Course Description and Objectives

Civil resistance is the application of unarmed civilian power using nonviolent tactics such as protests, strikes, boycotts, demonstrations, without using or threatening physical harm against the opponent. This method of struggle occurs worldwide in places as diverse as Russia, Serbia, Spain, Egypt, Iran, Maldives, the Niger Delta, the West Bank, Thailand, and Burma, among many others. As a consequence of the growing use of civil resistance, the foreign policy community has become interested in understanding the causes, dynamics, outcomes, and consequences of civil resistance campaigns.

This course will serve as a primer on the topic of civil resistance, introducing students to the primary texts in the field, as well as the policy implications of empirical research on the topic. The five primary goals of the course are to: (1) present leading theories and concepts for understanding civil resistance; (2) explore international history to evaluate theories of civil resistance; (3) apply these theories to analyze current trends and make predictions about future developments; (4) provide students with opportunities to synthesize their knowledge in a major written assignment; and (5) allow students to deepen their knowledge about several historical cases around the globe.

By the end of the term, I expect students to become comfortable taking an intellectual stand, defending it with evidence, engaging in some self-critique, deriving actionable policy recommendations, and communicating those recommendations to both specialist and non-specialist audiences. Course assignments are designed to enhance those skills.

Required Texts and Readings

The readings for this course offer conflicting interpretations of theory and history. Students should read these texts with the goals of identifying, interpreting, comparing, evaluating, contesting the contending arguments.

The following texts are available at the campus bookstore and online. Many of them are also eligible for rental, and some of the texts are available at Penrose Library.


Additional required readings are available on Blackboard, which students should check regularly for announcements and details on assignments for the course.

For students interested in pursuing further research on the subject, the readings on this syllabus are not exhaustive. I encourage students to visit me during office hours, where I can recommend materials specific to your interests.

**Expectations**

This course has no prerequisites, but students are strongly encouraged to follow current events through a major newspaper with reputable coverage of foreign affairs; I recommend in particular the *New York Times*. Worldpress.org is a source of headlines from daily newspapers around the world, and the magazine *The Economist* also has strong weekly coverage of global issues. *Foreign Affairs* and *Foreign Policy* are decent general sources and are released six times per year. For this course, I also recommend following the blog *Wagingnonviolence.org*, which regularly publishes stories and analysis of nonviolent conflict.

This is a graduate course, and I have high expectations of the students at the Korbel School. Students are advised not to fall behind in the reading, as the reading load is quite heavy. We will be reading several hundred pages per week. The reading may be overwhelming when read in a single sitting, so I recommend a daily discipline of reading.

I do not post notes online, but I do provide outlines following lectures to guide note-taking. I expect students to attend class regularly, arrive early and prepared, and conduct themselves with respect and courtesy toward others in the classroom. Students can expect the same from me.
Graded Work

Course grades will be based on the following elements, but failure to complete any of the assignments designated with an asterisk (*) is grounds for failing the course.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Deadline</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First Essay*</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>9am Feb. 12th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Group Memo*</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>9am Mar. 5th</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Campaign Assessment*</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>12pm Mar. 14th</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class Participation</td>
<td>25%</td>
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</table>

First Essay (25%)

The first paper is due at the beginning of class on Feb. 12th. The topic for the paper will be announced the first day of class. The paper should be no more than 7 pages in length and will be evaluated on the basis of persuasiveness, comprehensiveness, accuracy, clarity, and organization. The paper accounts for 25% of the total course grade and covers material through Week 4. There are no extensions; late papers will receive “0,” so I strongly recommend that students submit their papers ahead of the deadline.

Group Memo (15%)

On the first day of class, I will assign students to groups of four. Each group will write a 2-3-page policy memo to an American foreign policy official. The main task is to brief the official on several different policy options that the US government might use to support a pro-democracy movement in an authoritarian country (the group may choose the country). The memo should rely on empirical evidence and course materials to endorse the policy recommendations. Week 7’s readings and lecture will be especially helpful. The memo is due at the beginning of class on March 5th. The project accounts for 15% of the total course grade. There are no extensions; late papers will receive “0,” so I strongly recommend that groups submit their memos ahead of the deadline.

Campaign Assessment (35%)

The final assignment, which covers material for Weeks 1-10, is due at 12pm on March 14th. The paper will be a 12-15-page strategic assessment of a nonviolent campaign of the student’s choice. The paper should evaluate the strategic performance of a campaign, including its success at achieving participation, planning, training, maintaining unity, nonviolent discipline, and generating progress toward its strategic goals. The paper should then provide constructive steps for the campaign to improve its strategic performance. Papers will be evaluated on the basis of persuasiveness, command of the course material, accuracy, clarity, and organization. The paper accounts for 35% of the course grade. As with all assignments, there are no extensions; late papers will receive “0,” so I strongly recommend that students submit their papers ahead of the deadline.
Course Participation (25%)

Students should think of the course participation grade as an in-class oral examination extended throughout the semester. To achieve the maximum score on participation, students should attend class regularly, prepare for discussion by completing the readings in advance, contribute to the discussion in class, and be responsive to other students. Quantity of participation is not as important as quality. Questions, insights, and synthesis are all considered quality. Irregular attendance, arriving to class late, failing to participate in discussions, and disrupting class with side conversations, texting, or using your laptop for non-course related reasons can detract from the participation grade. In-class participation counts toward 25% of your grade.

Grading Standards

The following table designates the values I assign to letter grades. The numeric grades are thresholds, not averages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Numeric Grade</th>
<th>GPA Value</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>91.7</td>
<td>3.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>81.7</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>78.3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>71.7</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>68.3</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D-</td>
<td>61.7</td>
<td>.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>58.3</td>
<td>0</td>
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</table>

I do not grade on a curve, so theoretically, every student in the class could earn an A for the course. Such excellent grades must be earned, however, and this requires tremendous effort. Beyond the GPA, here is the way to interpret grades:

A  The student displays mastery of the material and more. The student performed far beyond my expectations in the course, displaying a grasp of the analytical and empirical material as well as creativity or insight beyond the material itself. The student will be among the top students in the degree program based on her/his performance in this course.

A-  The student displays complete mastery of the course material. I was very impressed by the student’s performance, and the student has acquired the analytical, theoretical, and empirical skills to achieve at a very high level in the degree program.
B+ The student fully comprehends the course material. The student met all of my expectations in the course; the student will perform very well in the degree program.

B The student met most of the requirements of the course, but demonstrated weakness in either analytical or empirical skills. The student will perform well in the degree program when those skills are further developed.

B- The student demonstrated weakness in both analytical and empirical skills, but clearly attempted to prepare for evaluated assignments. It is difficult to evaluate whether the student will succeed in the degree program.

C The student demonstrated disregard of the course requirements. Continuing in the degree program is not recommended.

D The student demonstrated blatant negligence and disrespect during the course. Continuing in the degree program is not recommended.

F The student did not attend class or did not perform to a level that I knew they were attending. Continuing in the degree program is not recommended.

Office Hours

I strongly suggest that students avail themselves of the opportunity to clarify and discuss course material with me during my office hours. Office hours are not, however, opportunities to obtain information missed during absences from class. Such material should be obtained from classmates.

Additional Information

Plagiarism is a grave offense, and the University of Denver takes academic honesty very seriously. For more details on DU’s policy on plagiarism (and how to avoid it), see http://www.du.edu/studentlife/studentconduct/policies.html.

Students with disabilities are responsible for registering with the Disabilities Services Program (DSP), in addition to making requests known to me within the first two weeks of class so that appropriate accommodations can be made. The procedures for registering with DSP can be found at http://www.du.edu/studentlife/disability/dsp/index.html.

The University of Denver provides numerous services to students to help improve writing, quantitative skills, and professional development. The Writing Center can be an invaluable resource for students with room to improve on writing. Please see the Writing Center’s website at http://www.du.edu/writing/wrc.htm for more information.

In the event that a student wishes to dispute a grade received on an assignment or in the course, the student must adhere to the University’s grade dispute procedure, listed here: http://www.du.edu/media/documents/graduates/grievance.pdf.
## LECTURE AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Lecture</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/8</td>
<td>Introduction to Civil Resistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>1/15</td>
<td>Strategic Principles of Civil Resistance</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>1/22</td>
<td>How Civil Resistance Happens</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>1/29</td>
<td>Why Civil Resistance Works— and Why it Fails</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>2/5</td>
<td>Dynamics of Civil Resistance: Radical Flank Effects; <strong>FIRST ESSAY DUE</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>2/12</td>
<td>Dynamics of Civil Resistance: Confronting Extremely Brutal Opponents</td>
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<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>2/19</td>
<td>Dynamics of Civil Resistance: The International Dimension</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>2/26</td>
<td>Dynamics of Civil Resistance: Confronting Atypical Opponents</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>3/5</td>
<td>Dynamics of Civil Resistance: Media and Technology; <strong>GROUP MEMO DUE</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>3/12</td>
<td>Consequences of Civil Resistance: Long-Term Effects</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3/14</td>
<td><strong>CAMPAIGN ASSESSMENT DUE BY 12PM</strong></td>
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</table>
LECTURES AND READINGS

Readings available on Blackboard are designated with an asterisk.

Week 1
Introduction to Civil Resistance
(70 pages)

Suggested Reading


Week 2
Strategic Principles of Civil Resistance
(270 pages)

Academic Perspectives


*Peter Ackerman. 2007. Skills or conditions: What key factors shape the success or failure of civil resistance? Paper delivered at the Conference on Civil Resistance and Power Politics, St Antony’s College, University of Oxford, 15-18 March. (9 pages)


Practitioner Perspectives


Film: *Bringing Down a Dictator* (in class)
Week 3
How Civil Resistance Happens
(238 pages)

Academic Perspectives


* Erica Chenoweth, Jay Ulfelder, and Orion Lewis. 2013. Are all revolutions unpredictable? The correlates of nonviolent mass uprisings. Working paper. (40 pages)


Practitioner Perspectives


Film: A Force More Powerful, excerpt on Nashville (in class)
Week 4
Why Civil Resistance Works—and Why it Fails
(279 pages)

Academic Perspectives


*Petter Grahl Johnstad. 2012. When the time is right: Regime legitimacy as an indicator of nonviolent protest outcomes. *Peace and Change* 37, no. 4 (October): 516-543. (27 pages)


Practitioner Perspectives


Film: *A Force More Powerful*, excerpt on South Africa (in class).
Week 5
Dynamics of Civil Resistance: Radical Flank Effects
(160 pages)

Academic Perspectives


Practitioner Perspectives


Week 6
Dynamics of Civil Resistance: Confronting Extremely Brutal Opponents
(196 pages)

Academic Perspectives


*David Hess and Brian Martin. 2006 Repression, backfire, and the theory of transformative events. Mobilization 11, no. 1 (June): 249-267. (18 pages)


Activist Perspectives


Film: A Force More Powerful, excerpts on Indian Independence Movement (in class).
**Academic Perspectives**


**Practitioner Perspectives**


Week 8
Dynamics of Civil Resistance: Confronting Armed Non-State Actors
(173 pages)

Academic Perspectives


Practitioner Perspectives


Week 9
Dynamics of Civil Resistance: Media and Technology
(119 pages)

Academic Perspectives


Malcolm Gladwell. 2010. Small change: Why the revolution will not be tweeted. The New Yorker (October 4).
http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa_fact_gladwell?currentPage=all. (9 pages)

*Clay Shirky. 2011. The political power of social media: Technology, the public sphere, and political change. Foreign Affairs (January/February): 28-41. (13 pages)


Practitioner Perspectives


http://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/2011/08/04/al-jazeera-documentary-to_n_918188.html. (1 page)

Week 10
Consequences of Civil Resistance: Long-Term Effects
(136 pages)

Academic Perspectives


Practitioner Perspectives