

# PSCI 4700.002

## Terrorism

Spring 2015

Tuesday, Thursday: 2:00–3:20 p.m.

### Instructor

**Professor:** Christopher Linebarger, Ph.D.

**Email:** ChristopherLinebarger@my.unt.edu

**Course Website:** learn.unt.edu

**Office Hours:** M,T,W,R: 12:30 PM–1:30 PM

### Description

Terrorism and counter-terrorism are subjects that dominate the news. Recently, high profile attacks occurred in places as far removed from one another as Paris, Sydney, Ottawa, Boston, Peshawar, and Baga. Moreover, the Senate recently released information on alleged torture at Guantanamo Bay. Despite the extensive media coverage of these events, few attempt to think analytically about the politics of terrorism. We will therefore use the tools provided us by social science and history to understand these important topics.

We will begin the course by examining the definitions and justifications of terrorism, as well as its historical evolution. We will then study the major theoretical traditions that try to explain terrorism. The remainder of the course sequence will examine terrorist tactics, the 9/11 attacks, state (-sponsored) terrorism, and the various controversies surrounding counter-terrorism.

Upon successfully completing this course, you will be familiar with the causes and consequences of terrorism. More importantly, you will be able to apply this knowledge to real-world scenarios, including historical cases, current events, and the prospects for the future. Finally, you will develop skills that are useful regardless of your post-college career choices. Such skills include thinking analytically and critically, and presenting logically sound arguments.

### Required Course Materials

There are two required books in this course:

- Stuart Gottlieb. 2013. *Debating Terrorism and Counterterrorism*. Washington, D.C.: CQ Press. ISBN-13: 978-1452226729.
- Lawrence Wright. 2007. *The Looming Tower*. New York: Vintage. ISBN-13: 978-1400030842.

These books are available in the UNT Bookstore, and at any of the usual online sources.

The remainder of the course's readings consist in articles, mainly from academic and policy journals. Each of these is listed below on the course calendar, and they are available in the Blackboard Learn system.

You should also do your best to keep up with current events. Cable news networks are an acceptable source of news, although they should be supplemented with sources that have extensive coverage of international affairs, such as the BBC, *The Economist*, *New York Times*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Washington Post*, etc.

### Optional Resources

A number of political science blogs and websites are also useful to our area of study. These include:

- "Political Violence at a Glance." <http://politicalviolenceataglance.org/>
- "The Monkey Cage." <http://www.washingtonpost.com/blogs/monkey-cage/>
- "The Duck of Minerva." <http://www.whiteoliphant.com/duckofminerva/>
- "Teaching Terrorism." <http://www.teachingterror.net/>
- "Foreign Policy Magazine." <http://foreignpolicy.com/>
- "Foreign Affairs." <http://www.foreignaffairs.com/>

### Assignments

**Attendance & Participation (20% of grade).** Although lectures comprise a large part of this class, it is my intention to also emphasize discussion. Because discussion is impossible without your presence, attendance is expected. Roll will be taken randomly throughout the semester. If you are unavoidably late, please inform me at the end of class so that you receive credit for your attendance.

You are *required* to complete the readings before class and to participate in discussions on a regular basis, and I will take note of how regularly you participate in class, in both productive or distractive ways. Failure to be prepared or to provide quality in a fully engaged discussion will result in a significant reduction in your course grade.

My hope is that the classroom will contain an atmosphere in which ideas and opinions will be welcomed and addressed. As such, please note that you will be graded on a number of criteria beyond simple participation, under the rubric of "professionalism." You are beginning your life as both adults and social scientists, and as such you are expected to act in a professional manner. Additional comments on classroom behavior is provided in the relevant section below.

To these ends, attendance and participation are worth 20% of your grade. Your base attendance and participation grade will be based upon the proportion of times I take attendance

and you are in class. Then, I will adjust that grade up or down depending on your participation. To maximize this part of your grade, it is highly recommended that you come to class prepared (e.g., having done the assigned readings) and willing to participate. Merely showing up and occupying a seat will not constitute full participation. Other ways to lose participation points include but are not limited to: being a disruption to others (e.g., side conversations with friends, reading for other classes, texting, browsing the internet), leaving class early without my explicit prior approval, repeatedly failing to answer a question if called upon, and not participating in classroom discussions and exercises in a productive manner.

**Two Exams (30 % of grade each).** There will be two exams in this class: a midterm and a final. These will consist of 50 multiple choice and true/false questions. Neither exam is cumulative. “Make up” exams are available only for legitimate family and medical related emergencies, and school-sanctioned events in which the student is a direct participant.

Students seeking a “make up” exam must provide documentation and must contact me as far in advance of the exam as possible. Requests for make-up exams must be obtained from me during my office hours. We will then set a time for the make up exam, which will occur as close to the exam as possible.

**In-Class Simulation (20% of grade).** Near the end of the course (see schedule below), we will be undertaking an in-class simulation. This simulation will be explained as its scheduled time approaches. There will be no make-up for the simulations if you miss class, and you will receive a zero for that proportion of the simulation that you miss.

**Addendum.** While a substantial portion of the class consists of lectures, I will not be making my slides available. I do this for a number of reasons. First, I do not crowd my slides with text that I read from, and I do not want you to simply copy down what you see on the screen. Rather, I want you to take notes and think about the issues as I talk about them, and as your fellow students discuss them. To that end, the slides will mainly consist of prompts for discussion and visual aids that service the lecture. Second, freely available slides depress attendance, thereby resulting in diminished understanding and lower exam grades. It is therefore to your benefit not to rely on power point slides.

## Grades

Grades are assigned according to the following scale:

<b>Letter Grade</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
A	90%
B	80%
C	70%
D	60%
F	<60%

## Classroom Conduct

Lecture and discussion based classes often present numerous issues. My goal is to make sure that everyone has an equal chance to do well. This means that rules are well understood, that an orderly environment exists that is conducive to learning, and that interference with other's learning is minimized so that all students have a fair shot. With this preamble in mind, I ask that all students accede to the following rules:

**Classroom Conduct.** Classroom courtesy is an essential component of creating an effective learning environment. All students have the right to learn without unnecessary distractions, and to do so without awkward confrontations with their fellow students. These distractions include: laptops, cell phones/smartphones, and the like, talking during the lectures (unless recognized by the instructor), reading non-class material, falling asleep, etc. If you use a laptop to take notes during class, turn off the sound and restrain yourself from browsing the internet. If you need a phone for emergency purposes, leave it set to vibrate. Entering and leaving also creates significant distraction. It is your responsibility to be on time and stay for the entire class. In circumstances where you need to leave early, tell the professor beforehand. If you are unavoidably late, please enter the classroom with as minimum a disruption as possible. Repeated disruptions of class will lead to a reduction in your final grade.

**Civility.** The topic of the course is a contentious one fraught with numerous ethical and moral issues, dispute over the proper role of government in containing violence, and questions of ends and means. In order to tackle these issues, to expose you to a variety of viewpoints, and to develop your analytic skills, this course is designed to emphasize discussion.

I therefore ask that all of you respect the opinions of your fellow students, even if you do not agree with them. This means not interrupting other students while they are speaking or verbally attacking them for their beliefs. Although it is necessary to connect theory and current events, I will cut short any debate that does not enhance the understanding of course concepts. I expect that you will offer substantive comments and questions when appropriate in class. I also expect you not to dominate a discussion, but to allow ideas to exchange freely. You are to maintain civility, respect for others, and professionalism.

## Accommodations

The Political Science Department cooperates with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA). The ODA makes formal recommendations regarding necessary and appropriate accommodations based on specifically diagnosed disabilities. If you are a student with a disability and wish to request accommodations, you should contact the ODA as soon as possible. Please present your written accommodation request to me on or before the sixth day of class. Information regarding disabilities is treated in a confidential matter.

## **Policy on Cheating and Plagiarism**

The university Code of Student Conduct and Discipline defines cheating and plagiarism as the use of unauthorized books, notes, or otherwise securing help in a test; copying others' tests, assignments, reports, or term papers; representing the work of another as one's own; collaborating without authority with another student during an examination or in preparing academic work; or otherwise practicing scholastic dishonesty.

Normally, the minimum penalty for cheating or plagiarism is a grade of "F" in the course. In the case of graduate departmental exams, the minimum penalty shall be failure of all fields of the exam. Determination of cheating or plagiarism shall be made by the instructor in the course, or by the field faculty in the case of departmental exams.

Cases of cheating or plagiarism on graduate departmental exams, theses, or dissertations shall automatically be referred to the departmental Graduate Studies Committee. Cases of cheating or plagiarism in ordinary coursework may, at the discretion of the instructor, be referred to the Undergraduate Studies Committee in the case of undergraduate students, or the Graduate Studies Committee in the case of graduate students. These committees, acting as agents of the department Chair, shall impose further penalties, or recommend further penalties to the Dean of Students, if they determine that the case warrants it. In all cases, the Dean of Students shall be informed in writing of the case.

Students may appeal any decision under this policy by following the procedures laid down in the Code of Student Conduct and Discipline.

## **Statement on Academic Integrity**

Student behavior that interferes with an instructor's ability to conduct a class or other students' opportunity to learn is unacceptable and disruptive and will not be tolerated in any instructional forum. Students engaging in unacceptable behavior will be directed to leave the classroom and the instructor may refer the student to the Center for Student Rights and Responsibilities to consider whether the student's conduct violated the Code of Student Conduct. The university's expectations for student conduct apply to all instructional forums, including university and electronic classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc.

## Course Calendar & Assigned Readings

The following calendar is only a guide. Dates and topics are subject to change. Any changes will be announced in-class well ahead of time. It is your responsibility to keep up to date with any schedule alterations.

Readings marked “BB” are to be found in the Blackboard Learn system.

### (I) Introduction to Terrorism: Definitions and Origins

**Week 1: Tue., Jan. 20:** Course Introduction & Syllabus Overview

- No readings.

**Week 1: Thurs., Jan. 22:** Definitions and Origins

- Ch. 1: Stuart Gottlieb. *Debating Terrorism and Counterterrorism* (Hereafter: “Gottlieb”). Ch. 1: “Is the “New Terrorism” really new?”
- Handouts.

### (II) Theories of Terrorism

**Week 2: Tue., Jan. 27:** Psychological Theories & Justification

- Gottlieb Ch. 3: “Can Terrorism be Justified?”

**Week 2: Thur., Jan. 29:** Rational Choice Theories

- Andrew Kydd and Barbara Walter. 2006. “The Strategies of Terrorism.” *International Security*. BB

**Week 3: Tue., Feb. 3:** Sociological & Structural Theories

- Gottlieb, Ch. 2: “Does poverty serve as a root cause of terrorism?”

### (III) Ideologies of Terror

**Week 3: Thur., Feb. 5:** Left Wing / Revolutionary Terrorism

- Extract from: Carlos Marighella. “From the Minimanual.” BB.
- Extract from: Abraham Guillen. “Urban Guerrilla Strategy.” BB.
- Paul Joose. “Leaderless Resistance and Ideological Inclusion.” *Terrorism and Political Violence*. BB.

**Week 4: Tue., Feb. 10:** Right Wing / Reactionary Terrorism

- Ami Pedazhur. 2001. “Struggling with the Challenges of Right-Wing Terrorism.” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*. BB.

**Week 4: Thur., Feb. 12:** Ethno-nationalist Terrorism

- Daniel Byman. 1998. "The Logic of Ethnic Terrorism." *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*. BB.

**Week 5: Tue., Feb. 17:** Religious Terrorism

- Gottlieb, Ch. 4: "Does Islam play a unique role in Modern Terrorism?"

(IV) **Tactics of Terror**

**Week 5: Thur., Feb. 19:** Suicide Terrorism

- Gottlieb, Ch. 5: "Is suicide terrorism an effective tactic?"

**Week 6: Tue., Feb. 24:** Transnational Dimensions of Terrorism / Foreign Fighter Phenomenon

- Thomas Hegghammer. 2013. "Should I Stay or Should I Go?" *American Political Science Review*. BB.

**Week 6: Thurs., Feb. 26:** Insurgency

- Ariel Merari. "Terrorism as a Strategy of Insurgency." *Terrorism and Political Violence*. BB.

**Week 7: Tue., Mar. 3:** Catch-up & Review

- I anticipate that in-class discussion will lead us to fall somewhat behind the strict outline listed above. This class session is designated to catch-up on whatever material we may not yet have covered, and to revisit and answer any unresolved questions or issues pertaining to already-covered material. With our remaining time, we will review for the upcoming exam.

**Week 7: Thur., Mar. 5: MIDTERM EXAM**

- No readings.

(V) **Al-Qaeda and 9/11**

**Week 8: Mar. 10, 12:** Film & Discussion. Film TBA.

- Begin reading: Lawrence Wright. 2007. *The Looming Tower*. Hereafter: "Wright."

**SPRING BREAK: Mar. 16–Mar. 22**

**Week 9: Tue. & Thurs., Mar. 24–26:** 9/11 & Al-Qaeda

- Finish Wright.

**Week 10: Tue., Mar. 31:** How Terrorism Ends.

- Audrey Kurth Cronin. 2006. “How al-Qaeda Ends.” *International Security*. BB.

## (VI) State (-Sponsored) Terrorism

**Week 10: Thur., Apr. 2:** State Terror

- David Claridge. 1996. “State Terrorism? Applying a Definitional Model” *Terrorism and Political Violence*. BB.
- Bruce Falconer. “Murder by the State.” *Atlantic Monthly*. BB.

## (VII) The Politics of Counter-Terrorism

**Week 11: Tue., Apr. 7:** State Sponsored Terror

- Gary Sick. 2003. “Iran: Confronting Terrorists.” *Washington Quarterly*. BB.
- Fareed Zakaria. 2004. “Terrorists Don’t Need States.” *Newsweek*. BB.

**Week 11: Thur., Apr. 9:** Counter Terrorism and American Foreign Policy (Hard Power vs. Soft Power)

- Gottlieb, Ch. 7: “Do We Need Bombs Over Bridges?”

**Week 12: Tue., Apr. 14:** Counter Terrorism and American Foreign Policy (Spreading Democracy)

- Gottlieb, Ch. 8: “Can Spreading Democracy Help Defeat Terrorism?”

**Week 12: Thur., Apr. 16:** MPSA Conference. No Class.

- No readings.

**Week 13: Tue., Apr. 21:** Film & Discussion. TBA.

- No readings.

**Week 13: Thur., Apr. 23:** Is the threat overstated?



- Gottlieb, Ch. 12: "Is the threat of terrorism being overstated?"

**(VIII) Simulation**

**Week 14: Tue., Apr. 28:** Simulation

**Week 14: Thur., Apr. 30:** Simulation

- Readings TBA.

**Week 15: Tue., May 5:** Simulation Debriefing & Review

- No readings.

**Week 15: Thur., May 7:** Reading Day (No Class).

- No readings.

**Week 16: Thur., May 14 1:30–3:30pm: FINAL EXAM.**

- No readings.

This syllabus is a guideline and is subject to change at any time.

UPDATED: January 20, 2015