

POLS5131

Political Violence, Insurgency and Terrorism

Term 2, 2022



Course Overview

Staff Contact Details

Convenors

Name	Email	Availability	Location	Phone
Srinjoy Bose	s.bose@unsw.edu.au	Mondays, 14:00 to 16:00	Morven Brown, Room 131	9385 2370

School Contact Information

School of Social Sciences

Room 159

Morven Brown C20

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Acknowledgement of Country

UNSW Arts, Design and Architecture Kensington and Paddington campuses are built on Aboriginal Lands. We pay our respects to the Bidjigal and Gadigal peoples who are the Custodians of these lands. We acknowledge the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, the First Australians, whose lands, winds and waters we all now share, and pay respect to their unique values, and their continuing and enduring cultures which deepen and enrich the life of our nation and communities.



Image courtesy of the Office of the Pro Vice-Chancellor Indigenous [UNSW's Indigenous strategy](#)

Course Details

Units of Credit 6

Summary of the Course

This course introduces you to the key concepts, unifying themes, trends, central actors and issues (causes and strategic responses) in the study of insurgency and terrorism in the 20th and 21st Centuries, but with an emphasis on the evolution of the phenomena since the end of the Cold War. In doing so, the course reflects on some of the historical and more enduring forms of political violence—asymmetric and irregular warfare—which draw attention to the underlying and fundamental causes of rebellion/terrorism and responses to it. You will explore how non-state armed groups organise themselves, extract resources, deploy violence, attract recruits, and both fight and negotiate with states. You will also explore the nature and challenge of global terrorism across levels of analysis, focusing on the responses and strategies of both non-state and state actors. This course utilises perspectives and knowledge drawn from international relations, political science, history, terrorism and counter-insurgency studies to examine, in a holistic manner, the phenomenon of contemporary political violence.

Course Learning Outcomes

1. Critically examine key concepts and unifying themes in the study of insurgency, terrorism, and political violence
2. Appraise key theoretical approaches to the study of insurgency, terrorism and political violence
3. Analyse and evaluate central actors and issues (causes of terrorism and strategic responses to terrorism) in the study of insurgency, terrorism, and political violence

Teaching Strategies

This postgraduate course is taught through a weekly two-hour seminar, across ten weeks. Assessments are designed to allow you flexibility and choice, and you will be required to demonstrate engagement across course content. The course encourages critical thinking through informed seminar preparation and discussion based on guided reading and independent research. Feedback is provided on all assessments in a meaningful and timely manner. Your achievement of the learning outcomes of this course is clearly demonstrated through your engagement with course material, the quality of the presentation of your ideas and discussion and your level of achievement in course assessment. Seminars are facilitated by lecturers/course conveners but participatory in style. The seminars encourage both independent and collaborative preparation.

Assessment

All assessments must be submitted electronically only, through the relevant assessment TurnItIn portal in Moodle. There is no hard copy submission required. Please ensure that your name and student ID number are on every page of your submission. You are not required to attach a cover sheet to electronically submitted assessments.

When you submit an assessment at UNSW, you are acknowledging that you have understood and abided by the University requirements in the preparation of that assessment item, in respect of student academic misconduct outlined in the Student Code Policy and Student Misconduct Procedures, both of which are available at: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/conduct>. **You are also declaring that the assessment item is your own work, except where acknowledged, and has not been submitted for academic credit previously in whole or in part.** In addition, you submit the assessment in the knowledge that: (1) the course convenor may provide a copy of the assignment to another staff for the purposes of assessment or evaluation; and (2) a copy of this assessment item will be retained in the TurnItIn database and may be used in evaluations of originality.

UNSW provides support for students in using TurnItIn at <https://student.unsw.edu.au/turnitin-support>. This webpage includes information on how to generate and interpret originality reports in TurnItIn. Support is also available from the central TurnItIn Help Center at http://turnitin.com/en_us/support/helpcenter. **To check you have submitted your assignment successfully you should click 'View digital receipt' at the bottom left-hand corner of the 'My Submissions' screen. You should print or save the digital receipt for your records. Do not navigate away from the submission screen or close your laptop during upload.** It is your responsibility to keep a copy of your work in case of loss of an assignment. You are also responsible for checking that your submission is complete and accurate.

For information about **Special Consideration and Extensions and Late Submission of Work**, please refer to the School's Policies and Guidelines available at <https://socialsciences.arts.unsw.edu.au/students/resources/policiesguidelines/>.

Referencing System: For ARTS1846, please use the **Harvard in-text referencing** style. Detailed information pertaining to the Harvard referencing style (and plagiarism) is available via the **School of Social Sciences Referencing Guide** (available on Moodle). The purpose of referencing in academic writing is to provide clear information about the sources of the material you use in your work. Several accepted styles are in common use. In the Humanities, for example, including History, Law, and Philosophy, the preference is for footnotes (sometimes referred to as Chicago Manual). However, in the Social Sciences, the preference is Harvard in-text referencing. For POLS5131, students should adhere to the Harvard style. You may, however, use the Chicago referencing style. If you choose the latter, discuss it with your convenor first. Whatever style you end up using, you **MUST** consistently adhere to **ONE** referencing style throughout the length of an assessment. For detailed information on referencing and preparing your assignment for referencing, please refer to the School of Social Sciences Referencing Guide (available on Moodle).

Please note: detailed feedback will only be provided if students request it. If you wish to receive detailed feedback on your assignment, please make a note at the top of the first page. Students who do not request feedback will receive a mark and a completed rubric with brief comments.

Assessment task	Weight	Due Date	Course Learning Outcomes Assessed
1. Essay Plan	20%	18/07/2022 11:30 PM	1, 3
2. Critical Review Essay	30%	24/06/2022 11:30 PM	1, 2
3. Research Essay	50%	10/08/2022 11:30 PM	1, 2, 3

Assessment 1: Essay Plan

Assessment length: 1200

Due date: 18/07/2022 11:30 PM

You will submit one essay plan of 1200 words. Essay Topics/Questions will be provided in class (and uploaded onto the LMS). You will receive written feedback, a completed rubric and a numerical grade through Moodle within 10 working days of submission.

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 2: Critical Review Essay

Assessment length: 1500

Due date: 24/06/2022 11:30 PM

1500 word critical review essay comparing and contrasting *at least* two different seminal texts (drawn from the required readings and recommended readings lists) discussed in seminars.

You will receive written feedback and a grade within 10 working days of your facilitation.

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Assessment 3: Research Essay

Assessment length: 3000

Due date: 10/08/2022 11:30 PM

3000 word research essay.

You will receive written feedback and a grade within 10 working days of your facilitation.

This assignment is submitted through Turnitin and students do not see Turnitin similarity reports.

Attendance Requirements

This is a Postgraduate Seminar. Students are strongly encouraged to attend all Seminars and contact the Course Authority to make alternative arrangements for Seminars missed. Students must attend 80% (8 out of 10) Seminars. Please note that Seminar recordings are not available for this course.

Course Schedule

[View class timetable](#)

Timetable

Date	Type	Content
Week 1: 30 May - 3 June	Seminar	<p>The Politics of Naming and Labeling Violence</p> <p><i>Seminar discussion questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is insurgency/terrorism ? How is insurgency/terrorism defined? How have definitions changed over time? • How does terrorism differ from other forms of political violence such as guerilla warfare or social protest? Why study insurgency/terrorism in tandem? • How important is a definition for combating insurgency/terrorism? How does its conceptualisation and the labeling (e.g. violence as 'terror') affect the way insurgency/terrorism is dealt with?
Week 2: 6 June - 10 June	Seminar	<p>Causes: Macro-level and Micro-level Explanations</p> <p><i>Seminar discussion questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do people become insurgents/terrorists? What type of situations/opportunity structures are likely to enable or encourage insurgency/terrorism? • How useful are the different explanatory models (structural, political, socio-economic, social, psychological, geopolitical, etc)? What methodological problems do they encounter? • Can they predict in what type of situation insurgency/terrorism is likely to occur, and who is likely to be an insurgent or perpetrate an act of terror (and why not others)? Can a particular type of person

		<p>be said to be especially prone to (a particular type of) insurgency/terrorism?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are there correlations between particular activist profiles and the goals, structures and methods they choose? What impact does the choice of goals, structures and methods have on relations within the group, and on relations with its support base?
Week 3: 13 June - 17 June	Seminar	<p>(PUBLIC HOLIDAY ☐ NO CLASS. <i>Since this is a public holiday, there will be no seminar session. Instead, you will watch a pre-recorded video with my reflections/lecture. When reading the required readings and watching my recorded video, consider the discussion questions indicated below.)</i></p> <p>Categories and Varieties of Violence</p> <p><i>Discussion questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the main categories insurgency/terrorism is divided into, and how useful are they analytically? What are some of the policy implications of categorization along such lines? • Does insurgency in the 21st century differ from insurgencies in the 19th or 20th? • Is 'new' terrorism really 'new'?
Week 4: 20 June - 24 June	Online Activity	<p>Resources, Ethnicity and Identity</p> <p><i>Seminar discussion questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the relationship between ethnicity and political violence, especially civil war and insurgencies? • Distinguish between the primordial/greivance and instrumentalist approaches to understanding ethnicity and political violence. • Do extractive esources help initiate and/or sustain insurgent or terror related violence? How?
	Seminar	<p>Gender, Women, and Political Violence</p> <p><i>Seminar discussion questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does 'gender' help us navigate concepts, trends, and issues in the study

		<p>of insurgency, terrorism, and political violence? How can a feminist approach help contribute to evolving understanding of insurgency/terrorism and women's role therein?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should we assume that women are motivated by reasons different from those influencing men? What are the problems in such an approach? • Women are often discussed in binaries: victim/perpetrator. Are such binaries helpful? How else can - and should - we understand women's agency in insurgency, terrorism, and political violence?
	Assessment	Critical Review Essay
Week 5: 27 June - 1 July	Seminar	<p>Strategies, Tactics, and Technology Use</p> <p><i>Seminar questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the difference between strategic and tactical terrorism? • What are the different strategies that insurgent (or terror) groups use to advance their objectives? What are the strengths and weaknesses of these strategies? • Why are some groups more deadly than others? What explains organizational competition between insurgent/terror groups? • How do ease and low-cost affect insurgent/terrorist planning and operations? Why do terrorists avoid sophisticated technologies when they innovate?
Week 6: 4 July - 8 July	Seminar	<p>Religion and Political Violence</p> <p><i>Seminar discussion questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Are conservatism in religion and violence inherently linked? Are religion and nationalism reasonable or incoherent dichotomies? • What is the relationship between insurgency and religion? Is it possible to talk about religious terrorism, and if so what are its characteristics? • What policy and security implications does

		<p>religious terrorism have that other types of terrorism doesn't?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the future of religious terrorism?
Week 7: 11 July - 15 July	Online Activity	<p>Insurgent Mobilisation and Insurgent Organisation</p> <p><i>Seminar discussion questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why do individuals join an insurgent or terror group? (When) Do they enjoy wider/popular support? • How are recruits mobilised and organised? What is the relationship between ideology, ethnicity/identity, and recruitment? • Are centralized organisations more effective and resilient than non-centralized organisations?
	Seminar	<p>Case-Studies: Comparison of al Qaida, FARC, HAMAS, IRA, ISIS, LTTE, and Taliban</p> <p><i>Seminar questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are some of the traits and characteristics of al Qaida/FARC/HAMAS/IRA/ISIS/LTTE/ and Taliban leaders and supporters? • What are the groups'/movements' organisational goals? Hoes do they differ from one another?
Week 8: 18 July - 22 July	Seminar	<p>Critical Approaches to Insurgency, (but especially) Terrorism Studies</p> <p><i>Seminar discussion questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the key strengths and weaknesses of the critical approach to terrorism studies? • Does a critical approach to terrorism studies offer a more nuanced understanding of the phenomenon, to counter-terrorism policies and their implications? • Has your view of terrorist organisations examined in the previous class changed following an introduction to the critical terrorism studies approach? Why or why not?

	Assessment	Essay Plan
Week 9: 25 July - 29 July	Seminar	<p>How Does Insurgency/Terrorism End?</p> <p><i>Seminar discussion questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is insurgency/terrorism a law and order problem, or a political one? • Has the global war on terror served to reduce or exacerbate the risks of terrorism? • To what extent can a military response be successful in combating insurgency/terrorism? Can one meaningfully combine a military with a political response? • What impact has the war on terrorism had on human rights and civil liberties? Is there necessarily a trade-off between liberty and security when responding to terrorism?
Week 10: 1 August - 5 August	Seminar	<p>Intelligence and High Value Targeting (GUEST LECTURE; Maj. PAUL LUSHENKO, US Army Ranger)</p> <p><i>Seminar discussion questions</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What purpose does intelligence serve in CT? What are the limits of this instrument? • What are the strengths and weaknesses of different intelligence techniques? What are the controversies involving use of intelligence for CT? • How do defense intellectuals understand the benefits of conducting HVT pursuant to either a counter-insurgency approach or CT strategy? • What are the ethical and moral implications of high value targeting, especially that prosecuted through lethal - drone - strikes?

Resources

Prescribed Resources

Seminar questions and detailed week-by-week reading is made available on Moodle. All of the 'required' readings are freely available through Moodle via Leganto; the rest can be accessed in hard copy through the library or online. You will benefit from becoming familiar with GoogleScholar (<http://scholar.google.com>) as a key search engine for academic publications and reports. You can set up the preferences to link to the UNSW Library even when you are not on campus. Go to Google Scholar> settings> library links, and enter 'University of New South Wales' in the box for "Library": You can sign up for Table of Contents (TOC) Alerts from the homepages of relevant journals, to receive an email whenever new articles are published in that journal. Journal websites will often carry information on the most viewed and most cited articles; these are likely to be interesting and often influential contributions. Google Scholar will also point you to articles that have cited a particular article and hence will be related to the topic.

Course Evaluation and Development

Student evaluative feedback is gathered periodically using, among other means, the University's 'Course and Teaching Evaluation and Improvement' (CATEI) process. Informal feedback and feedback specific to individual tutorials and lectures are also important, and welcome. Student feedback is taken seriously and continual enhancements are made to learning and teaching activities on the basis of student feedback.

Submission of Assessment Tasks

Turnitin Submission

If you encounter a problem when attempting to submit your assignment through Turnitin, please telephone External Support on 9385 3331 or email them on externalteltsupport@unsw.edu.au. Support hours are 8:00am – 10:00pm on weekdays and 9:00am – 5:00pm on weekends (365 days a year). If you are unable to submit your assignment due to a fault with Turnitin you may apply for an extension, but you must retain your ticket number from External Support (along with any other relevant documents) to include as evidence to support your extension application. If you email External Support you will automatically receive a ticket number, but if you telephone you will need to specifically ask for one. Turnitin also provides updates on their system status on Twitter.

Generally, assessment tasks must be submitted electronically via either Turnitin or a Moodle assignment. In instances where this is not possible, it will be stated on your course's Moodle site with alternative submission details.

For information on how to submit assignments online via Moodle: <https://student.unsw.edu.au/how-submit-assignment-moodle>

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism

Plagiarism is using the words or ideas of others and presenting them as your own. It can take many forms, from deliberate cheating to accidentally copying from a source without acknowledgement.

UNSW groups plagiarism into the following categories:

Copying: Using the same or very similar words to the original text or idea without acknowledging the source or using quotation marks. This includes copying materials, ideas or concepts from a book, article, report or other written document, presentation, composition, artwork, design, drawing, circuitry, computer program or software, website, internet, other electronic resource, or another person's assignment without appropriate acknowledgement.

Inappropriate paraphrasing: Changing a few words and phrases while mostly retaining the original information, structure and/or progression of ideas of the original without acknowledgement. This also applies in presentations where someone paraphrases another's ideas or words without credit and to piecing together quotes and paraphrases into a new whole, without appropriate referencing.

Collusion: Working with others but passing off the work as a person's individual work. Collusion also includes providing your work to another student for the purpose of them plagiarising, paying another person to perform an academic task, stealing or acquiring another person's academic work and copying it, offering to complete another person's work or seeking payment for completing academic work.

Inappropriate citation: Citing sources which have not been read, without acknowledging the "secondary" source from which knowledge of them has been obtained.

Duplication ("self-plagiarism"): Submitting your own work, in whole or in part, where it has previously been prepared or submitted for another assessment or course at UNSW or another university.

Correct referencing practices

The [UNSW Academic Skills support](#) offers resources and individual consultations. Students are also reminded that careful time management is an important part of study. One of the identified causes of plagiarism is poor time management. Students should allow sufficient time for research, drafting and proper referencing of sources in preparing all assessment items.

UNSW Library has [the ELISE tool](#) available to assist you with your study at UNSW. ELISE is designed to introduce new students to studying at UNSW but it can also be a great refresher during your study. Completing the ELISE tutorial and quiz will enable you to:

- analyse topics, plan responses and organise research for academic writing and other assessment tasks
- effectively and efficiently find appropriate information sources and evaluate relevance to your needs
- use and manage information effectively to accomplish a specific purpose
- better manage your time
- understand your rights and responsibilities as a student at UNSW
- be aware of plagiarism, copyright, UNSW Student Code of Conduct and Acceptable Use of UNSW ICT Resources Policy
- be aware of the standards of behaviour expected of everyone in the UNSW community
- locate services and information about UNSW and UNSW Library

Academic Information

Due to evolving advice by NSW Health, students must check for updated information regarding online learning for all Arts, Design and Architecture courses this term (via Moodle or course information provided.)

For essential student information relating to:

- requests for extension;
- late submissions guidelines;
- review of marks;
- UNSW Health and Safety policies;
- examination procedures;
- special consideration in the event of illness or misadventure;
- student equity and disability;
- and other essential academic information, see

<https://www.unsw.edu.au/arts-design-architecture/student-life/resources-support/protocols-guidelines>

Image Credit

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