

BSST 633
Research Methods in Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism
Spring 2017
University of Maryland

Lecture: Wednesdays 6:00-8:30pm

Professor: Dr. Michael Jensen
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Course Description and Objectives

This course covers research design, qualitative, and quantitative methods using a hands-on approach. The course considers general themes such as the logic of inquiry, the appropriateness of quantitative, qualitative, and mixed methodological approaches, as well as more specific topics such as process tracing, sampling, and measurement. It also provides students with the opportunity to learn and apply different tools for social science research, including qualitative methods such as case study design and quantitative methods such as descriptive statistics and multivariate inference.

The primary goals of the course are to: 1) formulate a proper research question in terrorism/counter-terrorism studies 2) present the qualitative and/or quantitative research designs to tackle the formulated question 3) introduce problems/issues one faces in terrorism research such as bias, causal complexity, and collinearity 4) familiarize the student with major terrorism databases and 5) cultivate a set of qualitative and quantitative skills to analyze terrorism data. By the end of the semester, students will have a better understanding of the research methods needed to answer important questions related to terrorism and counterterrorism.

This course is unique in that it is co-taught by two instructors. Dr. Jensen has expertise in qualitative research methods while Dr. Hodwitz has a background in quantitative analysis. This will give students the opportunity to learn from two instructors who each specialize in different methodologies, but share a common focus on the study of terrorism. This will provide students with the opportunity to see how different methods can be used to analyze separate aspects of the same research problem. The class is split into three modules, each with a different instructor assignment: the fundamentals of doing research (both instructors), quantitative analysis (Dr. Hodwitz), and qualitative analysis (Dr. Jensen).

Course Assessment

Final grades will be assigned according to the student's performance on the following items:

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| 1) Class participation based on readings/discussion questions | 20% |
| 2) Assignment 1 | 40% |
| 3) Assignment 2 | 40% |

1) *Regular class attendance and active class participation* (20% of the course grade): The expectation is that students will be prepared to constructively participate in class discussions. This requires completing the assigned readings before each class, attending class regularly, and being on time for class. The teaching assistant, Joe Oudin, will post discussion questions before each class and students should be prepared to discuss these questions during each lecture. If you are unable to attend a class due to health, work, or family considerations, you may post responses to the discussion questions on the course website *before* class begins to receive participation credit for the week. Please ensure that you have working headphones and a microphone (webcams are not required).

2) *Assignments* (80% of your course grade, 40% each): Each student will complete two assignments during the course. Students should post their assignments on ELMS. If you have questions about how to do this, please email Joe Oudin.

- **Assignment 1: (due April 5th).**

Assignment 1 is a quantitative essay. Students are expected to carry out a complete study including: identify a research question, write a literature review, form hypotheses, select variables, locate a data source, analyze the data (including descriptive, bivariate, and multivariate analyses), provide visual aids, present results, and form a conclusion. The essay should be between 15-20 pages, excluding supplementary materials (visual aids, appendices, etc). Students are strongly encouraged to complete each of these steps as the relevant topics are covered in the lectures.

- **Assignment 2: (due May 17th).**

Assignment 2 is a qualitative essay. Students are expected to draw on comparative case evidence to make policy recommendations about an emerging issue in counterterrorism. Students will identify a theory or theories that provide expectations that relate to the emerging issue that they have selected. Students will then use an appropriate case-based method (e.g., process-tracing, comparative method, etc.) to assess the logical consistency and explanatory power of the theory/theories that they identified, and they will draw logical conclusions about, and policy prescriptions for, the issue that they have selected. Students will need to explain why the method that they have chosen is appropriate given the issue that they are analyzing, and they will be expected to clearly articulate their case selection criteria and use appropriate case evidence to illustrate their points. This essay should be between 15-20 pages, double-spaced.

Expectations

This is a graduate course. Students are advised not to fall behind in the reading.

Powerpoint will be provided during lectures to guide note-taking and a recording of the lecture will be posted on Elms after the session has concluded. Students are expected to attend class regularly, arrive early and prepared, and conduct themselves with respect and courtesy toward others in the classroom.

Grading Scale

Grades will be assigned following the University of Maryland standard grading scheme:

Percentage	Letter Grade	Qualitative Description
97-100	A+	Achievement that is <u>outstanding</u> relative to the level necessary to meet course requirements.
93-96	A	
90-92	A-	
87-89	B+	Achievement that is <u>significantly above</u> the level necessary to meet course requirements.
83-86	B	
80-82	B-	
77-79	C+	Achievement that is <u>in keeping</u> with the course requirements in every respect.
73-76	C	
70-72	C-	
67-69	D+	Achievement that is worthy of credit even though it fails to meet fully the course requirements.
60-66	D	
0-59	F	Work that was either completed but not worthy of credit, or incomplete

Extensions and Incompletes

In the event that a serious problem emerges that you feel necessitates an extension or an incomplete, you must speak with us *before* the due date regarding this request. Extensions and incompletes are usually granted in the case of sickness, required official school events, familial bereavement, and religious holidays. Extensions and incompletes will not be granted if the request is made after the relevant deadline.

Plagiarism Policy

Academic dishonesty of any form will absolutely not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty encompasses the traditional behavior such as cheating on exams and assignments, giving false statements, etc., but also includes activities such as possessing and/or reviewing previous semester's assignments. The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally Recognized Code of Academic Integrity, administered by the Student Honor Council. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the Code of Academic Integrity or the Student Honor Council, please visit <http://www.studenthonorcouncil.umd.edu/whatis.html>.

Required & Suggested Readings

The reading materials are available on the ELMS course website. Additional readings may be posted throughout the semester.

Books (you will be reading specific chapters from these books but you are advised to read the whole book at some future time):

1) Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005).

2) Jarol B. Manheim, Richard C. Rich Lars Willnat, and Craig Leonard Brians, *Empirical Political Analysis: Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods*, 7th ed. (New York, NY: Pearson Education, 2008).

3) Royce A. Singleton and Bruce C. Straits, *Approaches to Social Research*, 4th ed (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005).

For those interested in pursuing these topics further, there are multiple major scholarly journals with a specific focus on terrorism and counterterrorism research and methods: *Terrorism and Political Violence*, *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, *Political Analysis*, *Criminology*, *Democracy and Security*, *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, *International Organization*, *International Security*, *Conflict Management and Peace Science*, *International Studies Quarterly*, *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, *Journal of Peace Research*, *Security Studies*, *Civil Wars*, *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, *Survival*, *Critical Terrorism Studies* and *Journal of Strategic Studies*.

MODULE 1: The Fundamentals of Doing Research

Jan 25 **Introduction to the Study of Research Methods (Hodwitz)** **Doing Research: Purpose, Process, Products, and Ethics**

- Royce A. Singleton and Bruce C. Straits, *Approaches to Social Research*, 4th ed (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), Chapters 1&2.

Feb 1 **Introduction to Terrorism Research (Jensen)**

- Martha Crenshaw, "The Causes of Terrorism," *Comparative Politics* (July 1981).
- Randy Borum, "Radicalization into Violent Extremism I: A Review of Social Science Theories." *Journal of Strategic Security*, vol. 4, no. 4 (2011), pp. 7-36.
- Audrey Kurth Cronin, "How al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups," *International Security*, Vol. 31, No. 1 (Summer 2006), pp. 7-48.
- Erica Chenoweth, "Terrorism and Democracy," *Annual review of Political Science*, vol. 16 (2013), pp. 335-378.

Feb 8

Research Questions and Literature Reviews (Hodwitz)

- Mats Alvesson and Jorgen Sandberg, *Constructing Research Questions: Doing Interesting Research* (London: Sage Publications, 2013), Chapters 2 & 5.
- Jeffrey W. Knopf, "Doing a Literature Review," *Political Science and Politics*, vol. 39, no. 1 (2006), pp. 127-132.
- John W. Creswell, *Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Method Approaches*, 3rd ed. (Thousand Oaks, CA; Sage Publications, 2009), Chapter 2.
- Amy Adamczyk and Gary LaFree, "Religiosity and Reactions to Terrorism," *Social Science Research*, vol.51 (2015), pp. 17-29 (**read pages 17-20 only**).
- James A. Piazza, "Roots in Poverty?: Terrorism, Poor Economic Development, and Social Cleavages," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 18 (2006), pp. 159-177 (**read pages 159-64 only**).

Feb 15

The Building Blocks of Research (Jensen)

Conceptualization, Operationalization, Theory

- Gary Goertz, *Social Science Concepts* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2006), Chapter 2.
- Giovanni Sartori, "Concept Misformation in Comparative Politics," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 64, no. 4 (1970), pp. 1033-1053.
- Kenneth Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, 1979), Chapter 1.
- Leonard Weinberg, Ami Pedahzur, and Sivan Hirsch-Hoeffler, "The Challenges of Conceptualizing Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 16, no. 4 (2004), pp. 777-794.

MODULE 2: Quantitative Analysis of Terrorism Data (Hodwitz)

Feb 22

Working with Terrorism Data¹

- Download and explore the following databases in Excel:
 - START's Global Terrorism Database (GTD)
 - CPOST's Suicide Attack Database (SAD)
 - RAND's Database of Worldwide Terrorism Incidents (WTI)
- Royce A. Singleton and Bruce C. Straits, *Approaches to Social Research*, 4th ed (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), Chapters 4 (**all**), 5 (**all**), & 14 (**read pages 443-467 only**).
- Ivan Sascha Sheehan, *Evidence-Based Counterterrorism Policy* (New York, NY: Springer, 2012), Chapter 2.
- The 2014 Washington Post/Monkey Cage debate (GTD vs SAD):
 - "Government data exaggerate the increase in terrorist attacks"
 - "The challenges of collecting terrorism data"
 - "How to fix the flaws in the Global Terrorism Database and why it

¹ Download Analysis Toolpak in Excel. Note that recent versions of MS Office for Mac do not have this Toolpak. Mac users should download StatPlus:mac LE for free at: <https://www.analystsoft.com/en/products/statplusmacle/>

matters”

Mar 1

Descriptive Statistics

- Jarol B. Manheim, Richard C. Rich Lars Willnat, and Craig Leonard Brians, *Empirical Political Analysis: Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods, 7th ed.* (New York, NY: Pearson Education, 2008), Chapters 15-16.
- Gary LaFree and Laura Dugan, “Introducing the Global Terrorism Database,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 19 (2007), pp.181-204.
- Madelyn Hsiao-Rei Hicks, Hamit Dardagan, Peter M. Bagnall, Michael Spagat, and John A. Sloboda, “Casualties in Civilians and Coalition Soldiers from Suicide Bombings in Iraq, 2003-10: A Descriptive Study,” *Lancet*, vol. 378 (2011), pp.906-14.

Mar 8

Bivariate Analysis

- Jarol B. Manheim, Richard C. Rich Lars Willnat, and Craig Leonard Brians, *Empirical Political Analysis: Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods, 7th ed.* (New York, NY: Pearson Education, 2008), Chapter 17.
- Royce A. Singleton and Bruce C. Straits, *Approaches to Social Research, 4th ed* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2005), Chapter 14 (**read pages 467-482 only**).²
- Matthew B. Capell and Emile Sahliyah, “Suicide Terrorism: Is Religion the Critical Factor?,” *Security Journal*, vol. 20 (2007), pp.267-283.
- Amy Adamczyk and Gary LaFree, “Religiosity and Reactions to Terrorism,” *Social Science Research*, vol.51 (2015), pp. 17-29.

Mar 15

Multivariate Analysis

- Jarol B. Manheim, Richard C. Rich Lars Willnat, and Craig Leonard Brians, *Empirical Political Analysis: Quantitative and Qualitative Research Methods, 7th ed.* (New York, NY: Pearson Education, 2008), Chapter 18.
- James A. Piazza, “Roots in Poverty?: Terrorism, Poor Economic Development, and Social Cleavages,” *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 18 (2006), pp. 159-177.
- Mindy S. Bradley-Engen, Kelly R. Damphousse, and Brent L. Smith, “Punishing Terrorists: A Re-examination of U.S. Federal Sentencing in the Postguidelines Era,” *International Criminal Justice Review*, vol. 19, no.4 (2009), pp. 433-55.

Mar 22

SPRING BREAK – NO CLASS

² This portion of Chapter 14 overlaps considerably with the previous reading (Manheim et al Chapter 17) but presents the information in a different way. If you have a good grasp of the material after reading Manheim, you can skip this chapter. However, if you’re struggling with the Manheim content, read this chapter since it may facilitate understanding, given that it approaches the same material differently.

Mar 29

Critiquing Quantitative Methods and Quantitative Catch-Up³

- Andrew Silke, "The Devil You Know: Continuing Problems with Research on Terrorism," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 13, no. 4 (2001), pp.1-14.
- Andrew Silke, *Critical Terrorism Studies: A New Research Agenda*, edited by Richard Jackson, Marie Breen Smyth, Jeroen Gunning (New York, NY: Routledge, 2009), Chapter 2.
- Joseph K. Young and Michael G. Findley, "Promise and Pitfalls of Terrorism Research," *International Studies Review*, vol. 13 (2011), 1-21.

MODULE 3: Qualitative Analysis of Terrorism Data (Jensen)
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Apr 5

Logic of Inference in Qualitative Methods

Assignment 1 due

- Gary Goertz and James Mahoney, *A Tale of Two Cultures: Qualitative and Quantitative Research in the Social Sciences* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2012), Chapters 1-3.
- Bryan C. Price, "Targeting Top Terrorists: How Leadership Decapitation Contributes to Counterterrorism," *International Security*, Vol. 36, No. 4 (2012), pp. 9-46.
- Michael Freeman, "A Theory of Terrorist Leadership (and its Consequences for Leadership Targeting)," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 26, no. 4 (2014).

Apr 12

Process Tracing

- Andrew Bennett and Jeffrey T. Checkel, eds., *Process Tracing: From Metaphor to Analytic Tool* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015), Chapters 1&7.
- Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), Chapter 10.
- Ian Lustick, "History, Historiography, and Political Science: Multiple Historical Records and the Problem of Selection Bias," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 90, no. 3 (1996), pp. 605-618.

Apr 19

Comparative Method

- Alexander George and Andrew Bennett, *Case Studies and Theory Development in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2005), Chapters 4-6.
- Jack S. Levy (2015) Counterfactuals, Causal Inference, and Historical

³ This is a "catch-up" lecture. We may use this lecture to discuss outstanding material from the previous lectures, to review progress on the first assignment, or to cover new material. As such, this is a tentative reading list. Students will be given more detail about the content of this lecture in the weeks leading up to it.

Analysis, *Security Studies*, 24:3, 378-402,

- Brian Jackson et al. *Aptitude for Destruction: Organizational Learning in Terrorist Groups and Its Implications for Combating Terrorism*, Vol. 2 (Santa Monica, CA: RAND, 2005), Chapters 3 & 5.

Apr 26

Causal Complexity in the Study of Terrorism.

- Peter Hall, "Aligning Ontology and Methodology in Comparative Politics," in *Comparative Historical Analysis in the Social Sciences*, ed. James Mahoney and D. Rueschemeyer (New York: Cambridge University Press), 373-404.
- Charles Ragin, *Redesigning Social Inquiry: Fuzzy Sets and Beyond* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008), Chapters 1-3, 6-7.
- Michael Jensen, Anita Atwell Seate, and Patrick James, "Causal Complexity and Radicalization to Violence: An fs/QCA Approach," Unpublished Manuscript (2016).

May 3

Mixed Methods and Future Research

- Evan Lieberman, "Nested Analysis as a Mixed-Method Strategy for Comparative Research," *American Political Science Review*, vol. 99, no. 3 (2005), pp. 435-452.
- Kai Thaler, "Mixed Methods Research and the Study of Political and Social Violence and Conflict," *Journal of Mixed Methods Research*, forthcoming (2016).
- Marc Sageman, "The Stagnation in Terrorism Research," *Terrorism and Political Violence*, vol. 26, no. 4 (2014), 565-580.

May 10

No Class.

May 17

Assignment 2 Due by 6pm