

INTL 4290H Modern Warfare: Terrorism, Ideology, and Identity

Fall 2009

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Note: This is a movie-based class dealing with the topic of war. Please note that war scenes and war-related coarse language depicted in the movies can be offensive to some individuals. If you are typically offended by such material, you may want to reconsider whether you want to take this course.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores key changes in the nature of warfare. Even though terrorist attacks may be thought of as very recent phenomena, their evolution can be traced back to the shifting nature of warfare. Specifically, ideological (e.g. liberalism, fascism, communism, religion-based world-views) and identity (i.e. ethnicity, culture, religion) differences have come to the forefront of 20th century political conflicts involving the use of force. Moreover, the doctrine of warfare has experienced a shift as well, in that civilians have developed the intertwined roles as the targets of war, means for fighting wars, and as evaluators of whether to fight particular wars. These changes will be explored both through theoretical readings and through viewing of several movies. The course is organized into three major thematic parts as follows. We start by identifying the nature of “traditional” warfare. Second, we explore the shift toward conflicts with ideological overtones and then do the same for conflicts with identity characteristics, all the while noting the roles of the civilians. Finally, we take the lessons from the above parts of the course and apply them to terrorism.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Reading Materials

1. A short course pack, available for purchase from Bel-Jean, 163 E. Broad St.
2. (recommended; placed on reserve at the Main Library) Ziegler, David W. 2000. *War, Peace, and International Politics*. 8th ed. New York: Addison, Wesley, Longman.

Student Initiative

Students should be alerted to the obvious fact that it will not be easy to summarize the complexity of our topics in terms of a few concepts and theories. Students should acquire the habit of regularly reading news magazines, opinion journals, and national newspapers. It is important that students **read assigned materials thoughtfully and thoroughly** and that they **attend classes regularly**.

Final Project

This assignment asks the students to write a term paper and conduct a related presentation to the class. The project will incorporate the students’ own research, materials from lectures, assigned readings, films, and class discussions. The description is given at the end of the syllabus. The due date is **Thursday, December 10** at 3:30 pm.

Discussion Leader

In a group composed of 2-3 students, analyze one of the movies shown in class. After the movie is shown, lead the follow-up discussion. A sign-up sheet will be passed around.

Reading Report

Students are asked to turn in a 2-page, single-spaced typewritten summary of a reading from the course pack on which they will report to the class. A sign-up sheet will be passed around.

Movie Journals

At the back of your course pack you will find movie discussion worksheets; additional copies are available from my web page. You are expected to fill out the worksheet for each movie we watch and turn in polished, typewritten versions of the worksheets twice during the semester. The **due dates** are **October 26** (through *The Killing Fields*) and **November 30**.

Participation

Participation in the class is essential to the success of this course, as it is discussion- and not lecture-oriented. The students are expected to offer their own insights based on assigned readings, films, and class discussions. To encourage participation, the instructor may use random questioning or unannounced quizzes.

Attendance

Unexcused class absences beyond one will negatively affect the overall grade. Each student starts out with 100 attendance points. The second and every subsequent unexcused absence will decrease the point total by 20 points. Note that excessive absences – excused and unexcused – will also hurt your participation grade, because one cannot participate in class discussions if one is not present in the class.

COURSE RULES

Grading Policy

Discussion Leader	20%
Final Project	30%
Reading Report	15%
Participation & Attendance	15%
Movie Journals	20%

Class Policies

1. Students are expected to turn in the assignments at the beginning of class and take the exam on the date specified. Failure to meet an assignment deadline does not entitle the students to make up the work at a later time.
2. Exceptions to the class requirements and rules are granted at the instructor's discretion, only under circumstances of extreme personal emergency or serious illness. In all instances, appropriate evidentiary documentation will be requested.
3. All academic work must meet the standards contained in "A Culture of Honesty." All students are responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any academic work. If you violate these rules – by, for example, cheating on examinations, plagiarizing the work of others, attempting to turn in assignments used in previous classes, etc. – you will receive a failing grade for the class and disciplinary proceedings to dismiss you from the University may be initiated against you. In short, I will not tolerate academic dishonesty and will assure you that you will face the harshest punishment possible if you attempt it.
4. Students may request the instructor to re-read exam answers or papers that they feel have been unfairly evaluated. Requests for re-evaluation must be submitted to the instructor in **typewritten form**, along with the assignment, within a week after it has been returned to the class. The written statement must

explain specifically why the student thinks that the grade should be reconsidered and what grade the assignment deserves.

5. The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.

6. All students are expected to complete assigned readings before they are discussed in class and they are expected to discuss and respond to random questioning by the instructor.

COURSE OUTLINE: TOPICS AND READINGS

I. TRADITIONAL WARFARE

A. Why do people fight: theoretical approaches

- Hobbes (47-50); Thucydides (37-41); Carr (“Military Power” section, 58-60); Waltz (68-74); Lenin (242-248); Mead (165-169)
- Recommended: Ziegler: Chapters 1 and 7

B. Pre-modern wars

- View: “Braveheart”

C. Traditional wars

- View: “All Quiet on the Western Front”

II. WARRING OVER IDEOLOGY AND IDENTITY

A. Communism, Fascism, and Liberalism

- Fukayama (5-16); Mearsheimer (17-32)
- View: “Conspiracy”
- Recommended: Ziegler: 25-34; Chapter 3; 87-95; Chapter 12

B. Civilization and culture

- Huntington (207-224); Barber (558-567)
- View: “The Killing Fields”

C. Ethnicity and religion

- Gellner (324-334); Kaufmann (348-365)
- View: “Michael Collins”
- Recommended: Ziegler: Chapters 4 and 5; 95-97, 98-104, 133-136

III. TERRORISM AND THE LINKS BETWEEN CIVILIANS AND WAR

- MSNBC.com article
- View: “One Day in September”
- View: “Paradise Now”

IV. STUDENT PRESENTATIONS

- Student choice movie
- Final project presentations

FINAL PROJECT

Assignment: With the instructor's approval, choose a 20th or 21st century conflict of interest to you. Write a 10-12 page (typewritten, double-spaced) paper analyzing the conflict; see below for paper content information. Before turning the paper in, you are asked to present your research to the class. This project will be a team effort (2 students per group). Please **propose your topic** as soon as possible, but no later than Monday, **October 5**. Each topic can be used only once, so the first-come, first-serve rule applies.

The **papers are due on Thursday, December 10 at 3:30 pm** (final exam time). Late papers will be penalized by 10% per day.

The paper should cover the below points. Grade "A" papers will not only be well written but will also clearly, thoroughly, and competently relate the conceptual and theoretical material from the course to your conflict (i.e. applying the key points from the readings and discussion, placing the conflict in a broader context by comparing and contrasting it with the movies viewed).

1. *Background information.* DO NOT describe the chronology of the war (i.e. first this happened, then that happened; so and so did this to so and so, etc.). Instead: (a) Identify the war you are analyzing, its timing, and key participants; (b) what does each side want, do all the people belonging to the same side want the same thing, do the people engaged in the conflict understand what they are fighting for?
2. *Traditional and non-traditional aspects of the war.* How is the conflict fought (i.e. tactics, style, and methods of combat)? What formal and informal rules of war do you notice; which ones are broken and why? Which aspects of the war fit the traditional vs. non-traditional image?
3. *Ideology and identity.* What roles do various ideologies (i.e. world-views) play in the war? What roles do identity factors (e.g. culture, ethnicity, religion) play in the war? Are these issues the actual causes of the conflict or do they play a different role; please explain?
4. *The role of civilians.* How do the civilians participate in the war? Are they the targets, are they the forces that carry out the war, or both? Why (or why not) are the civilians targeted? Are public opinion and media factors in the war; please explain?