



National Consortium for the
Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism

A CENTER OF EXCELLENCE OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY BASED AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND
BSST 630
MOTIVATIONS AND INTENTS OF TERRORISTS AND
TERRORIST GROUPS

INSTRUCTOR:

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Course Logistics:

This course will meet from Aug 28 – Dec 11, 2017 on the following Schedule:

Lecture: W 6pm - 830pm

Location: ONLINE

Course Description:

This advanced lecture/seminar examines motivations for terrorism from an interdisciplinary perspective. Specific focus on a political / applied social psychological perspective will be emphasized over the course. Topics include (but are not limited to) defining terrorism, preconditions, recruitment, domestic and international terrorism, as well as case studies and analysis of terrorist organizations. We will examine a variety of sources drawn from multiple disciplines.

Required Textbooks:

- 1) Hoffman, B. (2006). *Inside terrorism* (2nd Ed.). Columbia University Press. New York.
- 2) Victoroff, J. E., & Kruglanski, A. W. (2009). *Psychology of terrorism: Classic and contemporary insights*. Psychology Press.
- 3) Horgan, J. (2014). *The psychology of terrorism* (2nd Ed.). Routledge. New York.

Additional weekly readings and other media (e.g., video, audio) will be required and are available through ELMS. Readings are subject to change but all students will be notified via email. Students are expected to have all readings complete *before* the class date in which they appear under.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of the course:

- Students will have developed an understanding of the various theoretical perspectives on terrorist motivation and behavior;
- Students will have developed knowledge of the structural, social, and psychological causes of terrorism.
- Students will have developed knowledge of the structure and representation of terrorist ideology and its relation to violence;
- Students will have learned about the historical background of various terrorist groups;
- Students will have developed knowledge of the structure, decision-making, and tactics of terrorist organizations.

Grading and Assignments

Final grades are determined by the following:

- Mid-Term Report – 20% of your grade
- Final Report – 30% of your grade
- In-class presentations – 30% of your grade
- In-class group assignments – 20% of your grade

Mid-Term Report

Students will write a 5-page paper on a topic of their choice pertaining to 'Motivations and Intents of Terrorists and Terrorist Groups'. The second week of class (i.e., Sept. 6) you will receive more specific instructions, formatting instructions and the grading rubric that will be used to grade your paper. **By** the fourth week of class (i.e., **Sept. 20**), students will need to have **approval** from the course instructor **for their research topic**. Papers will be due the seventh week of class (i.e., **Oct. 11**), **Mid-Term Reports are due NLT 830pm**.

Final Report

Students will write a 10-page paper on an idea to improve upon existing policies/programs/practices in the areas of counter-terrorism, countering violent extremism, de- or counter-radicalization, terrorist attack recovery, or terrorist attack response that is based upon one of the psychological mechanisms discussed in class which impacts terrorists or their victims. The second week of class (i.e., Sept. 6) you will receive more specific instructions, formatting instructions and the grading rubric that will be used to grade your paper. **By** the seventh week of class (i.e., **Oct. 11**), students will need to have **approval** from the course instructor **for their research topic**. The **Final Report is due Dec 6**.

In-Class Presentations

Students will be randomly assigned an in-class presentation date during the second week of class (i.e., Sept. 6). Each date will have a corresponding topic pertaining to that week's lecture (e.g., Saudi Arabia's de-radicalization programs during the week de-radicalization is discussed). Students must conduct a thorough examination of the literature (e.g., peer-reviewed journal articles, think tank reports) on this topic, and prepare a PowerPoint presentation that they will give following the lecture portion of class.¹ The presentation must be 15 minutes in length. Additional instructions as well as a presentation grading rubric will be provided to students during the second week of class (i.e., Sept. 6).

In-Class Group Assignments

Each class, students will be randomly assigned to a group with other students where they will work together on a task pertaining to that week's topic. Tasks might include a brief analysis of the content of a news report, a brainstorming session on what methodology to use to help answer a difficult research question, or any other number of things. Students will collaborate through ELMS and turn in a 1-paragraph summary of their conclusions at the end of class. Discussions will be monitored by the course instructor and teaching assistant. Any students found not to be actively participating will receive a zero for their group assignment grade that day.

Your grades for all assignments in the course will be numerical values. Numerical scores correspond to letter grades as follows:

A+	98-100	C	73-77
A	93-97	C-	70-72
A-	90-92	D+	68-69
B+	88-89	D	63-67
B	83-87	D-	60-62
B-	80-82	F	0-59
C+	78-79		

Class Policies:

Student Conduct and Academic Integrity. Students are expected to adhere to the University of Maryland's Code of Student Conduct and to treat each other with respect. Disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. Students who are unable to demonstrate civility with one another or with the instructor or teaching assistants, will be subject to referral to the Office of Student Conduct or to the Campus Police. The Code of Student Conduct is available online: <http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/v100b.pdf>.

Students are also expected to adhere to the University of Maryland's Code of Academic Integrity and to refrain from acts of academic dishonesty. All students must write the Student Honor Pledge on all assignments:

I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination.

Any student committing an apparent act of academic dishonesty will be subject to referral to the Student Honor Council. The Code of Academic Integrity is available online: <http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/III-100A.pdf>.

¹ The first hour of class will be a lecture on the topic for that week by the course instructor. This will be followed by a 10 minute break. After the break, there will be one or two student presentations. In-class assignments will round out the remainder of the class period.

Attendance. Regular online attendance and participation in this class is the best way to grasp the concepts and principles being discussed. However, in the event that a class must be missed due to an illness or another valid reason,² the policy in this class is as follows:

- For every necessary absence from class, a reasonable effort should be made to notify the instructor in advance of the class.
- If a student is absent more than two consecutive course meetings, the student should supply documentation signed by a health care professional, coach, clergy member, etc.
- If a student is absent from class, they will be required to complete a makeup assignment for the missed group activity.

Any student submitting falsified documentation of illness will be referred to the Student Honor Council.

Class Cancellation and Changes. This course follows the university policies on closures. If the University is closed, class will not convene. Make-up classes will be scheduled, if feasible, through consensus within the students in the course. If students are not able to attend a make-up class time due to other class commitments, they will be allowed to complete an assignment in order to earn the participation points, and gain exposure to the course materials.

Religious Observances. The University System of Maryland policy on religious observances provides that students should not be penalized because of observances of their religious beliefs; students shall be given an opportunity, whenever feasible, to make up within a reasonable time any academic assignment that is missed due to individual participation in religious observances. Students must submit a written request to make up a class meeting, assignment, or due date for the purposes of religious observance by the end of the second week of classes. Please note that accommodations will not be made for travel to and from the site of religious observances. Additional information on religious observance policy is available online: <http://www.engl-pw.umd.edu/PoliciesandProcedures/GeneralPolicies/ReligiousObservances.htm>.

Disability Support Services. Any student requesting special accommodations must be registered with the University of Maryland's Disability Support Service (DSS) Office and must provide a DSS Accommodation Form updated for the current semester by the end of the second week of classes. Students who fail to meet this deadline will not receive special accommodations. Additional information on disability support services is available online: <http://www.counseling.umd.edu/DSS>.

² A valid excuse for missing any class/due date includes illness, observance of a religious/holy day, university sponsored travel, or an emergency or death in the family.

Course Schedule:

This course will meet from Aug 28 – Dec 11, 2017 on the following Schedule:

Lecture: W 6pm - 830pm

Location: ONLINE

Aug 30:

- **Lecture:** Introduction to the syllabus/course; Research methods

Sept 6:

- **Lecture:** Course assignments/reports; Defining terrorism; History and trends in terrorism; Conceptual frameworks in the study of terrorism
- **Readings:**
 - V&K p. x-53
 - Hoffman Chapters 1-3
 - Richards. (2014). Conceptualizing Terrorism. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 37(3), 213-236.
 - Kruglanski, A. W., Crenshaw, M., Post, J. M., & Victoroff, J. (2008). What should this fight be called? Metaphors of counterterrorism and their implications. *Psychological Science in the Public Interest*, 8, 97-133.
 - Schmid (2004). Frameworks for conceptualizing terrorism. *TPV*, 16, 197-221

Sept 13:

- **Lecture:** Dispositional factors influencing terrorism; Situational factors influencing terrorism
- **Readings:**
 - V&K 55-86, 195-226
 - Crenshaw, M. (2000). The psychology of terrorism: An agenda for the 21st century. *Political Psychology*, 21, 405-420
 - Lemieux, A. F., & Asal, V. H. (2010). Grievance, social dominance orientation, and authoritarianism in the choice and justification of terror versus protest. *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict*, 3(3), 194-207.
 - Gambetta & Hertog (2009). Why are there so many engineers among Islamic radicals? *AES*, 2, 201-230.

Sept 20:

- **Lecture:** Radicalization
- **Readings:**
 - Disgruntled scientists literature review (Davenport, 2015)
 - Horgan, Chapters 1-4
 - King & Taylor (2011). The radicalization of homegrown jihadists: A review of theoretical models and social psychological evidence. *TPV* 23, 602-622.
 - Hoffman, Chapter 4
 - Snow, D. and Cross, R. (2011). Radicalism within the Context of Social Movements: Processes and Types. *Journal of Strategic Security* 4(4) 115-130.

Sept 27:

- **Lecture:** Motivations; Quest for significance theory
- **Readings:**
 - V&K 281-298
 - Horgan, Chapter 5
 - Hoffman, Chapter 8

Oct 4:

- **Lecture:** Disengagement; Deradicalization
- **Readings:**
 - Horgan, Chapters 6 & 7
 - Hoffman, Chapter 9

Oct 11:

- **Lecture:** Mid-Term Reports; Counter-radicalization; Countering violent extremism (CVE)
- **Readings:**
 - U.S. Strategy for countering violent extremism: An assessment by Will McCants and Clinton Watts http://www.fpri.org/docs/media/McCants_Watts_-_Countering_Violent_Extremism.pdf
 - Vidino, L., & Hughes, S. (2015). Countering Violent Extremism in America. The George Washington University: Center for Cyber & Homeland Security. <https://cchs.gwu.edu/sites/cchs.gwu.edu/files/downloads/CVE%20in%20America%20.pdf>
 - Williams, M. J., Horgan, J. G., & Evans, W. P. (2016). The critical role of friends in networks for countering violent extremism: toward a theory of vicarious help-seeking. Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression, 8(1), 45-65.

Oct 18:

- **Lecture:** Social Psychology and terrorism
- **Readings:**
 - V&K 331-365

Oct 25:

- **Lecture:** Industrial/Organizational psychology and terrorism
- **Readings:**
 - Ligon, G. S., Simi, P., Harms, M., & Harris, D. J. (2013). Putting the "O" in VEOs: What makes an organization?. Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict, 6(1-3), 110-134.
 - Hunter, S. T., Shortland, N. D., Crayne, M. P., & Ligon, G. S. (2017). Recruitment and selection in violent extremist organizations: Exploring what industrial and organizational psychology might contribute. American Psychologist, 72(3), 242.

Nov 1:

- **Lecture:** Suicide Terrorism
- **Readings:**
 - V&K 119-194
 - Pape, R. A. (2003). The strategic logic of suicide terrorism. American Political Science Review, 97, 343-361.

Nov 8:

- **Lecture:** Religion and terrorism
- **Readings:**
 - V&K 419-434
 - Gregg, H. S. (2016). Three Theories of Religious Activism and Violence: Social Movements, Fundamentalists, and Apocalyptic Warriors. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 28(2), 338-360.

Nov 15:

- **Lecture:** Left- and Right-Wing Terrorism
- **Readings**
 - V&K 317-330
 - <https://www.unl.edu/eskridge/ecoterrorism.html>

Nov 22:

- **Lecture:** "Lone Wolf" Terrorism
- **Readings:**
 - McCauley, C., & Moskaleiko, S. (2014). Toward a profile of lone wolf terrorists: What moves an individual from radical opinion to radical action. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 26(1), 69-85.
 - Smith, B. L., Gruenewald, J., Roberts, P., & Damphousse, K. R. (2015). The Emergence of Lone Wolf Terrorism: Patterns of Behavior and Implications for Intervention. In *Terrorism and Counterterrorism Today* (pp. 89-110). Emerald Group Publishing Limited.

Nov 29:

- **Lecture:** WMD terrorism
- **Readings:**
 - Ackerman, G. A., & Pinson, L. E. (2014). An army of one: Assessing CBRN pursuit and use by lone wolves and autonomous cells. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 26(1), 226-245.
 - ISIS Behavioral Profile (START)
 - Bill Gates: Bioterrorism could kill more than nuclear war — but no one is ready to deal with it https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/worldviews/wp/2017/02/18/bill-gates-bioterrorism-could-kill-more-than-nuclear-war-but-no-one-is-ready-to-deal-with-it/?utm_term=.fa058266901b

Dec 6:

- **Lecture:** Media influences
- **Readings:**
 - Hoffman, Chapters 6 & 7
 - Benson, D. C. (2014). Why the internet is not increasing terrorism. *Security Studies*, 23(2), 293-328.
 - Klausen, J. (2015). Tweeting the Jihad: Social media networks of Western foreign fighters in Syria and Iraq. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 38(1), 1-22.