Introduction

Political struggles aimed at undermining the existing political order have been a pervasive feature of global politics. Modern states have constantly been sites of relentless challenges from their citizenry, which sometimes take the form of non-violent action while on other occasions manifest in terrorism and violence. This course introduces students to the politics of disruption – violent and non-violent struggles targeted at bringing about political change. Can non-violent resistance succeed against a coercive state? Why do individuals and groups participate in high-risk political struggles? What explains patterns of violence in civil conflicts? What are the effects of violence? What facilitates peace? This course will enable you to answer these questions.

The course will begin with an examination of alternatives to political violence. The focus will be on India’s non-violent struggle for independence from the British rule under the leadership of Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the civil rights movement in the United States led by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa with Dr. Nelson Rolihlahla Mandela in the lead. We will compare and contrast the approaches of Gandhi, King and Mandela – three iconic figures of the last century. Students will be familiarized with definitional, conceptual and practical distinctions between various forms and manifestations of violent and non-violent struggles. To facilitate a better understanding, we will study a carefully-selected list of cases in-depth during the course of the semester. Our discussion on political violence will be structured around four broad themes, which are:

(a) Causes underlying violence;

(b) Dynamics of conflict – focusing on such questions as who participates in violent activities, how violence and violent actors are organized, and what can we learn from the pattern
of violence;
(c) Consequences of violence, both short-term and long-term; and,
(d) Prevention and termination of violence.

The class time will be apportioned between lectures (40 percent), multimedia presentations (35 percent) and discussions, both individual and group based (25 percent). The multimedia presentations will incorporate movies, documentaries, media reports, speeches, memoirs, etc.

**Course Objectives**

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

1. List, describe and distinguish between various manifestations of political violence and its alternatives;
2. Understand philosophical and practical underpinnings of non-violent resistance;
3. Develop and demonstrate an enhanced understanding of the causes, consequences and dynamics of political violence;
4. Look beyond and think past the commonly-prevalent stereotypes and oversimplifications of conflict episodes in media;
5. Develop and practice their skills in researching and writing on issues of importance; and,
6. Develop and demonstrate a higher level of critical and analytical thinking skills in navigating opinions, arguments, theories and application thereof.

**Course Requirements**

Students are required to attend all lectures. Unexcused absences will negatively affect your final grade. The only acceptable excuses are family emergencies, illness and religious holidays for which you will have to provide proper documentation such as a doctor’s note. Students are expected to come to class having done the assigned reading for the day, and are strongly encouraged to follow current events. **Class participation**, which includes class attendance, constitutes 15 percent of the grade.

Students should expect **seven short assignments** that would include responses to assigned readings, news stories, op-eds, documentaries, etc. Three of these will be administered at the beginning of the class without prior notice and require shorter responses. The remaining are homework assignments, which will be emailed to you on Fridays and will be due at the beginning of class on the following Wednesday. Together these assignments will
account for 40 percent of the final grade; in-class assignments are worth 12 percent of your final grade and homework assignments account for the remaining 28 percent of the grade. You are allowed to work in a group on the four homework assignments and submit one assignment for the group, in which case all group members will get the same grade. You will not have an opportunity to make up for a missed assignment due to an unexcused absence. No late short assignment will be accepted, except under circumstances detailed in the course policies regarding late assignments below.

One research assignment will constitute another 20 percent of your grade. You have the freedom to work either individually or in a group on this assignment. If you decide to work as a group, all members of your group will get the same grade. You or your group will select one event from among the events listed below and prepare a report. Your report will include a brief statement of the historical background leading to the event, a short summary of key milestones/incidents/junctures and a succinct account of the historical significance of the event. In addition, you will be responding to a set of questions in the prompt relating to the event. This assignment is due on October 19, 2016.

Individual/Group Research Assignment: List of Historical Events

1. The Woman Suffrage Parade (USA), 1913
2. The Armenian Genocide (Ottoman Empire), 1915
3. Salt Satyagraha & Dandi March (India), 1930
4. The Montgomery Bus Boycott (USA), 1955
5. The Hukbalahap (Huk) Rebellion (The Philippines), 1942-1954
6. The Mau Mau Rebellion (Kenya), 1952-60
7. The Indonesian Massacre (Genocide-Politicide), 1965-1966
8. The Biafran War (Nigeria), 1967-1970
10. The Dirty War (Argentina), 1976-1983
11. The Velvet Revolution (Czechoslovakia), 1989
12. Los Angeles Riots (USA), 1992
13. The Zapatista Uprising (Mexico), 1994
14. Gujarat Riots (India), 2002

The remainder of your grade, 25 percent, will be based on an eight-page research paper. This will be your opportunity to undertake your own research on a topic of your choice. You will identify a research question on this topic and will seek to find an answer to this question
in your research paper. I will provide you with a template that will help you undertake this research. To guide you through your research work and facilitate regular feedback, your research paper project, in addition to the final submission, includes the following two components:

(a) Submit your research question in class on Friday, October 28, 2016; and,

(b) Upload a 3-4-page outline of your paper by 5 pm on Monday, November 21, 2016 to Moodle site.

You will lose 5 percent of your final grade if you fail to submit your research question by the due date. In addition, there is a penalty of 10 percent of your final grade if you do not submit an outline of your paper by 5 pm on November 21, 2016. We will have a workshop on Wednesday, November 23, 2016 to help you with your research project.

The final paper, a printed copy, is due in my mailbox located in 1414 Social Sciences Building by 5 pm on Monday, December 19, 2016. You are also required to upload this paper to the Moodle site.

Grade Distribution

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven Short Assignments:</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. In-class (Three):</td>
<td>12%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Homework (Four):</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual/Group Research Assignment:</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Paper:</td>
<td>25%</td>
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Some Useful Links

1. Waging Nonviolence: http://wagingnonviolence.org/


3. APSA Task Force on Political Violence and Terrorism: http://www.apsanet.org/content_15710.cfm


5. Center for Systemic Peace: http://www.systemicpeace.org/

Students with Disabilities

The University of Minnesota is committed to providing equitable access to learning opportunities for all students. Disability Services (DS) is the campus office that collaborates with students who have disabilities to provide and/or arrange reasonable accommodations. If you have, or think you may have, a disability (e.g., mental health, attentional, learning, chronic health, sensory, or physical), please contact DS at 612-626-1333 to arrange a confidential discussion regarding equitable access and reasonable accommodations.

If you are registered with DS and have a current letter requesting reasonable accommodations, we encourage you to contact your instructor early in the semester to review how the accommodations will be applied in the course. Additional information is available on the DS website: https://diversity.umn.edu/disability/

As a student you may experience a range of issues that can cause barriers to learning, such as strained relationships, increased anxiety, alcohol/drug problems, feeling down, difficulty concentrating and/or lack of motivation. These mental health concerns or stressful events may lead to diminished academic performance or reduce your ability to participate in daily activities. University of Minnesota services are available to assist you with addressing these and other concerns you may be experiencing. You can learn more about the broad range of confidential mental health services available on campus via http://www.mentalhealth.umn.edu

Scholastic Dishonesty

You are expected to do your own academic work and cite sources as necessary. Failing to do so is scholastic dishonesty. Scholastic dishonesty means plagiarizing; cheating on assignments or examinations; engaging in unauthorized collaboration on academic work; taking, acquiring, or using test materials without faculty permission; submitting false or incomplete records of academic achievement; acting alone or in cooperation with another to falsify records or to obtain dishonestly grades, honors, awards, or professional endorsement; altering, forging, or misusing a University academic record; or fabricating or falsifying data, research procedures,
or data analysis. The Office for Student Conduct and Academic Integrity has compiled a useful list of Frequently Asked Questions pertaining to scholastic dishonesty: [http://www1.umn.edu/oscai/integrity/student/index.html](http://www1.umn.edu/oscai/integrity/student/index.html)

### Use of Personal Electronic Devices in the Classroom

My strong preference is that students do not use any electronic devices, including **cellphones, laptops and tablets** during lectures. I encourage students to take handwritten notes, which is a scientifically-proven technique to facilitate retention. Moreover, the use of these devices is frequently distracting to all of us – me, you and your fellow students. However, if for a compelling reason you need to take notes on your computer, please come and talk to me. Regardless, I expect you to be both physically and mentally present in class. If you are permitted to use your laptop, you should turn off your Wi-Fi. Your cellphone should be in silent mode and put away in your bag. I have a very strict **no texting, no surfing** policy. Your teaching assistant will pay careful attention to violations. A violation of this policy will adversely affect your participation grade.

Here is the University’s policy on the subject:

Using personal electronic devices in the classroom setting can hinder instruction and learning, not only for the student using the device but also for other students in the class. To this end, the University establishes the right of each faculty member to determine if and how personal electronic devices are allowed to be used in the classroom. For complete information, please reference: [http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html](http://policy.umn.edu/Policies/Education/Education/STUDENTRESP.html)

### Readings

The following books are available for purchase at the U of M Bookstores. All of the other readings are available on the course Moodle site.


September 7, 2016. Introduction: Overview of the Course

September 9, 2016: Non-Violent Struggle: Some Conceptual & Philosophical Issues


Documentary: *A Force More Powerful: Part 1*

September 14 & 16, 2016: Non-Violent Struggle: Mahatma Gandhi


Documentary: *Gandhi: The Making of the Mahatma*

September 21 & 23, 2016: King and the US Civil Rights Movement


Documentary: *Freedom Riders*

September 28, 2016: Mandela & the Anti-apartheid Movement

Select Speeches of Nelson Mandela. [http://www.nelsonmandela.org/content/page/speeches](http://www.nelsonmandela.org/content/page/speeches).

Please see the course Moodle site.

Documentary: *Nelson Mandela: The Fight for Freedom*

September 30, 2016: Non-violent Struggle in the Contemporary World


October 5-7, 2016: Mass Protests & Uprisings


Documentary: The Square (Al Maidan)

October 12-14, 2016: Political Violence: Manifestations & Causes


Documentary: Khun Sa: Opium Warlord

October 19-21, 2016: Terrorism, Civil Wars & Insurgencies


Documentary: The Cult of the Suicide Bomber

October 26-28, 2016: Ethnic Riots, Pogroms & Genocides


Documentary: Worse Than War
November 2-4, 2016: Political Violence: Mobilization, Recruitment & Organization


Scott Gates and Sukanya Podder. 2015. “Social Media, Recruitment, Allegiance and the Islamic State.” Perspectives of Terrorism. 9(4).

Documentary: Recruiting for ISIS

November 9-11, 2016: Patterns of Violence


Documentary: Women, War & Peace: I Came to Testify

November 16-18, 2016: Consequences


Documentary: Invisible Children

Documentary: Waltz with Bashir

November 23, 2016: Research Project Workshop

November 25, 2016: Happy Thanksgiving!

November 30-December 2, 2016: Termination & Peace


Documentary: Israel and the Arabs: Elusive Peace

December 7-9 & 14, 2016: Counter-insurgency


Movie: *The Battle of Algiers*

**Final Paper due by 5:00 PM on December 19, 2016**

A printed copy of the paper is due in my mailbox, which is located in 1414 Social Sciences. Please makes sure to also upload your paper to the course Moodle site by the deadline.