

## PLSC 220: FAILED STATES

### Spring 2010

Assistant: Shanna Reulbach (smr18)

Asst: Hours: Tues 7 – 8 p.m. Milne Library

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Hours: T/W 1:30-3:30

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## COURSE OVERVIEW

Fragile, weak and failed states pose serious problems for the international community. They contribute to regional and global instability, produce horrific human rights abuses and suffering, and often become harbors for terrorists and international criminal organizations. This course will survey the literature on state weakness and collapse. Particular emphasis is placed on causes and consequences of state failure, the international community's response, and prospects for rebuilding the political, economic, and social fabric of failed states. We will examine the theoretical literature; apply tools and concepts from comparative politics, economics and international relations to specific cases; identify important explanatory variables; and discuss key issues relevant to post-conflict rebuilding. By examining the various processes at work in weak and failed states, the international response and the tools for reconstruction, I hope we can arrive at some conclusions regarding appropriate policy remedies.

## INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students will be expected to demonstrate familiarity with the issues surrounding the theoretical and policy dimensions of state failure and the international response. Among the questions we will address are:

- What makes for an effective state?
- How do the legacies of colonialism and the Westphalian system relate to state capacities?
- What is ethnic nationalism and what are its implications for internal conflict?
- How does the global environment influence weak states?
- How does a state's position in the global economy relate to its capacities?
- Can external mediation produce sustainable resolutions to violent internal conflicts?
- Should powerful states use military force to relieve human suffering in other countries?
- How can political structures be re-established in the aftermath of state collapse?
- How can economic assistance be delivered to ensure that post-conflict rebuilding is sustainable?
- What tools seem to be most effective for promoting psycho-social reconciliation and peace-building?

## REQUIRED TEXTS

- Robert I. Rotberg (ed.), When States Fail: Causes and Consequences. Identified by (RR)
- Robert H. Bates, When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late-Century Africa.
- Larry P. Goodson, Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban.
- Where a journal name is indicated, you can find the reading via Milne Library online journal resources
- Additional chapters from books can be found on MyCourses.

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

**Exams (40%):** This course will have a mid-term and a final exam, 20% each.

**Quizzes (20%):** It is essential that you keep up with readings. I will start the semester with reading quizzes. If it appears students are making a genuine commitment to the reading, I may stop this practice.

**Presentations: (10%):** The class will be divided into 12 country teams of either 3 or 4 students. Each group will be responsible for: 1) Following events in the country EVERY WEEK and being able to comment on those events when called upon in the context of any particular week's topic; and 2) making two 10-minute presentations (with

Powerpoint) during the course of the semester, the first on sources of state weakness/failure and the second on the international response. Note that specific countries may be assigned to specific weeks because they are relevant to a theme; try to link that week's theme to your presentation. **You must also submit a 3-page written version of the presentation, which must be e-mailed me Sunday evening prior to your assigned week.**

**Policy Brief (30%):** Each country team will be responsible for a "policy brief" addressed to national authorities and international donors regarding programming options to help strengthen your state. Each paper will contain a common introduction that details the sources of state weakness and failure (Four pages - jointly written) and at least three of the following sections (10 pages each): 1) Restoring Security; 2) Political Aspects of Reform and State Building; 3) Economic Aspects of Reform and State Building; 4) Social Aspects of Reform and State Building.

Country	Team
Bosnia	
Cote d'Ivoire	
DR Congo	
East Timor	
Haiti	
Iraq	
Nepal	
Pakistan	
Somalia	
Sudan	
Yemen	
Zimbabwe	

Each team member has primary responsibility for one of the sections. 80% of your grade on this paper/project will be based on your unique section. 20% will be a group grade based on the quality of the co-authored introduction section and the overall coherence and integration of the paper.

The following resources will prove invaluable for your presentations and strategy paper; I strongly recommend you learn how to mine them for information and check them regularly.

The International Crisis Group	Reliefweb
UN Department of Peacekeeping Operations	Internal Displacement Monitoring Center
UN Integrated Regional Information Network	World Bank Post-Conflict Unit
UN High Commissioner for Refugees	Reuters AlertNet
The Fund for Peace: Country Profiles	OCHA Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs

## POLICIES

**Plagiarism:** Don't plagiarize. Turnitin.com. allows me to compare your work to: a) everything on the internet; b) publications and books that are not on the internet but are available through the service; and c) other undergraduate and graduate papers submitted throughout the country. By remaining in the course, you agree that your work will be submitted to turnitin.com.

**Accommodations:** SUNY Geneseo will make reasonable accommodations for persons with documented physical, emotional or learning disabilities. Students should consult with the Office of Disability Services ([tbuggieh@geneseo.edu](mailto:tbuggieh@geneseo.edu)) regarding any needed accommodations early in the semester.

**Exam Scheduling and Missed Classes:** In the event that you must miss a class, you must seek ADVANCE written permission or you must produce a note from the medical center or the Dean's office in order to make up any missed tests or quizzes. Students are responsible for ensuring that they do not organize their schedule so that they have three or more examinations in one day. This is not the instructor's responsibility.

## **COURSE OUTLINE AND SCHEDULE**

### **Week 1 (Jan 19/21): Introduction**

- Rapley, "The New Middle Ages." *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2006.
- Kaplan, "The Coming Anarchy." *The Atlantic Monthly*, Feb 1994.
- Review the 2009 Failed States Index, including the descriptions of indicators, at:  
[http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=99&Itemid=140](http://www.fundforpeace.org/web/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=99&Itemid=140)

### **Week 2 (Jan 26): Colonialism, Sovereignty and the State System**

- Rotberg, "The Failure and Collapse of Nation States: Breakdown, Prevention, and Repair." (RR)
- Clapham, "The Global-Local Politics of State Decay." (RR)
- Ayoob, "State Making, State Breaking, and State Failure." (MyCourses)
- Jackson and Rosberg, "Why Africa's Weak States Persist: The Empirical and the Juridical in Statehood." *World Politics*, 35(1) (1982)

### **Week 3 (Feb 2/4): Security Dilemmas and Ethnic Politics**

- Kasfir, "Domestic Anarchy, Security Dilemmas, and Violent Predation." (RR)
  - Muller, "Us and Them." *Foreign Affairs*, March/April 2008.
  - Johnson, "Partitioning to Peace: Sovereignty, Demography, and Ethnic Civil Wars." *International Security*, 32(4) (2008)
  - Horowitz, Weisger, and Johnson, "The Limits of Partition." *International Security*, 33(4) (2009).
- *Presentations: Bosnia, Iraq, Somalia.* Presentation should focus on the ethnic issues associated with state weakness. What are the major ethnic groups? How has ethnicity become politicized? Did ethnicity cause state weakness, or did state weakness lead to the instrumentalizing of ethnic nationalism? Would the country be better off carved into ethnically-pure mini-states? Give some description of the nature and scale of violent conflict, especially as it relates to ethnic identity. Relate the key indicators of state weakness.

### **Week 4 (Feb 9/11): Micro-level and Rational Choice Explanations**

- Bates, When Things Fell Apart: State Failure in Late-Century Africa, All.
- *Presentations: DR Congo, Haiti, Zimbabwe.* Presentations should cover the incentives facing individual political actors that led to the establishment of weak and predatory state institutions. Who are the major political players in each state's recent history and how have their actions and policies led to violence. Who are the major opposition/rebel leaders and what incentives contribute to their behaviors? Try to build a direct link between the individuals and the progression from independence to state weakness/collapse. Try to relate directly to the Bates reading. As always, relate the key indicators of state weakness.

### **Week 5 (Feb 16/18): Economic Correlates of Failure**

- Van de Walle, "Economic Correlates of State Failure." (RR)
  - Collier, "Economic Causes of Civil Conflict and Their Implications for Policy." (MyCourses)
  - Reno, "The Politics of Violent Opposition in Collapsing States." (MyCourses)
- *Presentations: Cote d'Ivoire, Nepal, Pakistan.* Presentations should cover the domestic and international economic forces that have contributed to state weakness. Were rebellions in these states driven by greed or by grievance or by some combination? Give specific data to back up your arguments and trace the evolution of state deterioration in relation to economic changes. As always, relate the key indicators of state weakness.

### **Week 6 (Feb 23/25): Environmental Scarcity and Climate Change**

- Gleditsch, "Environmental Change, Security, and Conflict." (MyCourses)
  - CNA Corp. "National Security and the Threat of Climate Change." (MyCourses)
  - Salehyan, "From Climate Change to Conflict? No Consensus Yet." *Journal of Peace Research*, 45(3) (2008).
- *Presentations: Sudan, East Timor, Yemen.* This week's presentations represent a bit of a mish-mash. Give a general overview of the current indicators of state weakness, and link to any of the relevant themes we have explored thus far in the semester, including this week, if applicable. The Sudan team must address the issues of desertification and land use in relation to the conflict in Darfur.

### **Week 7 (Mar 2/4): Afghanistan**

- Goodson, *Afghanistan's Endless War: State Failure, Regional Politics, and the Rise of the Taliban*, All

### **Week 8 (Mar 9/11): Review (Mar 9) and Mid-Term Exam (Mar 11)**

### **Week 9 (Mar 23/25): Conflict Resolution, Negotiations and Cease-fires**

- Touval and Zartman, "International Mediation in the Post-Cold War Era." (MyCourses)
  - Crocker et al., "Is More Better? The Pros and Cons of Multiparty Mediation." (MyCourses)
  - ICG, "Sudan: Preventing Implosion," (Overview) at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=6438&l=1>
- *Presentations: Sudan, Cote D'Ivoire.* Provide an overview of the process leading to the establishment of peace agreements in each state. What role has the international community played in facilitating these processes? What are the major terms of the resulting peace agreements and are they on track to produce a sustainable peace?

### **Week 10 (Mar 30/Apr 1): Military Interventions and Transitional Authority**

- Fearon and Laitin, "Neotrusteeship and the Problem of Weak States." *International Security* 28:4 (2004)
  - Call and Cousens, "Ending Wars and Building Peace: International Responses to War-Torn Societies." *International Studies Perspectives*, Vol. 9 (2008)
  - Luttwak, "The Curse of Inconclusive Intervention." (MyCourses)
  - ICG, "Bosnia's Dual Crisis," (Overview) at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=6386&l=1>
- *Presentations: Bosnia, Somalia.* Provide an overview of the nature of the interventions (troop-levels, participating countries, costs, mandates) and provide an update on the outcomes. In the case of Bosnia, describe both the experiences of the UN during UNPROFOR, the subsequent NATO led intervention, and the current EU-led mission. In the Case of Somalia, discuss the experiences of the early 1990s and the more recent Ethiopian/African Union intervention.

### **Week 11 (Apr 6/8): Security Sector Reform**

- Colletta, Kostner, and Wiederhofer, "Disarmament, Demobilization, and Reintegration: Lessons and Liabilities in Reconstruction." (RR)
  - Rubin, "The Politics of Security in Postconflict State Building." (MyCourses)
  - ICG, "Reforming Pakistan's Police," (Overview) at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=5570&l=1>
- *Presentations: Iraq, Pakistan, Nepal.* What are the major security issues associated with reforming the security mechanisms in each state? What are the political interests in the security forces, and are they constrained by the rule of law or civilian leadership? What role is the international community playing?

### **Week 12 (Apr 13/15): Political Reconstruction**

- Lyons, "Transforming the Institutions of War: Post-conflict Elections and the Reconstruction of States." (RR)
  - Barnett, "Building a Republican Peace: Stabilizing States after War." *International Security*, 30(4) (2006)
  - Paris, "International Peacebuilding and the 'Mission Civilisatrice'." *Review of International Studies*, 28(4) (2002).
  - ICG, Zimbabwe: Engaging the Inclusive Government," (Overview) at: <http://www.crisisgroup.org/home/index.cfm?id=6064&l=1>
- *Presentations: Zimbabwe, DR Congo, Yemen.* Provide an overview of the major issues surrounding the reform or restructuring of political institutions of the state. Address issues of power-sharing, constitutionalism, elections, rule of law, civil society, and public administration. What role can/should international donors play?

### **Week 13 (Apr 20/22): Economic Reconstruction**

- Snodgrass, "Restoring Economic Functioning in Failed States." (RR)
  - Collier, "Post-Conflict Economic Policy." (MyCourses)
  - Woodward, "Economic Priorities for Successful Peace Implementation." (MyCourses)
- *Presentations: Haiti, East Timor.* What are the key priorities for economic stabilization and reconstruction. Who are the major donors and what are their institutional capacities and priorities. What role do the international financial institutions play?

### **Week 14 (Apr 27/29): Transitional Justice, Reconciliation, and Social Reconstruction**

- Widner, "Building Effective Trust in the Aftermath of Severe Conflict." (RR)
  - Stensrud, "New Dilemmas in Transitional Justice: Lessons from the Mixed Courts in Sierra Leone and Cambodia." *Journal of Peace Research*, 46(1) (2009)
- **PAPERS DUE: Tuesday, April 27**

### **Week 15: (May 4 only): Catch-up and Review**

- **FINAL EXAM: Friday May 7, 8:00 – 11:00 a.m.**