


## POLS\*3490 Conflict and Conflict Resolution

**Credit Weighting:** 0.5**Pre-/Co-Requisites:** 1 of POLS\*1500,  
POLS\*2100,  
POLS\*2200**Restrictions:** This is a Priority Access Course. Enrolment may be restricted to particular programs or specializations or semester levels during certain periods. Please **INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION****Name:** Ian S. Spears**Email:** ispears@uoguelph.ca**Office Location:** Mackinnon Building, Room 535**GENERAL DETAILS**

Welcome to POLS 3490: Conflict and Conflict Resolution. This course examines a growing body of literature on violent conflict and its management — with particular focus on civil war in the post-Cold War era. Materials are organized to reflect the trajectory of many contemporary conflicts, from identifying sources of conflict, to recognizing challenges and opportunities for peace and, finally, to identifying conditions and means for post-conflict governance. The contrasting nature of the perspectives within of this literature is highlighted.

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

Students will develop understandings for (1) why war and violence occurs and (2) approaches to its resolution.

**CAUSES OF WAR:** If war causes misery, pain and destruction, why does it continue even in the contemporary era? In this course, students are introduced to different causes or motivations for war and violence.

**CONFLICT RESOLUTION:** Once we have an understanding of why violent conflict occurs, students will learn about the different (and often opposing) approaches to conflict resolution. Are wars most likely to end through democracy and inclusion or through authority and separation of the disputants?

**METHOD OF ASSESSMENT**

**Tests and Exams:** There will be two take-home midterms (one multiple choice format; one essay format) and a final exam covering all course materials.

**Quizzes:** During the course of the term, students will complete several in-class quizzes. These are short tests worth one mark each and consisting of (usually) four questions. In each case, the quizzes are based on the readings and/or lecture discussion. These quizzes are meant to encourage students to be prepared for class.

Midterm Test 1: 30 percent; Midterm 2: 30 percent; Quizzes: 5 percent; Final Exam: 35 percent 

**REQUIRED READING**

There is no textbook for this course. Readings can be accessed through Ares (the library reserve system) or CourseLink. Supplementary materials (newspaper articles, links etc) are also available on CourseLink. Students are expected to critically consider the readings prior to each class and come prepared to participate in class discussions.