

**CHALLENGES OF WEAK STATES**  
**SIS-653 Topics in Foreign Policy**

Fall 2009

Monday 20:10 - 22:30

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Welcome to "Challenges of Weak States." This is an advanced course in security studies with a focus on weak states. It surveys major security challenges of weak states, both internally, internationally, and specifically to the United States, within the context of U.S. foreign policy and national security.

The harm emanating from weak, failing or failed states is three fold. First, when states fail or cannot exercise effective sovereignty there is no responsible agent to ensure the protection and fundamental human rights and provision of minimum humanitarian requirements. In these "ungoverned" spaces genocides, ethnic cleansing and other atrocities may occur without remedy. Second uncontained anomic forces within these areas can infect surrounding territories and neighboring states, thus extending the domain of anomie. Third malignant forces may strike out from these spaces and attack the interests or even territory of sovereign states, as happened on September 11, 2001, and has occurred repeatedly off the coast of Somalia in recent years.

While it is the third aspect that has captured Americans' attention for the past decade - specifically since the direct attacks on the U.S. homeland in 2001 - U.S. foreign policy has historically been affected by all three aspects of state failure. State failure can lead to humanitarian catastrophes including war, mass refugee and IDP migrations, famines, etc. which demand a response from the U.S.

The course is divided into three segments; 1) the failed state phenomenon; 2) impact on U.S. national interests; and 3) policy remedies for state fragility and failure. Each segment will be capped by a written assignment. The first two written assignments will be take home essay examinations to demonstrate understanding of key principles of weak and failed state dynamics and the threats

they pose to U.S. national interests. The third written assignment will be a policy memorandum presenting relevant background, facts and considerations for a policy-maker faced with an emerging complex contingency. In addition each student is required to brief a case study in an oral presentation. As this is a senior-graduate seminar emphasis will be on full class participation and interactive discussion. Regular participation will constitute a significant element in the grading formula. Students will be expected to lead as well as contribute to discussions.

### **Learning Objectives**

- developing the analytic skills necessary to understand the dynamics of state weakness and state failure
- understanding the constellation of threats posed by weak and failing states to U.S. national interests
- familiarity with the range of policy and instrumental options available to the U.S. for dealing with weak and failing states
- developing the ability to present in professional memorandum format the relevant background, facts, options and risks of action pertaining to complex crises

### **Schedule**

#### **August 25: Introduction to Course and Key Concepts; National Strategy, Chaos, and Complexity**

- "The National Security Strategy of the United States" (September 2002); <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/policy/national/nss-020920.pdf>
- Robert D. Kaplan "The Coming Anarchy; How scarcity, crime, overpopulation, tribalism, and disease are rapidly destroying the social fabric of our planet," *The Atlantic*, February 1994; <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/print/199402/anarchy?x=48&y=3>
- Horst W. J. Rittel and Melvin M. Webber, Dilemmas in a General Theory of Planning, *Policy Sciences* 4 (1973), 155-169 [http://www.uctc.net/mwebber/Rittel+Webber+Dilemmas+General\\_Theory\\_of\\_Planning.pdf](http://www.uctc.net/mwebber/Rittel+Webber+Dilemmas+General_Theory_of_Planning.pdf)

#### **September 1: The Emergence of the Modern State and the Inter-state System**

- Charles Tilly, *Coercion, Capital and European States: Ad 990 - 1992* (Wiley, John & Sons, 2007)
- Benjamin de Carvalho, *The Emergence of Sovereign Practices: England's Break from Rome and the Henrican Revolution* (2007)  
<http://archive.sgir.eu/uploads/de%20Carvalho-Benjamin%20de%20Carvalho%20SGIR%202007.pdf>
- Max Weber, *Politics as a Vocation* (Duncker & Humblodt, 1919)  
<http://media.pfeiffer.edu/lridener/DSS/Weber/polvoc.html>

### **September 8: Historical Context; America and Weak States**

- Max Boot, *The Savage Wars of Peace: Small Wars and the Rise of American Power* ( Basic Books, 2003)

### **September 15: Why States Fail (1)**

- Paul Collier et.al., "Breaking the Conflict Trap; Civil War and Development Policy, World Bank, Washington, D.C, 2003; [http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2003/06/30/000094946\\_0306190405396/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf](http://www-wds.worldbank.org/external/default/WDSContentServer/IW3P/IB/2003/06/30/000094946_0306190405396/Rendered/PDF/multi0page.pdf)
- James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin, "Ethnicity, Insurgency and Civil War," *American Political Science Review*; <http://www.yale.edu/irspeakers/Fearon.pdf>

- Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD),

"Concepts and Dilemmas of State Building in Fragile Situations" (2008)

<http://www.oecd.org/dataoecd/59/51/41100930.pdf>

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### **September 22: Why States Fail (2)**

- Max G. Manwaring "A Contemporary Challenge to State Sovereignty: Gangs and Other Illicit Transnational Criminal Organizations in Central America, El Salvador, Mexico, Jamaica and Brazil," , December 2007; <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/pubs/display.cfm?pubID=837>

- William Reno, Warlord Politics and African States (Lynne Rienner, 1999)

### **September 29: Why States Fail (3)**

- David Keen, The Economic Functions of Violence in Civil Wars, Adelphi Paper 320 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998)
- Paul Collier and Anke Hoeffler, "Greed and Grievance in Civil War" (2001) [http://jam.unsudan.info/background-info/data/conflict-analysis/12205\\_greedgrievance\\_23oct.pdf](http://jam.unsudan.info/background-info/data/conflict-analysis/12205_greedgrievance_23oct.pdf)

*The first take home essay examination on "the State Fragility and the Failing State Phenomenon" will be due at this session.*

### **October 6: Weak States and U.S. Foreign Policy**

- Case Study; Rwanda; <http://www.gwu.edu/~nsarchiv/NSAEBB/NSAEBB53/>
- Samantha Power, "Bystanders to Genocide," The Atlantic (September, 2001) <http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/print/200109/power-genocide?x=33&y=2>
- Center for Global Development, Report of the Commission on Weak States and US National Security (2004) [http://www.cgdev.org/doc/weakstates/Full\\_Report.pdf](http://www.cgdev.org/doc/weakstates/Full_Report.pdf)

### **October 13: Weak States and U.S. Foreign Policy**

- Case Study; Somalia
- R. D. Hooker, Jr ., "Hard Day's Night; A Retrospective on the American Intervention in Somalia" (Joint Force Quarterly, 2009) [http://www.ndu.edu/inss/Press/jfq\\_pages/editions/i54/29.pdf](http://www.ndu.edu/inss/Press/jfq_pages/editions/i54/29.pdf)
- Liana Sun Wyler, Weak and Failing States: Evolving Security Threats and U.S. Policy (Congressional Research Service, 2008) <http://www.fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL34253.pdf>

### **October 20: The U.S. and State Building**

- Case Study; Afghanistan
- James Dobbins, "America's Role in Nation-Building: From Germany to Iraq"(Rand Corporation, 2003)

- Rory Stewart, "The Irresistible Illusion," (London Review of Books, July 9, 2009) [http://www.lrb.co.uk/v31/n13/stew01\\_.html](http://www.lrb.co.uk/v31/n13/stew01_.html)

*The second take home essay examination on "the Impact of State Fragile and Failing States on the U.S." will be due at this meeting.*

### **October 27: Weak States, COIN, Stabilization Operations, and Counter-terrorism**

- Counterinsurgency, U.S. Army Field Manual 3-24 (December, 2006) <http://www.fas.org/irp/doddir/army/fm3-24.pdf>
- Stability Operations, U.S. Army Field Manual 3-07 (October, 2008) <http://usacac.army.mil/cac2/Repository/FM307/FM3-07.pdf>

### **November 3: Democratization and Good Governance**

- "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy," Seymour Martin Lipset, *The American Political Science Review*, Vol. 53, No. 1 (Mar., 1959), pp. 69-105: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/1951731>
- "DAC Guidelines on Conflict, Peace and Development Cooperation," Development Advisory Committee, OECD, 1997 (pps. 36-51), <http://www.fas.org/asmp/campaigns/smallarms/eguide.pdf>
- "How Development Leads to Democracy; What We Know About Modernization," Ronald Inglehart and [Christian Welzel](#), *From Foreign Affairs*, [March/April 2009](#)

### **November 10: Challenges of State Building**

- Francis Fukuyama, *State-Building: Governance and World Order in the Twenty-First Century* (London, England: Profile Books, 2004)

### **November 17: Challenges of State Building (2)**

- Ashraf Ghani and Clare Lockhart, *Fixing Failing States; A Framework for Rebuilding a Fractured World* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008)

### **November 24: no class**

### **December 1: Responsibility to Protect**

- Gareth Evans, "The Responsibility to Protect; Ending Mass Atrocity Crimes Once and for All," (Harper Collins, 2009)

*The third written assignment - the policy options memorandum - covering "Policy Responses to State Fragility and Failure" will be due at this meeting.*