

GOVT 327: The Politics of Terrorism
Wesleyan University, Fall 2008

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please include GOVT 327 in Subject

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Office Hours: T2:30-4:00, W10:30-11:30

Course Description and Objectives

Terrorism dominates the headlines, but few attempt to think critically about the origins and evolution of terrorist groups over the course of history. The history of terrorism, however, is rife with puzzles. What is terrorism? Why do groups take up arms against fellow civilians to effect political change? What explains the tactical choices of terrorist groups? Why do terrorist groups end? What are the most effective ways to combat terrorism? Is the “new” terrorism really new, or does it reflect continuity with terrorism in previous eras?

The course takes a historical perspective, attempting to nest contemporary challenges within the broader context of terrorism as a phenomenon. To this end, the course will acquaint students with the historical evolution of domestic and international terrorism while introducing them to the major theoretical approaches to the study of terrorism. The five primary goals of the course are to: (1) present leading theories and concepts for understanding terrorist behavior; (2) explore international history to evaluate theories of terrorism; (3) apply these theories to analyze current terrorist trends and make predictions about future developments; (4) provide students an opportunity to conduct research and write an original paper; and (5) allow students to deepen their knowledge about several major terrorist groups around the globe.

Required Texts and Readings

The readings for this course offer conflicting interpretations of theory and history. Students should read these texts with the goals of identifying, comparing, and evaluating contending arguments.

The following texts are available at the campus bookstore and online. A copy of each is also available at the Olin Library at the reserve desk.

Russell Howard, Reid Sawyer, and Natasha Bajema, eds. *Terrorism and Counterterrorism: Understanding the New Security Environment*, 3rd edition (McGraw-Hill, 2008).

Daniel Byman, *Deadly Connections: States that Sponsor Terrorism* (Cambridge University Press, 2005).

Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (Vintage, 2006).

Additional required readings are available on Blackboard, which students should check regularly for announcements and details on assignments for the course.

Expectations

This course assumes no prior familiarity with terrorism, but students are strongly encouraged to follow current events through a major newspaper with reputable coverage of foreign affairs; I

recommend in particular the *New York Times*. Wordpress.org is a source of headlines from daily newspapers around the world, and the magazine *The Economist* also has strong weekly coverage of global issues.

This is an upper-division course, and I have high expectations of the students at Wesleyan. Students are advised not to fall behind in the reading, as the reading load is quite heavy. I expect students to attend class regularly, arrive early and prepared, and conduct themselves with respect and courtesy toward others in the classroom. Students can expect the same from me.

Graded Work

Course grades will be based on the following elements

	<u>Value</u>	<u>Date</u>
Terrorist Group Profiles	5%	due Sept. 23 in class
Midterm Exam	30%	in class Oct. 7
Research paper prospectus	5%	due Nov. 11 in class
Research paper	40%	due by 5pm on Dec. 11
Class participation	20%	

Terrorist Group Profiles (5%)

Students will construct profiles of major terrorist groups in all regions of the world. These profiles will include information on the group's formation, objectives, location, membership, ideology, attack patterns, and opponent responses. The profiles must also include bibliographies of at least seven major sources of information about each group (only two of which may be official websites; unofficial websites are unacceptable). Profiles must be posted on the course wiki (labeled "Group Profiles" on the course Blackboard menu) no later than September 23rd at the beginning of class. I will assign terrorist groups to pairs of students on the first day of class. The wiki will serve as a launching point for students as they prepare their research projects.

Midterm Exam (30%)

The midterm exam will be administered in class on October 7th. Students can expect a combination of short answer and essay questions; more specific information will be announced prior to the exam. This exam accounts for 30% of the total course grade and covers material through October 2nd.

There are no make-up exams. Serious and verifiable personal emergencies will be accommodated at my discretion. Unexcused absences from an exam, however, will result in a "0" for that exam.

Research Paper Prospectus (5%)

Students will submit a 5-page research paper prospectus on **November 11th** at the beginning of class. The prospectus should include a research question, research design, and project bibliography. The prospectus is an opportunity for students to get feedback on their research papers before conducting the research and writing. Students should view the prospectus, therefore, as an opportunity to improve their final papers. I will evaluate the prospectus based on a pass or fail criteria; however, prospectuses that arrive late will receive a 0.

Research Paper (40%)

The final paper, worth 40% of the total course grade, will be a 25-page original research paper on one of two topics: (1) compare two groups (one violent, one nonviolent) and explain why one group adopted violence while the other did not; or (2) choose two terrorist groups and explain why one has targeted the United States while the other has not. The paper is due at the end of the assigned final exam period, which is **December 11th by 5:00pm**. Students should submit their papers to the locked box outside of the Government Department (PAC 116). Please ensure the paper is submitted to the course box identified for GOVT 327. Papers will be evaluated on the basis of demonstration of critical analysis, defense of argument, organization, coherence, and writing style. No extensions will be granted; students are strongly recommended to submit their papers before the deadline.

Course Participation (20%)

Students should think of the course participation grade as an in-class oral examination extended throughout the semester. To achieve the maximum score on participation, students should attend class regularly, prepare for discussion by completing the readings in advance, contribute to the discussion in class, and be responsive to other students. Quantity of participation is not as important as quality. Questions, insights, and synthesis are all considered quality.

The following table designates the values I assign to letter grades, per the standard grading scale at Wesleyan.

Letter Grade	Numeric Grade	GPA Value
A+	98.3	4.0
A	95	4.0
A-	91.7	3.7
B+	88.3	3.3
B	85	3.0
B-	81.7	2.7
C+	78.3	2.3
C	75	2.0
C-	71.7	1.7
D+	68.3	1.3
D	65	1.0
D-	61.7	.7
F	58.3	0

Office Hours

Students can sign up for time slots on my office door. I strongly suggest that students avail themselves of the opportunity to clarify and discuss course material with me during my office hours. Office hours are not, however, opportunities to obtain information missed during absences from class. Such material should be obtained from classmates.

Grade Dispute Procedure

In the event that a student wishes to dispute a grade received on an exam, the student must adhere to the following procedure before I will review the exam. First, the student must wait 48 hours

before sending me an email concerning the grievance. Second, the student must send me an email to make an appointment to discuss the grievance. Third, during the appointment, the student must provide the original graded exam and a brief, typed summary of the reasons why the grade seems unfair. I will then reevaluate the exam. The student must accept the revised grade on the exam, even if it is lower than originally graded.

Additional Information

Plagiarism is a grave offense, and Wesleyan University takes academic honesty very seriously. For more details on Wesleyan's policy on plagiarism (and how to avoid it), see http://www.wesleyan.edu/acaf/policy/sc_plagiarism_complete.html.

Students with disabilities should notify me immediately so that I can make the appropriate accommodations. Please see the University's policies on students with disabilities, available at the following website: <http://www.wesleyan.edu/deans/disabilities.html>.

Wesleyan University provides numerous services to students to help improve writing, quantitative skills, and professional development. The Writing Workshop can be an invaluable resource for students with room to improve on writing. Please see the Writing Workshop's website at <http://www.wesleyan.edu/writing/workshop> for more information.

LECTURE AND ASSIGNMENT SCHEDULE

Week	Date	Lecture
1	T 9/2	Introductory Lecture
	Th 9/4	What is Terrorism?
2	T 9/9	Analyzing Terrorism I: Theories and Evidence
	Th 9/11	Analyzing Terrorism II: Theories and Evidence
3	T 9/16	The Origins of Modern Terrorism: From Anarchism to State Terror
	Th 9/18	Algeria and the End of Colonialism
4	T 9/23	Film: <i>The Battle of Algiers</i> ; GROUP PROFILES DUE
	Th 9/25	Ethno-nationalist Terrorism: the PLO, the IRA, and ETA
5	T 9/30	The Struggle on the Left: Revolutionary Terrorism in Democracies
	Th 10/2	Film: <i>The Weather Underground</i>
6	T 10/7	MIDTERM EXAM
	Th 10/9	Reactionary Terrorism in Democracies
7	T 10/14	The Return of Religious Terrorism: Hezbollah, Hamas, and Others
	Th 10/16	The Origins of Al-Qaeda
8	T 10/21	September 11 th
	Th 10/23	Al Qaeda Today
9	T 10/28	FALL RECESS (No class)
	Th 10/30	Terrorists for Hire? State Sponsorship and its Dilemmas
10	T 11/4	The Effects of Globalization on Terrorism; U.S. ELECTIONS
	Th 11/6	Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction; Film: <i>Dirty War</i>
11	T 11/11	Suicide Terrorism; PAPER PROSPECTUS DUE
	Th 11/13	Terrorism, Media, and Democracy
12	T 11/18	How Terrorism Ends
	Th 11/20	Counterterrorism Instruments: Hard Power
13	T 11/25	Counterterrorism Instruments: Soft Power
	Th 11/27	THANKSGIVING BREAK (No class)
14	T 12/2	Do We Worry Too Much About Terrorism?
	Th 12/4	The Implications of Terrorism for U.S. Security
	12/11	FINAL PAPER DUE BY 5:00PM

LECTURES AND READINGS

Readings from the Howard, Sawyer, and Bajema book are designated “HSB;” Blackboard readings are designated with an asterisk.

Week 1

Sept. 2: Introductory lecture

No reading.

Sept. 4: What is Terrorism?

Bruce Hoffman, “Defining Terrorism,” HSB 1.1

Eqbal Ahmad, “Terrorism: Theirs and Ours,” HSB 1.2

*Paul Wilkinson, “Can a State be a Terrorist?”

Week 2

Sept. 9: Analyzing Terrorism I: Theories and Evidence

Martha Crenshaw, “Terrorism as a Strategic Choice,” HSB 1.3

*Martha Crenshaw, “Causes of Terrorism: Instrumental and Organizational Approaches”

*Barbara Walter and Andrew Kydd, “Strategies of Terrorism”

Sept. 11: Analyzing Terrorism II: Theories and Evidence

*Albert Bandura, “On Mechanisms of Moral Disengagement”

*Max Abrahms, “What Terrorists Really Want”

Week 3

Sept. 16: The Origins of Modern Terrorism: From Anarchism to State Terror

*Bruce Hoffman, “The End of Empire and the Origins of Contemporary Terrorism”

*David Rapoport, “September 11 and the Four Waves of International Terrorism”

Sept. 18: Algeria and the End of Colonialism

*Martha Crenshaw, “The Effectiveness of Terrorism in the Algerian War”

*Franz Fanon, “The Wretched of the Earth”

Week 4

Sept. 23: Film: *The Battle of Algiers*; GROUP PROFILES DUE

No reading.

Sept. 25: Ethno-nationalist Terrorism: the PLO, the IRA, and ETA

*Dan Byman, "The Logic of Ethnic Terrorism"

*Ignacio Cuenca, "The Dynamics of Nationalist Terrorism: ETA and the IRA"

*Ian Lustick, "Terrorism in the Arab-Israeli Conflict"

Week 5

Sept. 30: The Struggle on the Left: Revolutionary Terrorism in Democracies

*Stephen Vertigans, "'Red' Urban Terrorism"

*James Ron, "Ideology in Context"

*Paul Joossee, "Leaderless Resistance and Ideological Inclusion"

Oct. 2: Film: *The Weather Underground*

*Ehud Sprinzak, "The Psychopolitical Formation of Extreme Left Terrorism in a Democracy"

Week 6

Oct. 7: MIDTERM EXAM IN CLASS

Oct. 9: Reactionary Terrorism in Democracies

*Stephen Vertigans, "From Left to Right"

*Martin Durham, "The American Far Right and 9/11"

*Ami Pedhazur, "Struggling with the Challenge of Right-Wing Extremism in Democracies"

Week 7

Oct. 14: The Return of Religious Terrorism: Hezbollah, Hamas, and Others

*Bruce Hoffman, "Religious Terrorism"

*Magnus Ranstorp, "Terrorism in the Name of Religion," HSB 4.1

*Jessica Stern, "Humiliation"

Daniel Byman, *Deadly Connections*, Ch. 4

Oct. 16: The Origins of Al Qaeda

Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower*, skim Ch. 1-4; read Ch. 5-13.

Daniel Byman, *Deadly Connections*, Ch. 7.

Week 8

Oct. 21: September 11th

Wright, *The Looming Tower*, Ch. 14-20.

Oct. 23: Al Qaeda Today

*Peter Neumann, "Europe's Jihadist Dilemma"

Bruce Riedel, "Al Qaeda Strikes Back," HSB 10.1

Week 9

Oct. 28: FALL RECESS (No class)

Oct. 30: Terrorists for Hire? State Sponsorship and its Dilemmas

Byman, *Deadly Connections*, pp. 10-15, Chs. 2, 3, and 8.

Week 10

Nov. 4: The Effects of Globalization on Terrorism; DISCUSSION OF U.S. ELECTIONS TO FOLLOW

*Michael Mousseau, "Market Civilization and its Clash with Terror"

*Charles Knight and Melissa Murphy, "Correspondence with Michael Mousseau"

*Audrey Kurth Cronin, "Behind the Curve"

Nov. 6: Terrorism and Weapons of Mass Destruction; Film: *Dirty War*

*Matthew Bunn and Anthony Wier, "Seven Myths of Nuclear Terrorism"

*Graham Allison, "Nuclear Terrorism"

*Peter Zimmerman and Anna Pluta, "Nuclear Terrorism: A Disheartening Dissent"

Week 11

Nov. 11: Suicide Terrorism; PAPER PROSPECTUS DUE

*Robert A. Pape, "The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism"

*Mia M. Bloom, "Outbidding, Market Share, and Palestinian Suicide Bombing"

*Max Abrahms, "Why Terrorism Does Not Work"

Nov. 13: Terrorism, Media, and Democracy

*Quan Li, "Does Democracy Promote or Reduce Transnational Terrorist Incidents?", pp. 278-284

*Jeanne Kirkpatrick, "Lost in the Terrorist Theater"

*Jennifer Windsor, "Promoting Democratization Can Combat Terrorism"

*Gregory Gause, "Can Democracy Stop Terrorism?"

Week 12

Nov. 18: How Terrorism Ends

*USIP Special Report, "How Terrorism Ends"

Audrey Kurth Cronin, "How Al Qaida Ends," HSB 10.2

Nov. 20: Counterterrorism Instruments: Hard Power

Russ Howard, "Preemptive Military Doctrine: No Other Choice," HSB 8.3

Rob de Wijk, "The Limits of Military Power," HSB 7.3

Richard H. Schultz, "Showstoppers," HSB 7.4

Week 13

Nov. 25: Counterterrorism Instruments: Soft Power

*Peter Neumann, "Negotiating With Terrorists"

Steve Simon and Jeff Martini, "Terrorism: Denying Al Qaeda its Popular Support," HS 8.5

Nov. 27: THANKSGIVING BREAK (No class)

Week 14

Dec. 2: Do We Worry Too Much About Terrorism?

*John Mueller, "Simplicity and Spook"

*Todd Sander and Walter Enders, "Is Transnational Terrorism Becoming More Threatening?", pp. 307-312; 329-330.

Dec. 4: The Implications of Terrorism for U.S. Security

*The National Security Strategy of the United States of America, 2006

Daniel Byman, "US Counter-terrorism Options: A Taxonomy," HSB 8.2

Classmate Contact Information

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