

# Counterinsurgency Syllabus

History

Dr. "R" or Rattanasengchanh

Spring 2023

Meeting Times: Tuesday and Thursday 12:30pm – 1:50pm

Meeting Room: PY 202

Office: OD 234

Office Hours:

**Contact Information:** [mike.rattanasengchanh@msutexas.edu](mailto:mike.rattanasengchanh@msutexas.edu)

**Office Hours:** room OD 234; appointment if needed or zoom

## Introduction:

This is a class that will look at counterinsurgency in its modern context of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. We will examine various doctrines and theories from proponents of both insurgency and counterinsurgency to understand how some view war and population relations. In addition, the course will discuss certain case studies throughout the world where unconventional wars took place. We will dissect the successes and failures and ultimately, if this type of approach is still relevant and effective. Most importantly, we will analyze the impact of these types of wars on civilian population and the army as an institution. This is an issue that will not go away as several nations are current engaged in their own "War on Terror."

## General Topics Covered in the Course:

1. Russell Weigley's *America's First Way of War*
2. Mao's People War
3. Ho Chi Minh's Popular Uprising
4. Che's Revolution
5. US in the Philippines and Viet Nam
6. British in Malaysia
7. Latin America
8. Nagl vs. Daddis
9. Academic-Industrial Complex
10. Ethical Issues of "Human Warfare"
11. Case Studies:
  - i. Philippines
  - ii. British Malaya
  - iii. Vietnam
  - iv. Thailand
  - v. Laos
  - vi. Latin America
  - vii. Afghanistan

## Objectives:

1. To learn about the modern history of counterinsurgency and its impact today

2. To learn how to examine primary and secondary sources in order to understand counterinsurgency and some of the positive and negative aspects
3. To learn to write memorandums that utilize evidence and show analysis
4. To practice professionalization with memorandum assignment, specifically for Fort Sill, Oklahoma

**Assignments:**

1. Memos: work in groups
  - a. Memo (20%)
    - i. If possible, which counterinsurgency war (case study) would be the best example for all armies to use to inform its own counterinsurgency doctrine?
  - b. Memo to Fort Sill (25%) – Counterinsurgency vs. Conventional, for the US Army, is counterinsurgency still relevant and effective?
    - i. This assignment will be assessed by **Lieutenant Colonel Corrie S. Brice at Fort Sill, Oklahoma**
    - ii. I will give my assessment and the final grade.
2. Exams:
  - a. Midterm (20%) and Final Exam (25%)
    - i. Short answers
    - ii. ½ readings and ½ lectures
3. Class Attendance and Participation: (10%)
  - a. Will keep track
  - b. Attendance is critical as all the knowledge gained will inform your **memorandum to Fort Sill, Oklahoma**
4. Readings:
  - a. All will be provided in D2L
  - b. Please read and be prepared to discuss during class
  - c. Readings are critical as all the knowledge gained will inform your **memorandum to Fort Sill, Oklahoma**

**Course Schedule:**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Readings</b>	<b>Assignment</b>
January 17, Tuesday	Introduction, America's Way of War, and Introduction to COIN Debate	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Excerpts of Weigley's America's Way of War</li> <li>2. Reassessing Victory in Warfare</li> </ol>	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
January 19, Thursday	Pre-Modern War	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Theory and Prac of Insur. And COIN</li> <li>2. Short Intro. to US Army COIN Debate</li> </ol>	Be prepared to discuss readings in class

January 24, Tuesday	Native Americans VS. Europeans	1. "Peace Chiefs and Blood Revenge"	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
January 26, Thursday	The State and War	1. Cultural Barriers to Successful COIN 2. Towards Mercenary Anthropology	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
January 31, Tuesday	Non-State Actors & Guerrilla Warfare	1. Mao's readings 2. Ho Chi Minh's writings	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
February 2, Thursday	Non-State Actors & Guerrilla Warfare	1. Giap, People's War, People's Army, p. 17- 33	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
February 7, Tuesday	Anti-Colonial Resistance	1. Che's Guerrilla Warfare, Chapter 1	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
February 9, Thursday	Philippine- American War	1. Che's Guerrilla Warfare, Chapter 3	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
February 14, Tuesday	Mao and Ho Chi Minh	1. Nagl, "Learning to Eat Soup with a Knife"	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
February 16, Thursday	Philippine Huk Rebellion	1. Daddis, "Eating Soup with a Knife"	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
February 21, Tuesday	British Malaya	1. "Cultural Turn in US COIN" 2. "British Malaya and COIN Win"	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
February 23, Thursday	Castro and Che	1. "Guatemala COIN Win" 2. Popular Insurgency in Central America	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
February 28, Tuesday	Flexible Response	1. "Race War in the Philippines" 2. "Huk Rebellion COIN Win"	
March 2, Thursday	<b>Midterm</b>	<b>Midterm</b>	<b>Midterm</b>
March 7, Tuesday	No Class	No Class	No Class
March 9, Thursday	<b>Memo #1 due Friday by 11:59pm</b>	<b>Memo #1 due Friday by 11:59pm</b>	<b>Memo #1 due Friday by 11:59pm</b>
<b>March 13-18 Spring Break</b>	<b>March 13-18 Spring Break</b>	<b>March 13-18 Spring Break</b>	<b>March 13-18 Spring Break</b>
March 21, Tuesday	Viet Nam Wars	1. Cultural Intelligence and COIN in Vietnam"	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
March 23, Thursday	Viet Nam Wars	1. Limits of COIN in Afghanistan	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
March 28, Tuesday	Laos and Thailand	1. "Special Air Warfare and the Secret War in Laos"	Be prepared to discuss readings in class

March 30, Thursday	Laos and Thailand	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. End of the Age of Petraeus</li> <li>2. Insurgency in SEA</li> </ol>	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
April 4, Tuesday	No Class	No Class	No Class
<b>Holiday Break April 5-9</b>	<b>Holiday Break April 5-9</b>	<b>Holiday Break April 5-9</b>	<b>Holiday Break April 5-9</b>
April 11, Tuesday	Academic-Military Complex	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "The Social Scientists' War"</li> <li>2. "Culture as a Weapon System"</li> </ol>	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
April 13, Thursday	Modernization Theory and COIN	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dilemmas in Engaged Anthropology</li> <li>2. Complicating Humanitarian Applied Anthropology</li> </ol>	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
April 18, Tuesday	Afghanistan and Iraq	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Is there a Future for COIN?</li> <li>2. Lessons from Iraq and Afghanistan</li> </ol>	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
April 20, Thursday	Afghanistan and Iraq	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gendered Practices in COIN</li> <li>2. "Learning from Iraq"</li> </ol>	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
April 25, Tuesday	Nagl VS. Daddis Revisted	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. "Why COIN Doesn't Work"</li> <li>2. Success in COIN Warfare</li> </ol>	Be prepared to discuss readings in class
April 27, Thursday	No Class	No Class	No Class
May 2, Tuesday	<b>Memo #2 Fort Sill</b>	<b>Memo #2 Fort Sill</b>	<b>Memo #2 Fort Sill</b>
May 4, Thursday	No Class	No Class	No Class
May 6, Saturday	<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>	<b>Final Exam</b>