

Conflict in Asia

POLS 385 // Fall 2019

Instructor: Prof. Renard Sexton

Time: Monday & Wednesday, 8:30 – 9:45am

Location: Tarbutton Hall 106

Office hours: Tuesday mornings, sign up at: <https://calendly.com/renard-sexton/office-hours>

1. Course Description

This course examines the logic and exercise of violence in contemporary Asia, including insurgency, terrorism, foreign occupation, political violence during decolonization, show downs between regional powers, and social mobilization. We will start by asking “why do we see violence?” using game theory and historical cases. The course will then dive into present day cases such as Afghanistan, the Philippines, India, Pakistan, Myanmar, North Korea and the South China Sea. Cross-cutting topics will include international drug smuggling, terrorist networks, separatist insurgencies and foreign intervention.

2. Class Goals

In this class, students will:

- Learn and apply principles of strategic thinking to conflict cases from Asia
- Become familiar with a range of conflict types
- Explore a diverse set of conflict examples in South, East & Southeast Asia, primarily from the post-WWII era
- Be able to explain why we see conflict in some cases and not others

3. Class Requirements

Reading

Each class session has an associated set of readings and other preparatory material, including videos, podcasts, webcomics, etc. Preparation means that you have read the assignment before class and that you are ready to discuss it. In the event that you do not understand all that you have read, you need to be prepared to ask questions. If you miss readings for a class, it's worth going back and reviewing the material even after lecture or when completing the homework assignments.

Attendance and Participation

It's important to attend class and participate fully in the activities during our twice weekly sessions. It will be very difficult to complete the homework assignments and exam, and impossible to do the in-class assignments, unless you show up and participate.

Homework

There will be four problem sets that you should complete on your own. It's fine to convene with other students to discuss how to think about problems but each student's work should be their own. I recommend that you try the problems on your own first before consulting others. People

will be choosing different cases so answers to the problems may be different depending on your choices.

Final Exam

The final exam will take place as per the [assigned schedule](#) on December 12th during a 11:30 AM to 2:00 PM window. Students are expected to take the exam during that time. Any requests to reschedule must be processed through the Office of Undergraduate Education (it is up to the discretion of the professor whether a reason is compelling).

4. Grading

Attendance, Participation, and In-class assignments (20%)

Over the course of the semester, we will have discussions and in-class assignments that will be turned in at the end of the class. If you turn in a completed assignment, you'll get credit. Absences that are due to religious holiday, Emory activity with advance notice, etc. will be excused and in-class work exempted from their participation grade. If you need to miss class for an extended period of time (or will not be able to complete homework assignments) due to illness or other pressing personal circumstance, please reach out to me as soon as possible so that we may develop a plan together to help you complete the course.

Problem Sets (40%)

Over the course of the semester there will be four problem sets, with due dates set ahead of time. Students will turn in their assignments on Canvas. They will be graded based on a number of available points.

Problem sets will have a set due date, usually a week after the questions are distributed, and will be submitted on Canvas. Homework assignments may be turned in late for a 15% penalty until the correct answers are discussed in class, at which point no more assignments will be accepted.

Final Exam (40%)

At the end of the course there will be a cumulative final exam. It will be administered on Canvas and is open notes. You will have about two hours to complete the final.

Missed or late assignments:

In-class assignments do not have an option for make-ups. However, life happens – everyone is allowed to miss one in-class assignment without penalty.

There are no opportunities for extra credit throughout the semester or after the semester is over. If you are concerned about grading or your class performance at any point, please contact me ASAP so that we can work on a plan that will allow you to succeed in the course.

Any concerns regarding grades should be communicated in a timely fashion. For example, the week following the return of a homework assignment is the time to discuss grading, not the end of the semester. Once the final exam occurs, there will be no changes to homework or participation grades. After one week after grades are posted, there will be no further changes of any kind.

5. Course Website

The course will have a Canvas site where materials will occasionally be shared. Please access this at <https://canvas.emory.edu/>. You are responsible for checking email updates from Canvas in a timely fashion. Exams will also be administered via Canvas.

6. Policies

Students requiring any type of **academic accommodation** should consult with the Office of Disability Services (<http://www.ods.emory.edu/> or 404-727-6016) and discuss the issue with the instructor within the first week of class.

The Office of Undergraduate Education has resources and forms for nearly every academic concern you might have. Usually this is the place to start if you need help with an issue: [OUE Resources A to Z](#).

The **Honor Code** applies to all work submitted for courses in Emory College. Students who violate the Honor Code may be subject to a written mark on their record, failure of the course, suspension, permanent exclusion, or a combination of these and other sanctions. The Honor Code may be reviewed online at: <http://catalog.college.emory.edu/academic/policies-regulations/honor-code.html>. Basically, don't cheat. You don't gain much but there's a lot to lose.

No **incomplete grades** will be given unless there is an agreement between the instructor and the student prior to the end of the course. The instructor retains the right to determine legitimate reasons for an incomplete grade.

Most University employees are required to report any knowledge of an incident of sexual or gender-based harassment or sexual misconduct to the University's Title IX Coordinator. Unlike a health provider or counselor, I am a mandatory reporter, which means that even if a student says something 'in confidence,' I am legally obliged to report allegations of harassment or misconduct to the Title IX office. The Equity and Inclusion office has more information, including [this summary document](#). For confidential counseling services related to any issue, I encourage you to get in touch with Emory's terrific [CAPS clinical services](#).

7. Schedule

August 28th, 2019

Introduction

- No assigned readings

September 2nd

No Class – Labor Day

September 4th

What do we mean by conflict?

- South China Sea: Frances Mangosing, Inquirer, 2018. <https://www.inquirer.net/specials/exclusive-china-militarization-south-china-sea>
- India/Pakistan: Deutsche Welle, 2019. <https://dw.com/en/india-abolishes-kashmirs-autonomous-status/a-49892487>
- Myanmar: BBC, 2018. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-41566561>
- North Korea: <https://www.nti.org/analysis/articles/cns-north-korea-missile-test-database/>

September 9th

Why do we see conflict?

- James Fearon, 1995. "Rationalist Explanations for War." *International Organization*. Available at: <https://web.stanford.edu/group/fearon-research/cgi-bin/wordpress/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/Rationalist-Explanations-for-War.pdf>

September 11th

The Prisoner's Dilemma

- Short video introduction: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t9Lo2fgxWHw>
- Background reading:
 - <https://policonomics.com/game-theory/>
 - <https://policonomics.com/nash-equilibrium/>
 - <https://policonomics.com/lp-game-theory2-dominant-strategy/>

September 16th

Using Games to Analyze Conflict

- Oliver Roeder, FiveThirtyEight, 2017. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/how-to-win-a-nuclear-standoff/>
- Courtney Cooper, Samir Kumar, CFR, 2018. <https://www.cfr.org/blog/overcoming-prisoners-dilemma-reach-peace-afghanistan>

September 18th

Types of Conflict I: War

- Korean Peninsula, 1950: <https://blog.oup.com/2013/06/history-world-north-korea-invades-south-1950/>
- Pakistan/Bangladesh/India, US State Dept: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1969-1976/south-asia>

September 23rd

Types of Conflict II: Rebellion

- Philippines: BBC Guide to the Moro conflict, 2012. <https://d2071andvip0wj.cloudfront.net/301-the-new-bangsamoro.pdf>
- Chinese Civil War: <https://history.state.gov/milestones/1945-1952/chinese-rev>
- Homework 1 due

September 25th

- Go over Homework 1
- Review concepts from Unit 1

September 30th

Types of Conflict III: Terrorism

- Mumbai, India: <https://www.apnews.com/22586837d4054fa4820d37ea67117a0d>
- Singapore Airlines Flight 117: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PfLNs1EokMQ>
- Indonesia: <http://theconversation.com/how-indonesias-counter-terrorism-force-has-become-a-model-for-the-region-97368>

October 2nd

Types of Conflict IV: Social Conflict

- Western China: Sean Roberts and Kilic Bugra Kanat, 2013.
<https://thediplomat.com/2013/07/chinas-wild-west/?allpages=yes>
- Malaysia/Singapore

October 7th

Types of Conflict V: Proxy Conflict/Intervention

- NATO mission in Afghanistan: https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/topics_69366.htm
- Taiwan: <https://www.cfr.org/report/averting-cross-strait-crisis>

October 9th

Who Fights?

- Bethune, Macleans.ca, 2016. <https://www.macleans.ca/news/world/why-do-so-many-jihadis-have-engineering-degrees/>
- International Alert, Peace Perceptions Poll, 2018. <https://www.international-alert.org/peacepoll/why-do-people-turn-to-violence/>

October 14th

No Class – Fall Recess

October 16th

Why Fight?

- Littman, R. and Paluck, E.L., 2015. The cycle of violence: Understanding individual participation in collective violence. *Political Psychology*, 36, pp.79-99. Available [here](#).
- *Homework 2 due*

October 21st

- Go over Homework 2
- Review concepts from Unit 2

October 23rd

Alliances

- CFR, 2019. <https://www.cfr.org/backgrounder/us-japan-security-alliance>
- South China Morning Post, 2019. <https://www.scmp.com/week-asia/explained/article/2186774/explained-asean>

October 28th

European Colonialism

- Podcast: The end of Colonialism in South Asia.
<https://15minutehistory.org/2013/01/23/episode-9-the-end-of-colonialism-in-south-asia/>
- <https://c8.alamy.com/comp/ACK9TH/map-of-the-china-sea-the-philippines-and-european-colonies-in-the-ACK9TH.jpg>
- Review: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/West_New_Guinea_dispute

- West Papua today: <https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-01-30/west-papuans-fight-for-another-independence-referendum/10584336>

October 30th

Organized Crime & Drugs

- Philippines: South China Morning Post, 2019. <https://www.scmp.com/news/asia/southeast-asia/article/3015255/philippine-drug-war-deaths-pile-duterte-admits-losing>
- Myanmar: U.S. Institute of Peace, 2019. https://www.usip.org/sites/default/files/2019-07/pw_147-the_united_wa_state_army_and_burmas_peace_process.pdf

November 4th

Ending Conflict: Negotiated Peace

- “The Long Road to the Korean War Armistice”: <https://thediplomat.com/2018/08/the-long-road-to-the-korean-war-armistice/>
- Afghanistan: Graeme Smith, Globe & Mail, 2019. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-twelve-years-ago-i-saw-hope-for-peace-in-afghanistan-die-now-it/>

November 6th

Ending Conflict: Surrender/Defeat

- AFP/France 24: <https://www.france24.com/en/20090517-tamil-tigers-admit-defeat-37-year-independence-struggle->
- Japan Times: <https://www.japantimes.co.jp/opinion/2016/08/06/commentary/japan-surrender-world-war-ii/>
- *Homework 3 due*

November 11th

- Go over Homework 3
- Review concepts from Unit 3

November 13th

Ending Conflict: External Intervention (and eventually withdrawal)

- Vietnam War: The Diplomat, 2015. <https://thediplomat.com/2015/12/1975-the-start-and-end-of-conflict-in-southeast-asia/>
- Vietnamese war in Cambodia: BBC, 2014. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-29106034>

November 18th

Ending Conflict: Peacekeeping

- East Timor: BBC, 2012. <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-20873267>
- Cambodia, The Diplomat, 2019. <https://thediplomat.com/2019/07/was-cambodia-ever-really-a-democracy/>

November 20th

Ending Conflict: Counter-insurgency

- Sri Lanka: The Diplomat, 2015: <https://thediplomat.com/2015/04/how-sri-lanka-won-the-war/>
- Afghanistan: War on the Rocks, 2016: <https://warontherocks.com/2016/12/elephants-in-afghanistan-the-militarys-counterinsurgency-failure/>

November 25th

Case study: Korean Peninsula

- Background, BBC, 2011.
http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/worldwars/coldwar/korea_hickey_01.shtml
- North Korea nuclear program: <https://www.armscontrol.org/factsheets/dprkchron>
- Kaseong Industrial Park: <https://www.crisisgroup.org/asia/north-east-asia/korean-peninsula/300-case-kaesong-fostering-korean-peace-through-economic-ties>

November 27th

No class (Emory College off)

December 2nd

Case study work in class

- Homework 4 due

December 4th

Case study presentation and voting

- Present case studies and recommendations
- Class will vote on best proposals per case

December 9th

- Go over Homework 4
- Review for final
- Course evaluations

December 12th

Final exam – the exam will be take-home and distributed via Canvas during the final exam period with a defined start and finish time. We will discuss logistics in class.