

IAFF 6186.24
Insurgency and Counterinsurgency
Spring 2021

IAFF 6186: Insurgency and Counterinsurgency
Spring 2021
Sync Session: Tuesdays 5:10-6:10PM ET

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Virtual Office Hours: 3pm-4pm ET Wednesday, 3pm-4pm ET Thursday, or by appointment
Office Hour Sign-Ups: <https://www.wejoinin.com/irismalone@gwu.edu>

Overview

This course provides students with an analytical framework to understand the nature of insurgency and how states counter it. It is intended to provide a solid foundation for further inquiry into related topics such as civil war politics, security and development, stabilization and peacebuilding, responses to terrorism, and conflict resolution. The course examines the multi-disciplinary nature of insurgencies, and introduces students to the major concepts and issues of the topic, explores the main types of insurgencies, and analyzes in depth a number of strategic cases of counterinsurgency to help students understand the complexity and the variety of this form of warfare in the modern world. The course provides key frameworks for analysis for the study of insurgency and explores possible solutions to a number of current conflicts.

Concentrations: U.S. National Security, Transnational Security, and Conflict Resolution

Learning Outcomes

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- describe different types of insurgencies,
- evaluate different risk factors for insurgency,
- explain the tactical, operational, and strategic challenges in insurgency,
- compare the efficacy of selective versus indiscriminate violence,
- assess key ethical dilemmas of counterinsurgency, and
- mobilize historical examples and quantitative evidence to critically assess existing explanations.

Assignments and Evaluation

- **Participation (15%):** Contributing to synchronous and asynchronous (online discussion) forums in thoughtful and meaningful ways each week is essential. One discussion response is due each week by **Tuesday 5pm ET**. (Two responses due if sync attendance is not possible.) You may engage with one discussion question twice or two discussion questions separately. Quantity of participation is not as important as quality. Questions, insights, applied examples, and challenges are all considered quality. One-line answers and last-minute forum postings are not. A separate rubric will be provided. Please note: participation is graded on a curve (25% A, 35% B+ to A-, 30% B, 10% B- or below).
- **Center of Gravity Analysis (30%):** Students will work alone or in small groups of 3-4 to produce a COG analysis of a contemporary insurgency of their choice due by **February 16 5pm ET**. Analyses should be 7-8 page (individual) or 10-12 page double-spaced (group). The analysis should frame the problem, provide a center of gravity analysis, identify critical vulnerabilities, and develop an operational approach to deal with the threat. A separate page should summarize each group member's contributions to the project. Each team of students will have 5-10 minutes to present their analyses to the class on **February 16**.
- **Staff Ride Pre-Analysis (20%):** Students will write a 5-7 page double-spaced pre-analysis due by **March 29 5pm ET**. The pre-analysis should outline key battle background information including, but not limited to, key parties (organization, size, objective), terrain considerations, chronology of events, and critical decision-making junctures.
- **Final Counterinsurgency Strategy Paper (35%):** Students will write a 10-12 page case study examining the effectiveness of one counterinsurgency campaign due by **May 4 5pm ET**. Students will describe the nature of the conflict, key counterinsurgency challenges, how states identified and responded to the insurgent threat, and assess the effectiveness of the operation. Some outside research is expected. The paper should focus on one of the following cases:
 - Indonesia (Darul Islam), 1958-1962
 - Kenya (Mau Mau), 1952-1956
 - Zimbabwe/Rhodesia (ZANU/ZAPU), 1965-1980
 - Pakistan (Baluchistan), 1973-1978
 - Peru (Sendero Luminoso), 1980-2000

If an individual student would rather submit a single 20-page final term research paper instead of the staff ride and strategy paper, they should contact the instructor by the end of week 2 to discuss potential research topics.

Course Materials and Technology Requirements

Books

- Eli Berman et al. 2018. *Small Wars, Big Data*. The Information Revolution in Modern Conflict. Princeton University Press
- Jake Tapper. 2013. *The Outpost: An Untold Story of American Valor*. Hachette Press.
- Optional: Michael L. Burgoyne and Albert J. Marckwardt. 2009. *The Defense of Jisr Al-Doreaa*. University of Chicago Press, March

Articles and Book Chapters

PDF copies of articles and book chapters will be posted on Blackboard.

Technology Requirements

Blackboard will be used for posting course files, modules, and assignments and for communicating with the class. We will use Zoom for synchronous discussions. You are already enrolled for this course on Blackboard if you have completed registration for the course. It is your responsibility to periodically check the course site (log in at <http://blackboard.gwu.edu/> Using your gwu.edu address) for updates to the syllabus/readings.

As an online student, it is necessary to possess baseline technology skills in order to participate fully in the course. Please consult online.gwu.edu/student-support for further information about recommended configurations and support.

Course Format

Workload Expectations

In this 3 credit graduate course students are expected to work for 7.5 hours per week (this includes 60 minutes of synchronous class time per week) totaling to 112.5 hours of work over the duration of this 15-week semester.

Methods of Instruction

What is Synchronous?

1. **Weekly Zoom Discussions** (Tuesday 5:10pm-6:10pm ET): Zoom is a collaborative meeting tool that allows for real-time video meetings and sharing computer content over the web. You should familiarize yourself with the topics and cases for discussion before coming to class. **Please adjust for the time zone difference if you are not in ET.**

What is Asynchronous?

1. **Independent Readings:** Please read and come prepared to discuss before our weekly discussion.
2. **Online Modules:** Pre-Recorded Lectures and (Ungraded) Self-Check Assessments posted on Blackboard. Please watch before our weekly discussions and come to sync sessions with questions.
3. **Online Discussion Forums:** We will use Blackboard to participate in online discussion forums. For discussions, there are a minimum of two required postings each week (an initial response and an engagement with another classmates' posting). Please see the discussion rubric for further evaluation.

Submission of Assignments and Late Work

Submission of Papers

- Assignments are to be submitted to the professor via email in Word, Pages, or PDF before the deadline time. An assignment is considered late if the professor cannot successfully open the document before the deadline.
- Please name your files using the header LastName-Assignment, e.g. Malone-RedTeam.pdf

Late Work, Extensions, and Synchronous Absences

- Late papers will be penalized at a rate of one-half letter grade (e.g. A to A-) for every 12 hours past the deadline. They are not accepted after 48 hours.
- Extensions for late work will not be accepted except in extenuating circumstances (e.g. illness, family emergency).
- If synchronous class attendance is not possible due to extenuating circumstances *and* you have notified the professor in advance, you may compensate by doubling asynchronous participation in online forums the following week. If you have not notified the professor in advance, you may still receive credit by doing the above plus sending a 2 page double-spaced response paper before the start of the next class.

Netiquette for Online Discussions

- Remain professional, respectful, and courteous at all times.
- If you have a strong opinion on a topic, it is acceptable to express it as long as it is not phrased as an attack. Please be gracious with differing opinions.
- Proofread and use the spell check tool when you type a post. It makes the post easier to read and helps your readers understand what you are saying.
- I reserve the right to delete any post that is deemed inappropriate for the discussion forum, blog, or wiki without prior notification to the student. This includes any post containing language that is offensive, rude, profane, racist, or hateful. Posts that are seriously off-topic or serve no purpose other than to vent frustration will also be removed.

Contact and Virtual Office Hours

Email is the best way to contact me. I promise to respond to your emails within 24 hours. I will hold office hours via Zoom on Wednesdays and Thursdays. Please sign-up in advance using wejoinin.com/irismalone@gwu.edu. If those hours do not work for you, please email for an individual appointment.

University Policies

- **Plagiarism, Cheating, and Academic Integrity:** Academic dishonesty is defined as cheating of any kind, including misrepresenting one's own work, taking credit for the work of others without crediting them and without appropriate authorization, and the fabrication of information. For details and complete code, see studentconduct.gwu.edu/code-academicintegrity
- **Sharing of Course Content** Unauthorized downloading, distributing, or sharing of any part of a recorded lecture or course materials, as well as using provided information for purposes other than the student's own learning may be deemed a violation of GW's Student Conduct Code.
- **Observance of Religious Holidays:** In accordance with University policy, students should notify faculty during the first week of the semester of their intention to be absent from class on their day(s) of religious observance. For details and policy, see: provost.gwu.edu/policies-procedures-and-guidelines
- **Security and Safety:** In an emergency: call GWPD 202-994-6111 or 911. For situation-specific actions: review the Emergency Response Handbook: safety.gwu.edu/emergencyresponse-handbook In an active violence situation: Get Out, Hide Out or Take Out: For more info, see go.gwu.edu/shooterprep and safety.gwu.edu/stay-informed

- **Alert DC:** Alert DC provides free notification by e-mail or text message during an emergency. Visit GW Campus Advisories for a link and instructions on how to sign up for alerts pertaining to GW. If you receive an Alert DC notification during class, you are encouraged to share the information immediately.
- **GW Alert:** GW Alert provides popup notification to desktop and laptop computers during an emergency. In the event that we receive an alert to the computer, we will follow the instructions given. You are also encouraged to download this application to your personal computer. Visit GW Campus Advisories to learn how.

Student Support and Resources

- **Virtual Academic Support** A full range of academic support is offered virtually in spring 2021. See coronavirus.gwu.edu/top-faqs for updates. Tutoring and course review sessions are offered through Academic Commons in an online format. See academiccommons.gwu.edu/tutoring Writing and research consultations are available online. See academiccommons.gwu.edu/writing-research-help. Coaching, offered through the Office of Student Success, is available in a virtual format. See studentsuccess.gwu.edu/academic-program-support
- **Commitment to Inclusive Teaching:** Higher education works best when it encourages a vigorous exchange of ideas in which all points of view are heard. Free expression in the classroom is an integral part of the process. At the same time, this process is most effective when all approach the enterprise with empathy and respect for others, irrespective of their ideology, views, or identity. I encourage you to report bias incidents here: <https://diversity.gwu.edu/bias-incident-response>.
- **Disabilities and Accommodations:** If you need disability accommodations, please register with Disability Support Services (DSS). If you have questions about disability accommodations, contact DSS at 202-994-8250 or dss@gwu.edu or visit them in person in Rome Hall, Suite 102. For information about how the course technology is accessible to all learners, see the following resources:
 - <https://www.blackboard.com/blackboard-accessibility-commitment>
 - <https://corp.kaltura.com/products/video-accessibility/>
 - <https://voicethread.com/about/features/accessibility/>
- **Counseling and Psychological Services:** The University's Mental Health Services offers 24/7 assistance and referral to address students' personal, social, career, and study skills problems. Services for students include: crisis and emergency mental health consultations confidential assessment, counseling services (individual and small group), and referrals. For additional information see: counselingcenter.gwu.edu/

Course Calendar

1. January 12: Definitions and Historical Trends

- Topics
 - Course Introduction
 - Types of Insurgency
 - Levels of Analysis
- Readings:
 - Max Boot. 2013. “The Guerrilla Myth.” *Wall Street Journal* <https://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424127887323596204578243702404190338.html>
 - Robert Bunker. 2018. *Old and New Insurgency Forms*. Perennial Press, Summary (p. xi - xxiii)
 - Central Intelligence Agency. n.d. *Guide to the Analysis of Insurgency* [in en]. US Government
 - US Air Force. 2015. “Levels of War.” In *Basic Doctrine*. Curtis LeMay Center https://www.doctrine.af.mil/Portals/61/documents/Volume_1/V1-D34-Levels-of-War.pdf

Unit 1: Insurgency

2. January 19: Causes of Rebellion

- Topics
 - Greed versus Grievance
 - Geography
 - Resource Curse
 - State Capacity
 - Contagion and Diffusion
 - Key Cases: Colombia, DRC, Afghanistan
- Readings:
 - Paul Collier. 2010. “The Market for Civil War.” *Foreign Policy* <https://foreignpolicy.com/2009/11/02/the-market-for-civil-war/>
 - James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin. 2003. “Ethnicity, Insurgency, and Civil War.” *American Political Science Review* 97, no. 1 (February): 75–90
 - Sarah Zukerman Daly. 2012. “Organizational legacies of violence: Conditions favoring insurgency onset in Colombia, 1964–1984.” *Journal of Peace Research* 49 (3): 473–491
 - James D. Fearon. 2011. “Governance and civil war onset.” *World Bank* (Skim)

3. January 26: Insurgent Strategy

- Topics:
 - Center of Gravity (COG) Analysis
 - People’s War
 - Foco Theory
 - Networked/Netwar
 - Key Cases: Chinese Civil War, Cuban Revolution, Bolivia, Iraq
- Readings
 - Robert Taber. 1965. *The War of the Flea: How Guerilla Fighters Could Win the World*. New York: The Citadel Press, Chp. 1, 2, 4
 - Mao Zedong. 1961. *On guerrilla warfare*. University of Illinois Press, Chp. 2, 6
 - Daniel Smith, Kelley Jeter, and Odin Westgaard. *Three Approaches to Center of Gravity Analysis: The Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant* <https://ndupress.ndu.edu/Media/News/News-Article-View/Article/607722/three-approaches-to-center-of-gravity-analysis>
- Optional
 - Sun Tzu. 2012. *Sun Tzu Art of War*, Chp 1-2
 - Carl Clausewitz. 1982. *On war*. Vol. 20. Penguin UK, Book 6, Chp 26
 - Carl Clausewitz. *Excerpts: Center of Gravity*
 - Che Guevara. n.d. “General Principles of Guerrilla Warfare.” In *Guerrilla Warfare*
 - Matt D. Childs. 1995. “An historical critique of the emergence and evolution of Ernesto Che Guevara’s foco theory.” *Journal of Latin American Studies* 27 (3): 593–624

4. February 2: Recruitment and Capacity-Building

- Topics
 - Critical Requirements and Vulnerabilities
 - Collective Action Problems
 - Coercion, Selective Incentives, and Radicalization
 - Resource Wealth and Funding
 - Key Cases: Sierra Leone, Kashmir, ISIS
- Readings
 - Macartan Humphreys and Jeremy M. Weinstein. 2008. “Who fights? The determinants of participation in civil war.” *American Journal of Political Science* 52 (2): 436–455

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- Kristine Eck. 2014. “Coercion in Rebel Recruitment.” *Security Studies* 23, no. 2 (April): 364–398
- Paul Staniland. 2012. “Organizing insurgency: Networks, resources, and rebellion in South Asia.” *International Security* 37 (1): 142–177
- Iris Malone. 2018. “Analyzing ISIS in the Contemporary Environment.” *Military Strategy, Joint Operations, and Airpower*. Ed. Ryan Burke, Michael Fowler, and Kevin McCaskey. Georgetown University Press.
- Optional:
 - Virginia Page Fortna, Nicholas J. Lotito, and Michael A. Rubin. 2018. “Don’t Bite the Hand that Feeds: Rebel Funding Sources and the Use of Terrorism in Civil Wars” [in en]. *International Studies Quarterly* 62, no. 4 (December): 782–794

5. February 9: Insurgent Tactics

- Topics
 - Guerrilla
 - Terrorism
 - Diplomacy
 - Public Goods Provisions
 - Key Cases: Arab Revolt, Al Qaeda in Iraq, Eritrean People’s Liberation Front
- Readings
 - Thomas Edward Lawrence. 1929. “Science of guerrilla warfare.” In *Encyclopedia Britannica*. Routledge
 - Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter. 2006. “The strategies of terrorism.” *International Security* 31 (1): 49–80
 - Virginia Page Fortna. 2015. “Do Terrorists Win? Rebels’ Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes.” *International Organization* 69 (3): 519–556
 - Reyko Huang. 2016. “Rebel Diplomacy in Civil War.” *International Security* 40, no. 4 (April): 89–126
 - Megan A. Stewart. 2018. “Civil war as state-making: Strategic governance in civil war.” *International Organization* 72 (1): 205–226

6. February 16: Red Team Analysis/Presentations

- **Assignment Due: Red Team Analysis**
- Readings
 - None

Unit 2: Counterinsurgency

7. February 23: Threat Assessment

- Topics
 - Intelligence Cycle
 - State-Level Challenges
 - Group-Level Challenges
 - Key Cases: Malaya, Soviet-Afghan War, 9/11
- Readings
 - Karl Hack. 1999. “British intelligence and counter-insurgency in the era of decolonisation: The example of Malaya.” *Intelligence and National Security* 14, no. 2 (June): 124–155
 - Amy B. Zegart. 2007. “An Organizational View of 9/11.” In *Spying Blind*, 1–14. The CIA, the FBI, and the Origins of 9/11. Princeton University Press, Chp. 1
 - Paul Staniland, Asfandyar Mir, and Sameer Lalwani. 2018. “Politics and Threat Perception: Explaining Pakistani Military Strategy on the North West Frontier.” *Security Studies* 27, no. 4 (October): 535–574
 - Katherine Irajpanah and Iris Malone. 2020. “Signal and the Noise: Threat Assessment in Terrorism and Insurgency.” Working Paper.

8. March 2: Enemy-Centric COIN

- Topics
 - Counter-Terror Strategy
 - Search and Destroy
 - Indiscriminate Violence
 - Key Cases: Malaya, Algeria, Chechnya
- Readings
 - Huw Bennett. 2009. “‘A very salutary effect’: The Counter-Terror Strategy in the Early Malayan Emergency, June 1948 to December 1949.” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32, no. 3 (June): 415–444
 - Benjamin Valentino, Paul Huth, and Dylan Balch-Lindsay. 2004. “‘Draining the Sea’: Mass Killing and Guerrilla Warfare.” *International Organization* 58 (2): 375–407
 - Jason Lyall. 2009. “Does indiscriminate violence incite insurgent attacks? Evidence from Chechnya.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution*
 - Luke N. Condra and Jacob N. Shapiro. 2012. “Who takes the blame? The strategic effects of collateral damage.” *American Journal of Political Science* 56 (1): 167–187

9. March 9: Population-Centric COIN

- Topics
 - Hearts and Minds Strategy
 - Field Manual 3-24
 - Information Revolution (HUMINT, SIGINT, GEOINT)
 - Key Cases: Malaya, Afghanistan, Iraq
- Readings
 - Gian P. Gentile. 2009. *A Strategy of Tactics: Population-centric COIN and the Army*. Technical report. ARMY WAR COLL CARLISLE BARRACKS PA
 - Kalev I. Sepp. 2005. “Best practices in counterinsurgency.” *Military Review*
 - Brett Friedman. 2014. *No COIN for You? The Most Stagnant Debate in Strategic Studies* <https://warontherocks.com/2014/01/no-coin-for-you-the-most-stagnant-c>
 - Eli Berman, Joseph H. Felter, and Jacob N. Shapiro. *Small wars, big data: the information revolution in modern conflict*. Princeton University Press, 2020., Chp. 3-4
- Optional
 - David Galula. 1964. *Counterinsurgency Warfare: Theory and Practice*. Westport, CT: Praeger Security International
 - Octavian Manea. 2010. “Thinking Critically about COIN and Creatively about Strategy and War: An Interview with Colonel Gian Gentile.” *Small Wars Journal*, 6

10. March 16: Spring Break (No Class)

11. March 23: Organizational Learning and Adaptation

- Topics
 - Metrics
 - Inter-Agency Processes
 - Culminating Point of Victory
 - Key Cases: Afghanistan, Iraq, Sahel
- Readings
 - David H. Petraeus. 2006. *Learning Counterinsurgency: Observations from Soldiering in Iraq*. Technical report. Fort Leavenworth KS: Army Combined Arms Center, February

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- David Ucko. 2008. “Innovation or Inertia: the US Military and the Learning of Counterinsurgency.” *Orbis* 52 (2): 290–310
- Theo Farrell. 2010. “Improving in War: Military Adaptation and the British in Helmand Province, Afghanistan, 2006–2009.” *Journal of Strategic Studies* 33, no. 4 (August): 567–594
- Michael Shurkin. 2020. *France’s War in the Sahel and the Evolution of Counter-Insurgency Doctrine* <https://tnsr.org/2020/11/frances-war-in-the-sahel-and-the-evolution->
- Optional
 - John A. Nagl. 2005. *Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife: Counterinsurgency Lessons from Malaya and Vietnam*. University of Chicago Press
 - Clausewitz 1982, Book VII, Ch. 22

12. March 30: Virtual Staff Ride

- **Assignment Due: Staff Ride Pre-Analysis**
- Topics
 - Key Cases: COP Keating
- Readings
 - Jake Tapper. 2013. “Excerpt.” In *The Outpost: An Untold Story of American Valor*
 - Michael Burgoyne, and Albert J. Marckwardt. “The Defense of Jisr al-Doreaa.” University of Chicago Press, 2009.
- Optional: E.D. Swinton. “Defence of Duffer’s Drift.”

13. April 6: COIN Duration and Outcomes

- Topics
 - Asymmetric Warfare
 - Strategic Interactions
 - Outcomes
 - Key Cases: Vietnam, Algeria, Colombia
- Readings
 - Andrew Mack. 1975. “Why big nations lose small wars: The politics of asymmetric conflict.” *World Politics* 27 (02): 175–200
 - Ivan Arreguin-Toft. 2001. “How the weak win wars: A theory of asymmetric conflict.” *International security* 26 (1): 93–128
 - Jason Lyall and Isaiah Wilson. 2009. “Rage Against the Machines: Explaining Outcomes in Counterinsurgency Wars.” *International Organization* 63, no. 1 (January): 67–106

- Monica Duffy Toft. 2010. “Ending Civil Wars: A Case for Rebel Victory?” *International Security* 34, no. 4 (March): 7–36
- *Optional*: James D. Fearon. 2004. “Why Do Some Civil Wars Last So Much Longer than Others?” *Journal of Peace Research* 41, no. 3 (May): 275–301

14. April 13: Ethical Challenges

- Topics

- Pre-Emptive Violence
- Indiscriminate Violence
- Enhanced Interrogation
- Key Cases: Black Sites, Abu Gharib, Yemen

- Readings

- Neta C. Crawford. 2003. “Just war theory and the US counterterror war.” *Perspectives on Politics*, 5–25
- John Yoo. 2003. *Memo from John Yoo to Jim Haynes: Military Interrogation of Alien Unlawful Combatants Held Outside the United States*. Technical report. US Department of Justice (Skim)
- Matt Peterson. 2016. “Is Obama’s Drone War Moral? - The Atlantic.” *Atlantic* <https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2016/08/obama-drone-morality/496433/>
- Ralph L. DeFalco. 2010. “Ethics, Intelligence, and Preemptive and Preventive Actions.” *International Journal of Intelligence Ethics* 1, no. 1 (May): 76–96

15. April 20: Emerging Trends

- **Assignment Due Final Exam Week 5pm ET: Strategy Paper**

- Topics

- “Fourth Generation” Warfare
- Hybrid Warfare
- Globalization and ICT
- Key Cases: Lebanon (Hezbollah), Ukraine, Syria

- Readings

- David Kilcullen. 2013. *Out of the Mountains: The Coming Age of the Urban Guerrilla*. Oxford University Press, Incorporated, Chp 1
- Eoin Higgins. *Limited Wars Are Forever Wars* <https://foreignpolicy.com/2019/07/17/limited-wars-are-forever-wars/>
- Gary Anderson. 2013. *The End of the Peace of Westphalia: Fourth Generation Warfare* <https://smallwarsjournal.com/jrnl/art/the-end-of-the-peace-of-westphalia-fourth>
- TX Hammes. *Technology Converges; Non-State Actors Benefit* [in en]. Text <https://www.hoover.org/research/technology-converges-non-state-actors-benefit>