you may notice, this preview will take out any formatting you have done to the paper. Do not worry about it though because the paper that I will grade will have the original formatting.

8. Make sure you click the “Submit Paper” button again! Once you have successfully submitted the paper, you should see a message that says “You have successfully submitted this paper. Below is a copy of your Turnitin Digital Receipt.”

Oral Presentations: Each of you needs to give two oral presentations during the semester (based on two of the four assignments). You will have six minutes to present. If you go over the six minutes, I will penalize you. Use good presentation skills: be clear, be focused, be simple, and use overheads or visuals (carefully). We will talk more about the presentations before you present.

Peer Review: After turning in each section of the paper (theory, introduction/literature, research design, and conclusion), each of you will need to review the work of your peers. I will divide the class into groups of four. You will need to review three other papers and provide one single-spaced page of feedback to each of them. Your comments must first summarize the paper’s
independent and dependent variables and causal logics. Then, critique the paper noting both positive and negative aspects as well as ideas. A typical peer review would be structured, then, with four sections: argument identification, positive critique, negative critique, suggestions. You will be graded on the quality of your peer review.

A.1 Grant Proposal

You need to write a proposal requesting money to conduct your research for this class. You should concisely address your research question, the importance of answering the question for both the academic and policy communities, and how you will carry out the research. You should also address anything else that would make the proposal more compelling, and consequently, more likely to be funded. The ORCA proposals would be a great model of how to do this. Please visit the ORCA website to see some examples of good proposals. Note that for this assignment, you do not need to discuss how your project fulfills the mission of BYU. Also, you do not need to provide references to the literature yet.

Logistics: The grant proposal is due on Monday, September 22 by the beginning of class. It should be two pages, single-spaced, and you need to upload the paper to blackboard and bring a hard copy to class.

A.2 Theory

Theoretical Models: A strong theoretical model is based on a causal question — not an abstract topic — about a relationship between two variables. The research question must also be accompanied by a good “story”. In other words, you should pose a good question, but go beyond that to offer a compelling argument that provides a rationale and answer to the question theoretically. The argument should be accompanied by your rationale and should offer expectations that can be tested using empirical data. Importantly, you need to identify, define, and articulate your key concepts. If you’re writing about terrorism, for example, which of the 109+ definitions are you going with and why.

To come up with a question, I do not recommend that you read the academic literature too much. It is frustrating and usually not very helpful to consult the academic literature. Instead, read and follow Varian’s advice (http://people.ischool.berkeley.edu/hal/Papers/how.pdf) and read magazines and newspapers. Read about topics that interest you and think critically about what is being described. In an article on post-election violence in Kenya, for example, you might wonder whether a lack of democracy is motivating people to kill others. Or are ethnic leaders seeking to drum up support through violence? Let’s assume that it is a lack of democracy leading to violence; does this pattern occur in other countries? Is this a new phenomenon, or has this phenomenon occurred in previous decades? These are all examples of research questions that you might come up with from reading a single newspaper article. Ultimately, you will need to settle on one question and refine it so that it can be tested.

Puzzles: The most interesting research questions often come from “puzzles.” A puzzle is basically a research question, but one for which the answer is not immediately self-evident. A puzzle could also be an empirical phenomenon that deviates from what conventional theory would predict. The puzzle should bring to mind some possible explanations, but ones that would require further investigation and novel theoretical insights. One example of an interesting puzzle might be the following:
Civil wars frequently produce displacement crises as people flee from the instability and violence in their area. Yet, often people flee to countries and regions that are plagued with even more violence than what they experienced previously. Why wouldn’t these people flee to a location with more optimal conditions?

The key to the theoretical section is to have an answer to this question with a well-developed rationale and testable expectations. For this refugee example, a possible solution to the puzzle is that people cannot foresee the consequences of their decisions about where to flee, especially when violence is severe. People might only think about the immediate future and make decisions jointly within small social networks. As such, individual decisions might be optimal in the local context (e.g., if you’re going to flee, you should flee with family and friends), but the decisions might be suboptimal in the global context (e.g., your family and friends might be more concerned about getting away from violence than with figuring out their optimal destination).

Once you have a story along with a rationale, it is important to state expectations or hypotheses that can be tested. In the refugee example, at least a couple of hypotheses are possible:

**Hypothesis 1** The faster that violence diffuses geographically, the more likely it is that people will flee to suboptimal locations.

**Hypothesis 2** People are more likely to arrive in suboptimal locations, when they travel together with members of a social network.

Note that these hypotheses are falsifiable; that is, they might be right or wrong, and it is possible to determine which. You should try to identify as many expectations as possible that flow from your story. And be sure that these expectations are not contradictory — if so, you need to refine your theory. For example, could we reformulate Hypothesis 2 with a different expectation? Probably. This points to the need to refine the story and make it more precise. The importance of developing the logic and rationale for your argument cannot be understated. Think of possible counterarguments and preempt them. Think of the assumptions you are making and flesh them out. Think of as many implications as possible and attempt to address them. Note that you do not need to spend time reviewing the scholarly literature for this assignment — just come up with a compelling and interesting story.

**Logistics:** Each of you needs to meet with me as you develop the theory. Please plan to visit my office between September 22–26 so that we can discuss your topic. The theory assignment can build on your grant proposal, but it does not have to. The theory paper is due on Wednesday, October 1 by the beginning of class. The peer review assignment is due the following Monday, October 6 by the beginning of class. You need to upload the paper to blackboard and bring a hard copy to class.

**A.3 Introduction and Literature**

**Introduction:** The introduction and literature review sections are two of the most important parts of a research paper; they are also the sections on which writers spend the least time. If the author does not “hook” the reader by the first couple of pages, there is little chance the reader will endure to the end of the paper. This applies to academic, policy, and professional papers. Take any policy report and it typically has an “executive summary” at the beginning. But “hooking” the reader goes beyond an executive summary; it attempts to generate interest, and even enthusiasm, for reading the paper.
As discussed in the theory assignment, coming up with a good puzzle makes a paper easier to sell. In your introduction, then, either begin explicitly with a question or try to frame the question as a puzzle, such as with the refugee question. Once the puzzle has been raised, the introduction could then *briefly* review what others have written about the topic with the goal of establishing that others have provided a less-than-satisfactory answer. For the refugee example above, most literature focuses on individual decisions to migrate to a place with better conditions. Existing literature has a difficult time explaining why people frequently end up in less-optimal locations.

Having explained why other explanations are not satisfactory, the logical next step is to let the reader know that you have a novel solution. This is where you briefly summarize the theory you are offering. You need to emphasize how your theory and empirical analysis offer a solution to the puzzle in a way that others cannot. (Note: in order to talk about what your findings are, you need to edit the introduction after you do the research.) You should also highlight the theoretical and policy importance of your approach. Finally, you should end your introduction section with a concise “road map” of what is in the paper.

**Literature Review:** The literature review can also be structured a number of ways, but the most important objective for the literature review is to address how the scholarly literature provides insight into your question or puzzle. Although this sounds obvious, a literature review intended to address the puzzle on refugees would not want to cover everything that has ever been written on refugees. Such a literature review would require several books, at the very least. Instead, the review might want to identify those works that are about refugee crises during civil war, individual decision-making in times of uncertainty, and individual decision-making in the context of social networks. This is still a lot. So only the most important and germane works within these categories should be addressed. Our tendency is always to over cite or to reach an acceptable number of citations without worrying about whether they fit. Once the domain is narrowed, other steps need to be taken to organize the section appropriately. The review could be organized by theoretical approaches (e.g., rational choice, constructivist), empirical findings (e.g., for or against the puzzle), levels of analysis (e.g., individual vs. collective), or phases in time (e.g., beginning of a war or refugee crisis vs. the end).

To reiterate, the most important objective is to incorporate an evaluative component. If you are making a contribution, there needs to be a hole in the current literature that you are addressing. And you need to point out that hole and show that your puzzle fills it. Examples of holes that you could address include: They did it wrong and I plan to do it better; They got it right, but I am going to extend their analysis to another domain (e.g., spatial or temporal); Nobody has addressed this question, but I am going to now; Others have offered a theory, but no one has tested it. Further, you will likely encounter all sorts of problems with other research, but you only want to critique those aspects that you plan to address and correct. The literature review should always end with a summary that transitions into the theoretical section.

**Abstract:** You should also turn in an abstract with this draft of your paper. An abstract is a short (100–200 word) summary of your research paper’s argument and evidence. It will develop as you conduct your research, but begin the abstract now based on your introduction, literature review, and theory. State your expectations about the findings until you have completed the empirical analysis.

**Logistics:** The introduction/literature review paper is due on Wednesday, October 15 by the beginning of class. The peer review assignment is due the following Monday, October 20 by the
beginning of class. You need to upload the paper to blackboard and bring a hard copy to class. Also, you should turn in the (revised) theory section along with the introduction and literature review. Note that even though you worked on the theory paper first, it should come after the introduction and literature review. So please turn in the material from both assignments in the following order: introduction, literature review, and theory.

A.4 Research Design

The research design section is where you detail how you plan to test your theory. It is usually the least interesting part of the paper, but also it is typically the easiest to criticize. In writing the research design, you’re primary goals should be to (1) match the empirical measures to the concepts in the theory and (2) make the empirical analysis replicable.

Testing the Theory: Think about the theoretical model you have developed. What do you need to do to test the theory appropriately? You should not use certain data or study particular cases just because the data are easy to obtain. Think about the nuts and bolts of the theory and about how they match to empirical referents. For example, what is the spatial-temporal domain? If your theory is about political violence following independence from colonialism, then you probably do not want to choose cases of violence that occurred only in the 2000s, even though data for those cases is more readily available than for cases in the 1950s and 1960s. Think about the key explanatory factors in your theory as well as what you’re trying to explain. Can you find appropriate measures to capture these factors. If you want to explain the onset of civil war worldwide, for example, is there a measure that applies universally across wars? OR if you are arguing that “blood diamonds” are instrumental in fueling civil wars, can you find data that distinguish “blood diamonds” from other types of diamonds. It is important that you convince the reader that your measures capture the theoretical concepts validly. The best way of convincing others is to cite appropriate research and materials that provide a justification for the approach you are choosing. Many other scholars have thought through similar issues and have come up with numerous solutions. Knowing the set of available solutions will help you choose the best approach, whether it be one of these solutions or a new one.

Replication: After finishing the research design section, the reader should be able to completely reproduce your results to verify your findings. This does not mean that you give the entire history of a dataset, but you should say where you obtain your data. You should describe the sources for the key variables. If you use statistical methods in your analysis, you should describe and justify the choice of statistical estimator. If you use case study methods, you need to justify your choice of cases and provide adequate source material so that someone could trace your steps and replicate the results.

Logistics: The research design paper is due on Wednesday, October 29 by the beginning of class. The peer review assignment is due the following Monday, November 3 by the beginning of class. You need to upload the paper to blackboard and bring a hard copy to class. Also, you should turn in the (revised) introduction, literature review, and theory sections along with your research design. The order of the sections should be the same as the previous assignment and the research design section should come last.
A.5 Findings

In the findings section, you need to deliver on everything that you’ve promised in other parts of the paper. You should test every hypothesis you offer and evaluate the argument that you made as best as possible. Importantly, if the evidence you find does not support your theory, then this is okay. You should try very hard to come up with evidence supporting your theory, but if the evidence does not, you need to demonstrate that you understand what is contradictory and some possible reasons why.

**Statistical Analysis:** If you conduct statistical analysis, you should not report every model that you estimate. Report only the analyses that most directly test your theory. It is important to conduct robustness checks so that you know that your results are not overly sensitive to small changes in the model specification. You should conduct diagnostic tests as well, but do not report them aside from a possible footnote. Tables and figures are important to include, but be cautious. All tables and figures should be easy to understand and self-contained. In other words, if someone picks up the paper and only looks at the tables or figures, s/he should be able to understand them. It is also important to talk about only the key information in the tables. If you try to describe everything, then it will require too much space. With statistical analysis, it is vital that someone with no training in statistics be able to understand the results. This means that great care needs to be taken to explain everything clearly. It is also helpful to use case illustrations strategically to flesh out the statistical results.

**(Comparative) Case Studies:** One of the temptations with case studies is simply to describe the case in very thick detail. While this is occasionally appropriate, most of the time it is not. You should provide some narrative to give the reader background about the cases, but the bulk of your time should be devoted to a careful evaluation of the hypotheses. It is frequently better to organize the discussion based on hypothesis, even if you jump back and forth between cases. The purpose behind discussing the cases is to provide support for the theory and so the theory should remain central. In order to be focused, state your conclusions up front and then flesh them out throughout the section.

**Logistics:** The findings paper is due on Wednesday, December 3 by the beginning of class. The peer review assignment is due the following Monday, December 8 by the beginning of class. You need to upload the paper to blackboard and bring a hard copy to class. Also, you should turn in the (revised) introduction, literature review, theory, and research design sections along with your findings. The order of the sections should be the same as the previous assignment and the findings section should come last.

A.6 Final Paper

The final paper is not simply a collection of the previous assignments. It is important to go back to the beginning and be sure your introduction, literature, and theory fit with the findings you have. It is important that you evaluate all sections of the paper and edit them appropriately. In most cases, you will need to rewrite considerable portions of your paper. You should also update the abstract to reflect the final composition of the paper. As noted in the findings section, you might find contradictory evidence, which is fine, but you need to update the introduction to state this and justify it. You must have continuity across the sections so that the entire paper flows well and is consistent. Making the final product polished is crucial, furthermore, because
many of you will use this paper as you apply to graduate school, seek employment, or publish in student journals.

**Logistics:** The final paper is due on Thursday, December 18 by 12:00 pm. You need to upload the paper to blackboard rather than submitting a hard copy. All previous sections of the paper should be included and integrated. The sections should be ordered as follows: introduction, literature review, theory, research design, findings, conclusion, and works cited. If you use an appendix, it should come at the end.