

POLS 382 Topics in Contemporary Security:
The Power of Protest in Global Politics
Northern Illinois University
Spring 2018

Monday & Wednesday 11:00am - 12:15pm | Dusable Hall 459

Professor:

Dr. Ches Thurber

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Office Hours: Mon / Wed 9:00 - 10:30am

Course Description:

From colonial America to colonial India, the Berlin Wall to Tahrir Square, nonviolent resistance movements have proven capable of toppling regimes and recasting the geopolitical landscape. But what exactly constitutes “nonviolent resistance?” Why do some groups employ it while others turn to arms? Why and when is it effective? What, if anything, can the international community do to help nonviolent movements succeed? This seminar is intended to provide a broad, interdisciplinary overview of the study of what has been interchangeably called civil resistance, nonviolent direct action, and strategic nonviolence. It will explore questions surrounding the ethics of nonviolent action, when and where civil resistance is used, the conditions under which it is more or less effective, and its consequences for local communities, state politics, and the international system. The course will draw from seminal philosophical texts, historical accounts, and cutting-edge social science research. Students will gain an understanding of both the normative and empirical debates surrounding the practice of civil resistance and a familiarity with key cases in which it has been used.

Course Format:

We will be meeting twice a week for 75 minute sessions. While some material will be presented in lecture, we will spend much of our time openly discussing the readings and topics assigned for each day. As such, it is essential that students come to class having completed the readings and participate in discussion every class period. Throughout the semester there will also be in-class exercises and role-plays. Audio-visual materials may also be used as appropriate.

Course Materials:

Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan, *Why Civil Resistance Works: The Strategic Logic of Nonviolent Conflict*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2011.

Adam Roberts and Timothy Garton-Ash, eds. *Civil Resistance and Power Politics: The Experience of Non-violent Action from Gandhi to the Present*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. (Available Electronically through NIU library)

Evaluation:

1. *Class attendance, preparation and participation: (20%)*

The time we spend in class is for me the most important of this course. As such, punctual attendance is mandatory. But more important than just being present at a desk is that you are actively engaged. I expect that you have done the readings and that you try to participate in discussion each and every class section.

2. *Reading Quizzes and In-class Writings: (10%)*

Over the course of the semester, there will be 5 unannounced reading quizzes. They will consist of multiple choice questions based on the assigned reading for the day. There will also be 5 in-class writing activities which will be graded.

3. *Writing Assignments: (60%)*

You will complete four short writing assignments over the course of the semester. Each assignment should be between 600 and 800 words in length. You will pick a case of a civil resistance from around the world and become an expert on that case. The first assignment will ask for a brief overview of the case, the second and third will analyze in depth key concepts introduced in the course, and the final will draw lessons from the case for the practice and study of civil resistance. The writing assignments are due at 5pm on Friday afternoons as indicated in the course schedule below.

4. *Final Presentation: (10%)*

During the exam period, you will give a 10 minute powerpoint presentation to a subset of the class, describing the case you studied over the semester and the lessons you drew from it. Your powerpoint "deck" should be submitted on Blackboard prior to the start of the exam period.

Course Policies:

1. Successful completion of this course consistent, punctual attendance, completing the readings prior to the start of class, and active participation. If you must miss class due to a conflicting responsibility or an emergency, it is your responsibility to contact me to discuss the situation. I will generally require a short written assignment to be submitted in lieu of class attendance. Any more than 2 absences without prior notification and make-up work will affect your final grade.
2. If you think you need to delay taking an exam or submitting a written assignment, you should talk to me, generally at least two weeks before the exam/due date. Such extensions are never guaranteed, but will be based on university policy, exigency of the circumstances, and timeliness of the request (the earlier the better). Any missed exam or written assignment submitted after the deadline without prior authorization from me will not be accepted and a grade of 0 will be assigned.
3. A missed quiz is less serious in nature. If you miss a quiz, usually due to absence or tardiness, you will be given the opportunity to take a make-up 5 minutes before the next class. The questions may be different and the scoring system more difficult. Students who miss a quiz and do not show up for a make-up will receive a 0.
4. Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will lead to an F for the course. If you are unsure as to whether your approach for any given assignment may constitute plagiarism, please be sure to double check with the professor prior to handing in your assignment. Political Science department resources pertaining to plagiarism may be found at: <http://www.niu.edu/polisci/audience/plagiarism.shtml>
5. I am committed to your success in this class – if you feel that you are not performing to your expectations, please come and see me. I am available to answer any questions you may have about course assignments, requirements or content.

Letter Grade Distribution:

You will receive a percentage score for each assignment above that can be translated into a letter grade according to the scale below.

| | | | |
|---------------|----|---------------|----|
| >= 93.00 | A | 77.00 - 79.99 | C+ |
| 90.00 - 92.99 | A- | 70.00 - 76.99 | C |
| 87.00 - 89.99 | B+ | 60.00 - 69.99 | D |
| 83.00 - 86.99 | B | <= 59.99 | F |
| 80.00 - 82.99 | B- | | |

Tentative Course Outline:

Updates will be announced in class and posted on the course website.

Week 1: Introduction

Wed 1/17 Introduction

Week 2: What is Civil Resistance?

Mon 1/22 Defining Civil Resistance

- CRPP, Chs. 1-2

Wed 1/24 Civil Resistance and the American Revolution

- Conser Jr., "The United States: Reconsidering the Struggle for Independence, 1765-1775" (BB)

Week 3: Nonviolence as a Moral Philosophy

Mon 1/29 Gandhi's Philosophy of "Ahimsa"

- Gandhi, Selections from "Satyagraha" and *Hind Swaraj* (BB)

Wed 1/31 Gandhi's Movement

- Brown, "Gandhi and Civil Resistance in India" (CRPP Ch. 3)

Week 4: Nonviolence as a Strategy

Mon 2/5 The Strategic Logic of Civil Resistance

- WCRW, Chs. 1-2

Wed 2/7 People Power Revolution in the Philippines

- Mendoza, "People Power in the Philippines, 1983-86" (CRPP, Ch. 11)
- WCRW, Ch. 6

Fri 2/9 *Writing Assignment 1 Due at 5 PM*

Week 5: The Problem of Repression

Mon 2/12 What We Know about Repression and Mobilization

- Chenoweth et al, "State Repression and Civil Resistance"

Wed 2/14 The Tianenmen Protests and Massacre

- Goldman, "The 1989 Demonstrations in Tianenman Square and Beyond" (CRPP)
- Nepstad "The Tianenman Tragedy" (BB)

Week 6: When Repression Backfires

Mon 2/19 The Logic of Backfire

- Martin, Excerpts from *Justice Ignited: The Dynamics of Backfire* (BB)
- Popovic, "Make Oppression Backfire" (BB)

Wed 2/21 The Iranian Revolution

- Chenoweth and Stephan, "The Iranian Revolution" (WCRW)
- Abrahamian, "Mass Protests in the Iranian Revolution" (CRPP)

Week 7: Choosing and Maintaining Civil Resistance

Mon 2/26 Ideology vs. Strategy in Nepal

- Thurber, "Between Mao and Gandhi: Social Ties and the Strategy of Nonviolent Revolution" (BB)

Wed 2/28 Cohesion and Fragmentation in Palestine

- Pearlman, "The Organizational Mediation Theory of Protest" (BB)
- Chenoweth and Stephan, "The First Palestinian Intifada" (WCRW)

Week 8: Catch-up Week

Mon 3/5 Catch-up Day 1

Wed 3/7 Catch-up Day 2

Fri 5/9 *Writing Assignment 2 Due at 5 PM*

SPRING BREAK

Week 9: Nonviolent Discipline vs. Mixed Strategies

Mon 3/19 Nonviolent Discipline and the Color Revolutions

- Pinckney, "Making or Breaking Nonviolent Discipline"

Wed 3/21 Radical Flanks and the Anti-Apartheid Movement

- Lodge, "The Interplay of Violent and Nonviolent Action in the Movement Against Apartheid in South Africa" (CRPP)
- Braithwaite, "Rethinking Radical Flank Theory: South Africa" (BB)

Week 10: Ethnicity, Race, and Nonviolence

Mon 3/26 Ethnic and Racial Barriers to Civil Resistance

- Gelderloos, "Nonviolence is Racist" (BB)
- Thurber, "Ethnic Barriers to Nonviolent Action" (BB)

Wed 3/28 The US Civil Rights Movement

- McAdam, "The US Civil Rights Movement" (CRPP)
- Morris, "A Retrospective on the Civil Rights Movement: Political and Intellectual Landmarks"

Week 11: Gender and Civil Resistance

Mon 4/2 Women in Civil Resistance

- Principe, "Women in Nonviolent Movements" (BB)
- Codur and King, "Women in Civil Resistance" (BB)

Wed 4/4 Women and Black Lives Matter

- Taylor, "Black Lives Matter, A Movement, Not a Moment" (BB)
- Chatelain and Asoka, "Women and Black Lives Matter" (BB)

Fri 4/6 *Writing Assignment 3 Due at 5 PM*

Week 12: Transnational Diffusion of Civil Resistance

Mon 4/9 Processes of Diffusion and Emulation

- Patel and Bunce, "Turning Points and the Cross-national Diffusion of Popular Protest"
- Isaac et al, "Nashville Workshops in the Southern Civil Rights Movement" (BB)

Wed 4/11 The Arab Spring I

- Anderson, "Demystifying the Arab Spring"
- Saideman, "When Conflict Spreads: Arab Spring and the Limits of Diffusion"

Week 13: Civil Resistance Against Powerful Adversaries

Mon 4/16 Resistance to Nazi Rule

- Stratford, "Can Nonviolent Defence Be Effective If the Opponent Is Ruthless? The Nazi Case" (BB)
- Martin and Summy Responses to Stratford (BB)

Wed 4/18 Resistance to Soviet Rule

- Kramer, "The Dialectics of Empire: Soviet Leaders and the Challenge of Resistance in East-Central Europe" (CRPP)
- Williams, "Civil Resistance in Czechoslovakia" (CRPP)
- Smolar, "Towards Self-Limiting Revolution: Poland" (CRPP)

Week 14: New Applications of Civil Resistance

Mon 4/23 Civilian-Based Defense

- Sharp, *Civilian-Based Defense: A Post-Military Weapons System*, Ch. 1 (BB)
- Osburg, "Unconventional Options for the Defense of the Baltic States"

Wed 4/25 Civil Resistance Against Non-State Actors

- Kaplan, "Protecting Civilians in Civil War: The Institution of the ATCC in Colombia" (BB)
- Stephen, "Civil Resistance versus ISIS" (BB)

Week 15: Longer Term Outcomes

Mon 4/30 Civil Resistance, War Recurrence, and Democracy

- Chenoweth and Stephan, Chapter 8 (WCRW)

Wed 5/2 Arab Spring II

- Hinnebusch et al, "Civil Resistance in the Syrian Uprising: From Democratic Transition to Sectarian Civil War" (BB)
- Roberts, "Civil Resistance and the Fate of the Arab Spring" (BB)

Fri 5/4 *Writing Assignment 4 Due at 5 PM*

Final Presentations: Wednesday, May 9, 10:00-11:50am
