



# **CDSn4001: Conflict Analysis**

**Asymmetric conflicts:  
rebellion and insurgency**

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**Miriam Matejova, PhD**

# Agenda

- Final exam
- What makes a conflict asymmetric?
- Why doesn't a state easily win against an insurgency?

# Final exam

- a written test
- five questions - answer four of your choice
- short answers
- Concepts, theories, linkages
- Each answer will be worth 10 points for a total of 40 points. The exam will cover the required (not recommended) literature and lectures.

# Final exam

- Answer the question
- Explain your answer (don't assume the reader knows what you are talking about)
  - If you make a statement, explain its logic, why you believe the statement is true
- Define key terms
- Correctly link the authors to their theories/arguments
- Provide accurate examples and explain how the examples fit the theory
- Answer the question

# Exam rubric

- **9-10:** Extraordinary answers—will include everything in a '7-8' answer but there is something 'extra' that really sets it apart (e.g., making links between themes/weeks/concepts from other courses, incredible balance/presenting of both sides of argument evidence of engagement with literature, etc.).
- **7-8:** Solid answers—key terms defined, question answered in a clear and structured way with evidence of an analytical approach of some kind (engaging in a critique of practice using concepts/ideas from class—not just saying 'it didn't work' if discussing a policy but bringing in concepts from class). Links to cases (if relevant) clearly explained. For example, don't just say 'negotiated settlements don't work as happened in country X'. You should explain why the settlement didn't work in that particular context.

# Exam rubric (cont.)

- **5-6:** Answer is mostly descriptive. Key terms are provided and, if applicable, the case study is evidence of these ideas, but there is no analysis of any of the types described above OR the analysis really doesn't make sense.
- **3-4:** No real answer to the question and no analysis. The student has primarily just written down everything they know about the topic. There are some inaccuracies and/or gaps.
- **1-2:** No real answer to the question. Many or most terms are incorrectly defined if used at all. Inaccuracies in theories, authors, concepts, etc.
- **0:** No answer.

# Asymmetric conflict

- Terrorist attacks? Rebel attacks? Computer viruses?
- Antagonists not fighting “fair”?
- Regular wars with parties possessing unequal resources?
- An umbrella term for warfare between parties with **legal status differences, power imbalances, or asymmetric strategies**

# Asymmetric conflict: legal status

- State actors (recognized as sovereign and possess centralized armed forces) vs. non-state actors (lack international recognition and operate under a more diffuse chain of command)



# Asymmetric conflict: resources

- The weaker actor lacks sophisticated armaments (e.g., aircraft carriers, long-range missiles) as well as manpower, economic resources, technological competence, or other assets to confront the stronger actor on *equal terms*.

# Asymmetric conflict: strategies

- Direct strategies targeting opponent's fighting capabilities vs. indirect strategies targeting opponent's **willingness to fight**



- What makes rebel groups prevail?