Public Affairs/International Studies 5700
Rebuilding Failed and Weak States
Spring 2017
Tuesdays and Thursdays
Mendenhall Lab 173
9:35 – 10:55 AM
Credit Hours: 03

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Office Hours: by appointment

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Office Hours: Tu 11:15a-12:15p; appointments via email

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course tackles the question of how to design policies and programs to rebuild failed and weak states into functioning, if not vibrant, democracies. In pursuit of this end, we will examine the causes of nation-state failure, the trajectories or pathways to and from failure, and the ingredients purported to contribute to the consolidation of democracy. Further, the course examines 1) what makes a state a state, 2) whether some states should be allowed to fail, and 3) whether some states should be recognized at all. Primary focus is on how international aid policy-making institutions, specifically the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and governments interact to define statehood and to implement programs that lead to state recognition, reconstruction, and stabilization.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

The course learning goals and objectives are five-fold:

- To provide you an understanding of the causes of state degeneration and failure, as well as the ingredients that purportedly lead to vibrant democracy;
- To provide you the tools to assess the capability of international aid organizations to assist in the transition from failed state to functioning democracy;
- To provide you experience applying concepts and frameworks to real-world public policy challenges;
• To enhance your abilities to recognize the details and challenges of both sides of sovereignty/separatism and ethnic conflicts; and,
• To enhance your abilities to express your analytical ideas in concise, technical language. Important note: The technical writing you will need to perform in this class is very different than academic, business, or creative writing you may have done in the past. **Prior to turning in any written assignment**, please review the Technical Writing Guidelines at: [http://www.techprose.com/assets/techwriting_guidelines.pdf](http://www.techprose.com/assets/techwriting_guidelines.pdf)

The course’s unit-level learning objectives are:

**Unit 1 – Foundations of Democratization**
- Demonstrate ability to write a clear, concise, evidence-based public policy report
- Identify and explain in writing the democratization concepts governing modern western nations
- Identify the sources of conflict

**Unit 2 – Peaceful-to-Forceful Regime Transition**
- Identify and explain in writing examples of peace regime transitions
- Describe the democratization and political institutional factors necessary for peaceful regime transitions
- Describe the specific political institutions and actors that led to ‘peaceful’ regime transitions in Ukraine from August 1991 to February 2010
- Describe the specific political institutions and actors that led to ‘forceful’ regime transitions in Ukraine from September 2013 to March 2014

**Unit 3 – Implosion**
- Identify and explain in writing examples of implosions
- Describe the factors leading from weak state to collapse
- Describe the specific cleavages that led to the Rwandan Genocide

**Unit 4 – External Military Intervention**
- Identify and explain in writing examples of external military interventions
- Compare and contrast ‘successful’ and ‘unsuccessful’ external military interventions

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course tackles the question of how to design policies and programs to rebuild failed and weak states into functioning, if not vibrant, democracies. In pursuit of this end, we will examine the causes of nation state failure, the trajectories or pathways to and from failure, and the ingredients purported to contribute to the consolidation of democracy. In addition, we will critically assess the policies and programs of international actors’ intent upon aiding the transition to democracy. Specifically, we will examine the programmatic efforts of one of the primary development organs – the U.S. State Department’s Agency for International Development (USAID) – in three settings: Ukraine, Rwanda and Iraq. We will assess USAID’s current complement of programs in each of these three settings and make informed judgments about whether they should be expanded, changed, or
abolished. Ultimately, we will examine whether attempting to rebuild failed and weak states is an activity worthy of undertaking at all. Maybe weak states should be allowed to fail?

This class involves a mixture of readings, lectures, videos and assignments where you analyze aid provider strategies. The readings are primarily drawn from research on democratic transition and state failure. The lectures are designed to elaborate on and extend the key points covered in the readings. The analyses of aid provider strategies provide an opportunity for you to integrate and apply these ideas to real world situations.

This course is targeted at upper division undergraduate students and graduate students with interests in international affairs. For undergraduate students, second year standing or higher is required. The primary undergraduate audience is students in the Public Policy or International Studies Security & Intelligence tracks, although the course is open to students from other majors with interests in the transition to democracy and the role of foreign aid providers. For graduate students, the course is open to both doctoral and masters students with practical or research interests in the administration of development organizations and the transition to democracy. Students from a wide variety of disciplines are welcome (e.g. Public Affairs, Agricultural, Environmental and Development Economics, City and Regional Planning, Political Science, etc.).

**GRADING**

**Grading:**

Class Participation: 15%

- Class discussions (max 5%)
- Online Chat Forums 1-4 (1.25pts per forum; max 5%)
- In-class Congressional Testimony 1 and 2 (max 5%)

Measuring Democracy Assignment: 10%

Group Project: 10%

Two Case Analyses (20% Each): 40%

Final Exam (undergraduates) or Final Paper (graduates): 25%

Transformation of numerical grade to letter grade will be according to the schedule below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Numerical Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>93-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-92.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>83-86.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-82.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79.9</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>73-76.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70-72.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>D+</td>
<td>67-69.9</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-66.9</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td>&lt; 60</td>
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Substantively, A means excellent, B means above average, C means average, D means below average, and E means failing. While we do not employ a curve, we evaluate your performance relative to your fellow classmates. Even though we use the same grading scale for all students, we have higher expectations for graduate students relative to undergraduate students.
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

1. Class Participation (both undergraduate and graduate students):
Transitioning to democracy and post-conflict nation-building are not spectator sports. **Therefore, this is a participatory class.** Students are expected to complete readings and actively participate in class discussions, mock Congressional Testimonies, online forums, and group projects. Cell phones are NOT to be used at all during this class. Laptop use is permitted during class SOLELY for notetaking for THIS class. Class participation represents 15% of total grade and is divided as follows:

   **In-Class Discussion.** Critical assessment of the readings constitutes a major portion of each class activity. Thorough preparation is essential. The primary source of your learning in this course will take place in the classroom as you and your colleagues share your insights and engage each other in debate on alternatives or appropriate aid provision strategies. Although the assigned readings provide background material, attending class is essential, and is necessary for a satisfactory grade. Your in-class discussion participation represents 5% of your final course grade.

   **Online Chat Forum Discussions (both undergraduate and graduate students):** During the semester we will watch two films related to the course’s case studies. The first film is PBS’ “The Ghosts of Rwanda”, a graphic and searing documentary on the 1994 Rwandan Genocide. The second film is PBS’ ‘The Lost Year in Iraq”, a firsthand account of the challenges, failures, and ‘successes’ of the first year of US occupation of Iraq after external military intervention. We will examine these films in the context of their application to the democratization and rebuilding concepts discussed in class. For each of the films, each student will provide their personal, EVIDENCE-BASED assessment of the events depicted in the film via an online posting and will also be required to provide no less than two responses to classmates’ postings. Guidance for acceptable personal posting and response postings:

   **Personal Postings**
   - No less than two and no more than four paragraphs long
   - Each paragraph must be more than one sentence
   - Discuss what are the key democratization and rebuilding points
   - Stay focused and concise and do not delve into editorializing and hyperbole
   - Use active voice and the technical writing principles discussed in class.

   **Response Postings**
   - No more than two paragraphs long
   - Address the key points and evidence presented in the student posting
   - Can be supportive or respectfully critical.
   - Use active voice and the technical writing principles

During the scheduled class period, the instructor(s) will be online and responding to online chat postings. Chat postings are expected to contain college level thought and analysis and to maintain OSU’s standards for online civility. Your online chat discussion participation represents 5% of your final course grade. We will also have two other
online discussions on technical and current event topics. While these two discussions are not graded as the two discussions on the films we will watch, the ungraded online discussions count towards your overall class participation grade.

Congressional Testimony Exercise Participation. After viewing an actual US Congressional Testimony online, we will have a class period wherein students will be separated into two groups and will engage in class in a mock Legislative Committee debate arguing the pros and cons of a specific USAID funding allocation or a State Department development decision. Your Congressional Testimony participation represents 5% of your final course grade.

2. Measuring Democracy Assignment (both undergraduate and graduate students):
Your first assignment will be to select a country of interest to you and examine its Freedom House rating score and categorization (free, partly free, and not free) over the last ten years (http://www.freedomhouse.org/report-types/freedom-world). Drawing on secondary sources, you are to evaluate whether Freedom House has made the correct assessment. You will turn in a written analysis that includes three components: a summary of the Freedom House score and evaluation over the last ten years; a brief summary of key events in that country that pertain to the criteria that Freedom House uses in its evaluation; and an analysis of whether Freedom House has made the appropriate evaluation. The assignment is due by 9:35 AM, January 19. Your written analysis should be no more than one page, single-spaced, 12-point font with 1” margins. For each of these requirements that you breach, your grade for that case will decrease by 1/3 letter grade (i.e. A- to B+). Please either place your assignment in the relevant folder on the course’s Canvas website or email us (brown.2296@osu.edu and hightower.23@osu.edu) your assignment in MS Word format.

You may do the assignment individually or in small groups of two to three people. If you elect to do the assignment with others, you will all receive the same grade. This assignment represents 10% of your final grade.

In selecting a country, do not pick established democracies (i.e. those that Freedom House rates as “free”). Instead, select a country that Freedom House has labeled as “partly free” or “not free”. For graduate students, you should select the country for which you plan to do your final paper. You cannot select one of the three countries we will examine in the cases: Ukraine, Rwanda or Iraq.

3. Two Case Analyses (both undergraduate and graduate students):
During the semester, we will examine three cases of state failure and how one aid provider, the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), has attempted to assist these nations in the transition to democracy. The states for examination include: Ukraine, Rwanda and Iraq. For each case, your assignment will be to review the 2015 budget request and justification by USAID to the US Congress for the nation in question. More specifically, you will assess whether USAID has appropriately planned its expenditures in light of conceptual material we will cover in class. Think of yourself as a Congressional staffer writing a brief to a legislator on the congressional oversight committee. What’s USAID asking for? Will the agency’s proposed programs increase the
chances of democratic consolidation? Why or why not? What else should USAID be doing?

While there are three cases for examination during the quarter, you are only required to undertake two of the three. If you elect to undertake all three, we will drop the case with the lowest grade. Of the two cases that will count, each is worth 20% of your final grade.

Your written case analysis should be no more than four pages, single-spaced, 12-point font with 1” margins. For each of these requirements that you breach, your grade for that case will decrease by 1/3 letter grade (i.e. A- to B+). Due dates for each case are listed in the course calendar. Please either place your assignment in the relevant folder on the course’s Canvas website or email us (brown.2296@osu.edu and hightower.23@osu.edu) your assignment in MS Word format. We expect that everyone will read the case material and think about the case questions regardless of whether you are turning in a case analysis that day.

4. Group Project – Class Debate
Students will be separated into three groups to study and evaluate a sovereignty/separatism and ethnicity conflict and present informed, cogent arguments to support or refute the establishment of statehood. Again, thorough preparation is essential and it is expected that each group will use concepts discussed in class to support their respective arguments. The case study The Declarations of Independence: The Moldova-Pridnestrovie Conflict will provide the debate context. However, additional outside research is critical for supporting each group’s debate. All members of the group will receive the same grade and this group project represents 10% of your final course grade.

5. Final Exam (undergraduate students only) / Final Paper (graduate students only):
During Finals Week, undergraduates will take an in-class final exam that assesses your knowledge of the content and concepts of the material covered in the course. The exam will cover all readings and class sessions. The exam will be composed of a series of short answer questions. The final exam represents 25% of your total course grade.

Graduate students enrolled in the course must complete a research paper examining and assessing development efforts in the transitioning or failed state you chose for the measuring democracy assignment. The paper can focus on the activities of one development organization (e.g. USAID) or multiple organizations. You should follow the basic outlines of the case analyses, but should also feel free to deviate from this structure by adding components as appropriate.

The final paper should be no more than ten pages, single-spaced, 12-point font with 1” margins. You should cite all references. For each of these requirements that you breach, your grade for that case will decrease by 1/3 letter grade (i.e. A- to B+). The final paper is due by midnight on the same day as the Final Exam (to be determined). The paper represents 25% of your total course grade.
As was the case with the Measuring Democracy assignment, you can do this assignment individually or in small groups of two or three. If you elected to do the measuring democracy assignment with other students, you are welcome to keep the group together, perform the assignment individually, or form a new group. If you elect to form a new group, you must team with someone who selected the same country as you for the measuring democracy assignment.

Note: Undergraduates may select to do the final paper in place of the final exam.

REQUIRED COURSE READING MATERIAL


All other required readings are available on Canvas or will be handed out no less than one week prior to the week the readings are required.

You will notice that there are different reading requirements for graduate and undergraduate students. Undergraduate students are welcome to read the graduate reading material.

COURSE POLICIES

Our preference is for you to complete your assignments in Microsoft Word and place them in the relevant folder on the Canvas course website. We will insert our comments directly onto the text and email it back to you. If you have difficulty with this, you can always deliver your assignment in person or fax it to 292-2548. Informing us of your intention to be absent does not waive your obligation to submit assigned work. We will accept late work with a one-letter grade penalty each day that it is late (i.e. A to B).

Academic Misconduct

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp).
Disability Services

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/.
COURSE CALENDAR

Tu, January 10  Course Overview and The Collapse: Why States Fail
Readings:

Th, January 12  Principles, Measures and Indicators of Democracy
Reading:

Additional Reading for Graduate Students

Tu, January 17  Forms of Aid and Assistance
Reading:

Additional Reading for Graduate Students
Th, January 19  Measuring Democracy Assignment Discussions

Undergraduate students meet with Trevor Brown and graduate students with Rudy Hightower. We will notify you of the room where we will meet over email and in class the week prior.

**MEASURING DEMOCRACY ASSIGNMENT DUE BY 9:35 AM**

Tu, January 24  Scenario #1: Peaceful-to-Forceful Regime Transition

Reading:

**Additional Reading for Graduate Students**

Th, January 26  Online Lecture and Forum Discussion

**No In-Class Attendance:**

Online readings focused on Technical Report Writing in the Policy Process and on Presenting Analysis

Reading:
- Second reading TBD

Tu, January 31  Ingredients: Political Institutions

Reading:

Additional Reading for Graduate Students

Th, February 02  Ingredients: Economics

Reading:

Additional Reading for Graduate Students

Tu, February 7  Case #1: Ukraine

Undergraduate students meet with Trevor Brown and graduate students with Rudy Hightower. We will notify you of the room where we will meet over email and in class the week prior.

Reading:
- USAID. Ukraine: 2015 Congressional Budget Justification

CASE ANALYSIS #1 DUE BY 9:35 AM

Th, February 9  Congressional Testimony Exercise


Tu, February 14  Scenario #2: Implosion

Reading:
• Samantha Power. “Never Again: the World’s Most Unfulfilled Promise.”

Additional Reading for Graduate Students

Movie and Discussion: Ghosts of Rwanda
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zeCIZJ-yRaA

Th, February 16  Online Chat Forum of Ghosts of Rwanda
No In-Class Attendance

Tu, February 21  Ingredients: Nationalism, Ethnicity and Religion
Reading:

Additional Reading for Graduate Students

Th, February 23  Ingredients: Civil Society and Social Capital
Reading:

Additional Reading for Graduate Students

Tu, February 28  Case #2 – Rwanda

Undergraduate students meet with Rudy Hightower and graduate students with Trevor Brown. We will notify you of the room where we will meet over email and in class the week prior.
Reading:
- USAID. Rwanda: 2015 Congressional Budget Justification

CASE ANALYSIS #2 DUE BY 9:35 AM

Th, March 02 Scenario #3 – External Military Intervention
Reading:

Additional Reading for Graduate Students

Tu, March 07 Online Chat Forum of The Lost Year in Iraq
No In-Class Attendance

Th, March 09 Online Forum – Military Interventions Today
No In-Class Attendance

Mo-Fr, Mar 13-17 NO CLASS: Spring Break

Tu, March 21 Ingredients: The Rule of Law
Reading:

Th, March 23 Ingredients: Security, Order, Infrastructure, Basic Services and the Administrative State
Reading:

Additional Reading for Graduate Students

Tu, March 28  Case #3 – Iraq

Undergraduate students meet with Trevor Brown and graduate students with Rudy Hightower. We will notify you of the room where we will meet over email and in class the week prior.

Reading:
• USAID. Iraq: 2015 Congressional Budget Justification

Congressional Testimony:
http://www.foreign.senate.gov/hearings/the-transition-in-afghanistan

CASE ANALYSIS #3 DUE BY 9:35 AM

Th, March 30  In-class Congressional Testimony Exercise

Tu, April 04  Traditional Military Operations: Intervention
Reading:

Th, April 06  Non-Traditional Military Operations: Nation-Building

GUEST SPEAKER, Mr. C. Bill Beavin, MPA, Former Trainer of the Iraqi Security Forces

Tu, April 11  Non-Traditional Military Operations: Nation-Building
Reading:
• The State Partnership Program (http://www.nationalguard.mil/features/spp/default.aspx)

Th, April 13  Is Failure an Option?
Reading:


Additional Reading for Graduate Students

Tu, April 18
Group Presentation Part I – Filmed Debate at the ‘International Court of Justice’; Case Studies in Sovereignty, Reconstruction and Stabilization, and Failed and Weak States
Reading:

Th, April 20
Group Presentation Part II – Filmed Debate at the ‘International Court of Justice’

Tu, April 25
Course Summary/Evaluations;

Finals Week
Reading:
• The White House. 2015 National Security Strategy, Overview
• Exact Date TBD; In-Class Final Exam for Undergraduates
Final Papers due for Graduate Students