Course Description and Questions

Given the controversial nature of the subject matter, and the events in Oklahoma City, September 11, Fort Hood, and the rise of Islamic State, much of the public discourse is often emotionally charged and lacks factual grounding and objective analysis. This course will attempt to get at the roots of terrorism and analyze the various facets associated with this phenomenon. We will examine such questions as: what is terrorism? How does it differ from other types of violence? Why does terrorism occur? What are the different types of terrorist groups? What are the international and domestic sources? How has it evolved over time? How do scholars in the field of terrorism research explain this phenomenon? How can we best explain the organizational structures and methods of certain actors that employ terrorism as a means of political action? What explains suicide missions and suicide terrorism? What can be done to reduce and/or eliminate terrorism?

The course will be taught with a combination of lecture and discussion. This course will demand a critical examination of a wide variety of issue areas.

The readings that will direct our discussions are as follows:

(In the syllabus listed as TS.)


Souad Mekhennet, *I was told to come Alone: my Journey behind the lines of Jihad*. Henry Holt, 2017. (In the syllabus listed as ALONE.)

In addition, there will be a few articles posted to Canvas.

Learning Goals and Objectives
The primary goal of this course is to give you an understanding of the motives, origins, and rationale for extremist beliefs and terrorist behavior, as well as how governments respond to these phenomena. You will be challenged to critically assess extremist ideology and the practice of terrorism. You will be challenged to evaluate the notion that the practice of terrorism is limited exclusively to the “lunatic fringe” – indeed, is one person’s terrorist another person’s freedom fighter? After participating in this course, you will:

- Be able to discuss how American public administrative agencies deal with the problems of domestic and international terrorism.
- Understand the underlying theories that explain the origins of extremist beliefs, and how one should define ‘terrorism.’
- Demonstrate familiarity with the different types of terrorism, from the left and the right.
- Learn to analyze and critically evaluate the ideas, arguments, and points of view presented in the readings and in class discussions.
- Develop your skills in reading analytically and writing formal essays and papers.

Course Expectations and Preparation

1. **Attend class.** This course will rely more on discussion than lecture. For this format to succeed, you must be present and on time. If you cannot be in class, please let me know. Without question, irregular attendance accounts for the majority of poor grades received. It is unusual for an “A” student to miss class more than once or twice, and most never miss even once. Students who miss class more than 5-6 times usually receive “D” or “F” grades.

2. **Read the assigned materials.** The material that we read will provide us with the common ground upon which we will base our conversations. Without the common ground, our discussions will lose some of their richness.

3. **Be attentive and participate in class.** Participation does not simply mean speaking aloud in class, although that is essential. Students should participate by actively following the discussion and by contributing through the insights they present in their papers and essays.

4. **Complete the required assignments in a timely fashion.** The assignments provide you with both informal and formal opportunities to articulate your responses to the issues we will be discussing. You will get the most out of the course if you turn in your work on time.

Extensions must be only for extenuating circumstances and require one full day’s advance approval from me.

**Grading Standards**

There are no grade quotas, and overall course grade distributions vary from semester to semester. Students who make a “good faith effort” in the course – by at least 90% of the time attending class, paying attention, taking notes carefully, and completing reading and writing assignments – very seldom receive course grades lower than “C”. Unfortunately, in every semester there are
those in the class who fail to make a good faith effort and most of those individuals receive “D” or “F” grades.

“A” grades in Political Science are reserved for students who demonstrate a superior understanding both of factual material and logical relationships between concepts and facts. One common difference between “A” students and “B” or “C” students is that “B” or “C” students know the answers, whereas “A” students know why the answers are the answers; they can fully explain the logic.

**Grading Computations**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94% and up</td>
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<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90 to 93%</td>
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<tr>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84 to 86%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77 to 79%</td>
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<td>C</td>
<td>74 to 76%</td>
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<tr>
<td>C-</td>
<td>70 to 73%</td>
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<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>60-69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>59% or below</td>
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</table>

**Classroom civility**

Regrettably, a small minority of students demonstrate discourtesy to other students and to instructors by disrupting classes unnecessarily. Such disruptions commonly result from talking to friends, text messaging, reading newspapers, packing notebooks prior to the end of class and late arrivals to class. Never assume that professors or other students fail to notice discourteous behavior of these and other types.

I expect that each of us will treat with respect the comments and observations of others. When one person is speaking always let that person finish before asking to respond to the comment.

**Cell phones and laptop computers and tablets**

Cell phones are to be turned off. This is a rule of the university. Repeated violations means you can be expelled from a course. No text messaging.

If you wish to use a laptop or tablet in class, you must first check with me.

**Disabled Students**

Students with disabilities likely to require accommodation by the instructor must contact the instructor and document the disability through the Disability Resource Center during the first
week of classes. Requests for special considerations relating to attendance, pedagogy, or assignments must be approved by the instructor.

Be sure to check your USU email account for any messages that I might send out. I regularly use email to notify each of you of any changes or adjustments in the course schedule. Therefore, it is important that you do check your account frequently.

Assignments

1. In-class exams.
   There will be two in-class exams. They will comprise short answer and essay questions. A study guide will be provided about a week before each of the examinations. They will cover material read to date for the class along with any material imparted through class lectures. Therefore, failure to read any of the assigned reading could be quite costly. Each examination will be worth 60 points.

2. Terrorism Organization Paper
   You are required to write a 10-12 page research paper analyzing a terrorist organization. You will have close to the entire semester to complete it. You are free to choose any relevant group from any time period; provided it is reasonably well documented (many groups are not). Here are some examples of relatively well-studied groups:

   Abu Sayyaf Group   Red Brigades
   LTTE            Jemaah Islamiya
   Lashkar-e-Taiba   AQAP (Yemen)
   Action Directe    Hamas
   Anarchists (19th century)   Provisional IRA
   Ku Klux Klan (50s and 60s)   Aum Shinrikyo
   PKK             Black September Group
   Rote Arme Fraktion ETA
   Sendero Luminoso Front de Liberation du Quebec
   Weather Underground

   Your choice of the group you will be researching is due to me by November 2.

   In this paper you are to cover the following. Provide a brief history of the area within which this group arose. Were there major ethnic and/or religious divisions? If there were what impact did such divisions have on the conflict? What were the specific grievances of the relevant group, its members and supporters? What were the group’s objectives? Were non-violent efforts made to overcome the situation? If there were non-violent methods applied why did they fail? Why the resort to violence?
What is the structure of the organization? Has or did it have any degree of success? If the group declined or disappeared, why? If the group is still active what does their future look like?

The paper is worth a possible 60 points.
See a mini guide to qualitative terrorism data collection at the end of the syllabus to help you with your research.

Paper must be double-spaced with 12 font. Any citation method is okay.

3. Final Take Home Exam
The exam will be handed out on the last day of class. It will consist of essay questions. There will be no study guide in advance given it is a take home. The exam will be worth 90 points. It must be typed double-spaced with 12 font. It will be partly comprehensive. The exam will be due in the Political Science main office on Friday, December 14. The exam may be handed in early.

4. Participation
A total of 30 participation points is available. Remember you must be in class and be participating in order to receive any of these points.

5. Reading Questions
I expect you will submit, via Canvas, answers to daily reading questions for each class period they are assigned. (See the course schedule.) Reading Questions are due by the beginning of class; late submissions will not be accepted. Each reading reflection should provide a substantive answer to the following questions:
   1. What was the reading about as a whole?
   2. What were the major themes?
   3. What was your overall reaction to the reading(s)?

These will be graded on adequate/inadequate scale on a 0 to 2 point scale. You will be permitted to miss three (3) of the possible 32 assignments. Thus 29 will be counted. There is only one (1) RQ to be turned in for each class. Be sure you do discuss ALL the readings for each class. Each RQ needs to be just a page and a page and a half in length.

Missed Exams
Students will NOT be permitted to take early exams for any reason. Students who miss an exam as a result of required participation in a university activity, a death in the immediate family or a serious illness will be given a makeup exam. Be sure to notify me before the exam that you will be unable to make the scheduled exam time.
Students who miss an exam for other reasons – such as weddings, vacations, car problems, etc. will receive zeros on the missed exams.
Essay Grading Criteria

1. Responsiveness to the question: reading questions carefully and answering them directly.
2. Command of information: demonstrated knowledge of the relevant concepts and facts.
3. Analysis: explaining concepts and facts with logical cause and effect relationships.
5. Organization: clarity and coherence of essays.

Keep in mind you are graded only on the basis of what you write on your exams, not on the basis of how much you study or how much you “know.” If you know something, make sure your exam demonstrates that you do.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism occurs whenever someone represents, by paraphrase or direct quotation, the published or unpublished work of another person as one’s own in any academic exercise or activity without full and clear acknowledgement. It also includes using materials prepared by another person or an agency engaged in the sale of term papers or other academic materials.

Even if you just paraphrase you MUST properly cited the material. Remember, if you can find it on-line so can I!!

Violations will result in an F for the course. There are no excuses. If you are in doubt please come and speak with me.

Summation of Points and Dates Due

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam: In class 10/1(Monday)</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mid-Term Exam: In class 11/5(Monday)</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terrorism Group Paper: 12/7(Friday)</td>
<td>60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Take Home Exam: Handed out 12/7 Due 12/14</td>
<td>90</td>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
<td>30</td>
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<td>Reading Questions (29 due)</td>
<td>58</td>
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<td>ISIS article</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>363</strong></td>
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Class Schedule and Readings

8/27(M) Introduction to the Course

8/29(W) TS, Terrorism in Historical Context
Rapoport, “Fear and Trembling.” RQ
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Reading Material</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>8/32(F)</td>
<td>No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/3(M)</td>
<td>No class</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/5(W)</td>
<td>No Class</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/7(F)</td>
<td>TS, Terrorism in Historical Context</td>
<td>Duyvesteyn, “How new is the new terrorism?” Rapoport, “The four waves of modern</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>terrorism.”</td>
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<td>9/10(M)</td>
<td>TS, Definitions</td>
<td>Gibbs, “Conceptualization of Terrorism.” Weinberg, et al, “The challenges of</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/12(W)</td>
<td>TS, Understanding and Explaining terrorism</td>
<td>Crenshaw, “The causes of terrorism.” Weinberg, “Turning to terror.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/14(F)</td>
<td>TS, Understanding and Explaining terrorism</td>
<td>Taylor and Horgan, “A conceptual framework for addressing psychological process</td>
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<td>in the development of the terrorist.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/17(M)</td>
<td>TS, Terrorist Behavior</td>
<td>Della Porta, “On individual motivations in underground political organizations.”</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Crenshaw, “Decisions to use terrorism.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/19(W)</td>
<td><strong>On Canvas: Radicalization</strong></td>
<td>Khosrokhavaran, “History of Radicalization,” “Financing,” “Sites of Radicalization,</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>“Ambiguous Role of Frustration in Radicalization.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>9/21(F)</td>
<td><strong>On Canvas: Radicalization</strong></td>
<td>McCauley, Moskalenko, “Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways Toward</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Terrorism.”</td>
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<td>9/24(M)</td>
<td><strong>On Canvas: Recruitment</strong></td>
<td>Waller, “Prisons as Terrorist Breeding Grounds.”</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>study.”</td>
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<td>9/28(F)</td>
<td>TS, Terrorist Movements</td>
<td>Sprinzak, “Right-wing terrorism in a comparative perspective.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Topic</td>
<td>Readings/Video</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/1(M)</td>
<td>IN CLASS EXAM – BRING A LARGE BLUE BOOK TO CLASS</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/5(F)</td>
<td>WAY, “Buddy,” “White Power,” “Romantic Violence.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/8(M)</td>
<td>WAY, “Fourteen Words,” “Summer of Hate,” “Young Hate Mongers,”</td>
<td>“Hear the Call,” “White Pride.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/10(W)</td>
<td>WAY, “Armed and Dangerous,” “W.A.Y.,” “Sick Society,”</td>
<td>“Heavy-Metal Hate Machine,” “AKA Pablo.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/12(F)</td>
<td>WAY, “Martyr,” “Happy Death,” “Final Solution,” “Open Your Eyes,” “AmeriKKKa.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/17(W)</td>
<td>Suicide Terrorism</td>
<td>*On Canvas: Pedahzur and Perliger, “The Making of Suicide Bombers: A Comparative Perspective.”</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Ward, “What do we know about Suicide bombing?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>10/19(F)</td>
<td>FALL BREAK – NO CLASS</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10/22(M)</td>
<td>Jihadist Terrorism and Ideology</td>
<td>Video: “Jihad: The Men and Ideas behind Al Qaeda.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/24(W)</td>
<td>Video: continued and</td>
<td>*On Canvas: Kurzman, “Why there are so few Muslim Terrorists.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/26(F)</td>
<td>Video: finish “Jihad.” 20 minutes</td>
<td>Video: Begin “The Rise of ISIS.” <em>Frontline</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10/29(M)</td>
<td>Video: finish and</td>
<td>ALONE, “Prologue: Meeting ISIS Turkey, 2014.”</td>
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<tr>
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<td>“Stranger in a Strange Land Germany and Morocco, 1978-93”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Your choice of group is due to me by today.

11/5(M)  SECOND IN CLASS EXAM – BRING LARGE BLUE BOOK TO CLASS

11/7(W)  ALONE, “The Value of a Life Algeria, 2008.”
          “Guns and Roses Pakistan, 2009.”
          “Mukhabarat Egypt, 2011.”
          RQ

11/9(F)  ALONE, “This is not an Arab Spring Germany and Tunisia, 2011.”
          “Threats Bahrain, Iran, and Germany, 2011-13.”
          “Boys for the Caliphate Germany, 2013.”
          RQ

          “Terror comes Home Austria, France, and Belgium, 2015-16.”
          “Epilogue: the Deepest Cut Germany and Morocco, 2016.”
          RQ

          Mullins, “The Road to Orlando: Jihadist-inspired violence in the West, 2012-2016.”
          TS, Vidino, “Homegrown jihadist terrorism in the United States.”
          RQ

11/16(F)  *BRING AN ARTICLE TO CLASS THAT PROVIDES AN UP-DATE ON THE CURRENT STATUS OF ISIS.*

11/19(M)  Media
          Video: YouTube “Backlight: cyberjihad.”
          RQ

11/21 and 11/23 THANSGIVING BREAK

11/26(M)  Counterterrorism
          TS, Pedahzur and Ranstorp, “A tertiary model for countering terrorism in liberal democracies: the case of Israel.”
          TS, Silke, “Fire of Iolaus.”
          RQ

11/28(W)  TS, Hassan, “Key considerations in counterideological work against Terrorist ideology.”
          RQ

11/30(F)  IN CLASS DEBATE ON METHODS OF COUNTER TERRORISM

12/3(M)  Trends
          TS, Ackerman, “WMD terrorism research.”
**On Canvas**: Forest, “Assessing the WMD Terrorist Threat.” RQ

*Recommended, but not required* is an article that describes the effects of different types of weapons. Forest, “Weapons of Mass Destruction: an Introduction.”

12/5(W) TS, Cunningham, “Countering female terrorism.” RQ

12/7(F) *On Canvas*: Nacos, “Living with Terrorist threats.”
Forest, “The future of Terrorism.”

TS, Mueller, “Six rather unusual propositions about terrorism.” RQ

GROUP PAPER DUE TODAY.

FINAL EXAM WILL BE DUE BY FRIDAY, DECEMBER 14.

**A mini guide to qualitative terrorism data collection**

Secondary sources:

NB: use *Wikipedia* with extreme caution. Use it if you must for basic queries, but *never* rely on it for academic purposes.

- Search for books and articles in the big databases such as *WorldCat, Google Scholar, JSTOR, Web of Science, and EBSCO Host*. Be sure you check the USU library site as well.
- Browse and search specialist journals such as *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism, Terrorism and Political Violence, Perspectives on Terrorism, CTC Sentinel, Jamestown Terrorism Monitor, and Critical Terrorism Studies*.
- Search for theses and dissertations on *Proquest*.
- Search for news articles on *Lexis-Nexis and World News Connection* (non-English media).
- Browse and search specialist magazines, blogs and websites, such as
  - [www.longwarjournal.org](http://www.longwarjournal.org)
  - [www.ict.org.il/](http://www.ict.org.il/)
  - [www.teachingterror.net/](http://www.teachingterror.net/)
  - [www.splcenter.org/](http://www.splcenter.org/)
- Consult other research guides

Primary Sources:

- Check the footnotes of the best secondary sources
- Search for memoirs on *WorldCat* (also try Amazon)
- Search for interviews on *Lexis-Nexis and Google*
- Look for declassified documents for example at the Digital National Security Archive [**(http://nsarchive.chadwyck.com/home.do)**](http://nsarchive.chadwyck.com/home.do) and the HARMONY documents at the Combating Terrorism Center (**www.ctc.usma.edu**)
- Check radical website monitoring sites such as *Jihadology*, *MEMRI*, or *SITE* (the latter is subscription-only)
- Search for propaganda videos and commentaries on *YouTube and Dailymotion*
- *Browse radical websites directly* (for example *Stormfront*, *Revleft*, and *Ansar al-Mujahidin*)