***Old Dominion University***

***College of Arts and Letters***

The Graduate Program in International Studies

## **Doctoral Dissertation Defense**

**William R. Patterson**

**Can Democracies Win Counterinsurgencies?**

Abstract:

This dissertation focuses on the question of whether democracies can win counterinsurgency conflicts by examining the arguments on both sides.  This is done first by a conceptual analysis of the arguments and secondly by an examination of three case studies: Malaysia, Vietnam, and Iraq.  This analysis demonstrates that the arguments against the ability of democracies to win counterinsurgencies is not as strong as many scholars currently believe.  Secondly, this research demonstrates that a population-based, culturally-informed, counterinsurgency strategy provides a plausible avenue of victory for democratic states faced with insurgencies.  Though such a strategy cannot guarantee success, the more closely it is followed the more likely success will be.

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**December 4, 2013**

**3:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.**