

TERRORIST MOTIVATIONS AND BEHAVIORS
BEHAVIORAL AND SOCIAL SCIENCES 330
UNIVERSITY OF MARYLAND

PROFESSOR

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COURSE LOGISTICS

September 8 – December 15, 2008
Day: Mondays 1:00 pm – 3:45pm
Location: Hornbake 0105
Office Hours: Mondays 4:00 pm – 6:00pm, or by appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will provide an introduction to the study of the phenomenon of terrorism, focusing on explaining the formation of terrorist groups and the motivations behind terrorist behavior. To do so, it will draw upon theories from social psychology, sociology, political science, criminology, and history. The course will draw heavily from historical examples as well as current examples of international and domestic terrorist groups around the world.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the completion of the course, students should be able to:

- Understand the complexity inherent in terrorist motivations and behaviors, and avoid simplistic characterizations of the phenomenon.
- Appreciate both the relevance of historical antecedents and the impact of dynamic and novel developments in comprehending terrorist motivations and behaviors.
- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of salient features of the different types of terrorist ideologies and their relation to violence.
- Describe the motivations and behaviors of a variety of terrorist groups.
- Demonstrate a familiarity with the basic theories of the structural, social, and psychological causes of terrorism and the factors influencing of terrorist decisionmaking.

COURSE MATERIALS

Walter Reich, *Origins of Terrorism: Psychologies, Ideologies, Theologies, States of Mind*, Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson Center Press, 1998, *hereafter referred to as Reich*.

Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism: Revised and expanded edition*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2006, *hereafter referred to as Hoffman*.

Rex A. Hudson, *The Sociology and Psychology of Terrorism: Who Becomes a Terrorist and Why?* Library of Congress, 1999, available online at http://www.loc.gov/rr/frd/pdf-files/Soc_Psych_of_Terrorism.pdf (also available for purchase in print form) *hereafter referred to as Hudson*.

Both Reich and Hoffman will be available at the University Book Center. Additional readings will be available online and through the library's electronic databases.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENTS

Final grades are determined by the following:

- Terrorist Profile (team activity) – 40% of your grade
- Mid-term Exam – 20% of your grade
- Final Assignment – 20% of your grade
- In-class Participation – 20% of your grade
- *Extra credit* can be earned (up to 5% of your grade) for contributions to the course blog

Grading:

- 1) For all assignments and the final grade, grading will be done on the basis of percentages, which will then be converted into symbols according to the following schema: >95%=A+; 90%-95%=A; 85%-89%=A-; 80%-84%=B+; 75%-79%=B; 70%-74%=B-; 65%-69%=C+; 60%-64%=C; 55%-59%=C-; 50%-54%=D; <50%=F.
- 2) Grading criteria:
 - a. Evidence of understanding of course content.
 - b. Breadth, depth and quality of data collected / research conducted (where relevant).
 - c. Lateral, creative thinking and analysis – surprise me!
 - d. Quality presentation and documentation of work i.e. PROFESSIONALISM.
 - e. To obtain a grade of A or greater will require exceptional effort and superlative performance in all the abovementioned areas.
 - f. Detailed grading criteria for each assignment will be provided with the assignment instructions.

Terrorist Profiles: By the fourth week of class, students will be divided into five separate teams. Each team will be responsible for creating a profile of a fictionalized terrorist group, consisting of the following four elements: a) a *manifesto* outlining the group's motivations and goals; b) a *newspaper report* on the group's origins and structure; c) *minutes* of an internal group discussion of strategic options; and d) an *attack plan*. Teams will submit these materials in wiki format and present elements of their profile to the class during the first week in December. Team members will each receive the same grade based on their profile and presentations.

Mid-term Exam: The mid-term exam will be held during class on October 27. It will consist of multiple choice, short answer and long-answer questions based on readings and materials discussed in class.

Final Assignment: The final assignment will consist of a comparative threat assessment of two currently active terrorist organizations or individuals, incorporating the theoretical approaches covered during the course. The final assignment should be no longer than 10 double-spaced pages in length and must be submitted to me, via e-mail or ELMS, no later than 5:00 pm on December 16. Each threat assessment should draw on at least 10 sources from academic journals, books, databases and primary source documents from terrorist groups themselves.

Grades will be based on consistency of the analytical argument, clarity of writing, and quality of persuasion.

More details on the exam and assignments will be handed out in class.

Class participation: Students will be expected to have completed all of the required readings and be prepared to discuss them in class. Each class will have time set aside specifically for discussion and grades will be based on a demonstrated ability to discuss these topics and questions meaningfully in class. More than one unexcused absence will affect this portion of the grade. Consistent lateness will also affect your grade. On October 20, I will inform students of their class participation grade thus far, and notify them if they need to improve their participation.

Movies: Two movies will be viewed and discussed during the course, *The Battle of Algiers* and *The 7/7 Bombers: A Psychological Investigation*. These movies must be viewed prior to their discussion in class, and will be available from the media library. I might also schedule a general viewing at a suitable time and location.

Course Blog: I will maintain a blog / discussion group on the course website. Each week, after class, I will pose a question or supply an (often provocative) comment in order to precipitate an informed discussion. Students will have until the next class to respond to my posting or those of their fellow students. Relevant, cogent and insightful responses can earn students extra credit of up to 5% of their final grade. Conversely, irrelevant, unprofessional response or responses made just for the sake of providing a response can negatively affect a student's grade up to a total of 5% of their final grade.

COURSE EXPECTATIONS

Readings: Doing the required readings is essential – material covered in class will often merely reference the readings on the assumption that these have been completed. I have intentionally limited the size of most of the weekly required readings to fewer than 100 pages in order to encourage everyone to complete the readings. If you do not do the readings, you will firstly be shortchanging yourself, as you have an opportunity with this course to cover some fascinating material and, secondly, you may quickly find that you are far behind and unable to participate in group and individual projects.

Class Notes: It is a good idea to take notes during class – some of what I say isn't in the readings or on the slides. However, it is more important that you understand the material – most of the really important material will be in the slides, which will be made available on the course website at the end of each month.

Interactivity: Knowledge is information with MEANING. My approach to the course is interactive – feedback between sender and receiver is vital for true communication to occur. I encourage you all to question me and engage me intellectually. No matter whether you are a non-native English speaker or have a timid personality, feel free to speak up – I will never disparage an enquiring mind.

Assessment: From your assignments (whether they are done in groups or on your own) I am seeking to evaluate what you have learnt. Therefore, I suggest that you put a lot of thought into analyzing each task and work on it consistently over time rather than a mad-dash as the deadline looms. Teamwork, multitasking and tight deadlines part of the course, because these are the conditions under which much terrorism analysis actually occurs. Of course, you are welcome to come to me for guidance at any time.

Office Hours: Office hours are your opportunity to get personalized guidance for assignments as well as help with understanding the course material. Take advantage of it. If the listed office hour

times are not workable for you then please email me and we can set up a time that works in order to meet.

Things I do not like: Disrespecting me or your classmates by being uncooperative, causing unnecessary disruption (such as ringing cellphones), being late for class, or not paying attention during class (including such activities as text messaging or checking one's e-mail). Abusively disruptive behavior of any kind will not be tolerated. Students who are unable to show civility towards one another, the teaching assistant, or instructor will be subject to referral to the Office of Student Conduct or to Campus Police. You are expected to adhere to the Code of Student Conduct. This extends to all class-related communications, including e-mail and other electronic media.

Academic Integrity: 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.shc.umd.edu>. To further exhibit your commitment to academic integrity, remember to sign the Honor Pledge on all examinations and assignments: "I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination / assignment."

Plagiarism: If you are involved in plagiarism the penalty will likely be failure in the course and you will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct. **In this one regard there are no second chances.** If you are not sure if something violates standards – ask. If you are not sure whether to cite or not to cite – cite. If you have not already done so, you are encouraged to visit the Libraries' plagiarism resource page at http://www.lib.umd.edu/UES/plag_stud_what.html.

SPECIAL ACCOMMODATIONS

Religious Observance: By September 15, 2008, students must provide me in writing with a request for a make up mid-term examination or team presentation if I have indicated a date on this syllabus that you are unable to make due to a specific religious observance on a specific date. Please refer to the Undergraduate Catalog Policy on Religious Observance.

Students with Disabilities: I will make every effort to accommodate students who are registered with the Disability Support Services (DSS) Office and who provide me with a University of Maryland DSS Accommodation form which has been updated for the Fall 2008 semester. This form must be presented to me no later than October 1, 2008. I will not be able to accommodate students who are not registered with DSS or who do not provide me with documentation that has been reviewed by DSS after October 1, 2008.

Absence due to Illness: Campus Senate policy requires students who are absent due to illness/injury to furnish documentary support to the instructor. I require students to contact me by email prior to class time to indicate that you have an illness or an injury and will be missing class. You must provide written documentation verifying your illness/injury on the day that you return to class. You will not be allowed to turn in missed assignments or make up quizzes, tests, papers, etc. if you have not provided this documentation. In addition, if it is found that you have falsified the documentation provided, you will be referred to the University's Student Conduct Office.

Non-Native English Speakers: Students whose native language is not English are encouraged to consult Campus ESOL (English as a Second Language) resources, at <http://www.counseling.umd.edu/LAS/ESOL.html> and in particular the resources of The Writing Center, at <http://www.english.umd.edu/programs/WritingCenterWebsite/EEIGSPage.htm>. I am also happy to work with students on improving their written and oral expression for course

projects, but students must consult with me *prior* to submission of assignments or class presentations.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 (September 8): INTRODUCTION; WHAT IS TERRORISM?

Required Reading:

- Hoffman, Chapter 1
- Hudson, pp. 9-11

WEEK 2 (September 15): EARLY HISTORY OF TERRORIST-LIKE BEHAVIORS TO WORLD WAR II

[Last day for Undergraduate Schedule Adjustment]

Required Reading:

- Hoffman, Chapter 2
- Rapoport, David C. (1984). Fear and Trembling: Terror in Three Religious Traditions. *American Political Science Review* 78, no. 3, pp. 658-677, available at <http://www.international.ucla.edu/media/files/fear-trembling.pdf>
- Crenshaw, Martha (2007). *The Debate Over 'New' vs. 'Old' Terrorism*. Prepared for presentation at the annual meeting of the American Political Science Association, Chicago, IL, 30 August - 02 September 2007, available at: http://www.start.umd.edu/publications/New_vs_Old_Terrorism.pdf

Note: The reading load for Week 3 is relatively heavy, so it would be a good idea to begin the Week 3 readings during this week.

WEEK 3 (September 22): CAUSES OF TERRORISM: THEORIES

Required Reading:

- Hudson, pp. 15-33
- Reich, Chapters 1 and 2
- Ross, J. (1993). Structural causes of oppositional political terrorism: towards a causal model. *Journal of Peace Research*, 3, pp. 317-329
- McCauley, Clark and Moskalenko, Sophia (2008). Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways Toward Terrorism. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, 20, 3, pp. 415-433
- Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, Chapter 1.
- Borum, Randy (2004). *Psychology of Terrorism*. University of South Florida, available from: <http://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/nij/grants/208552.PDF>
- Lia, Brynjar, and Katja Skjolberg. (2004). *Causes Of Terrorism: An Expanded And Updated Review Of The Literature*. Kjeller, Norway: Norwegian Defence Research Establishment, available at: <http://rapporter.ffi.no/rapporter/2000/02769.pdf>

Recommended Reading:

- Sprinzak, E. (1991). "The Process of Delegitimization: Towards a Linkage Theory of Political Terrorism," *Terrorism and Violence*, 3, pp. 50-68
- Eidelson, R., & Eidelson, J. (2003). Dangerous ideas: Five beliefs that propel groups toward conflict. *American Psychologist*, 58, pp. 182-192
- Victoroff, J. (2005). The Mind of the Terrorist: A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*

WEEK 4 (September 29): ETHNO-NATIONALIST TERRORISM

Teams for Terrorist Profiles assigned during class.
Must have viewed *Battle of Algiers* prior to class.

Required Reading:

- Slate.Com Primer on the Battle of Algiers, found at: <http://www.slate.com/id/2087628/>
- Hoffman, Chapter 3
- Hudson, pp. 82-96
- Byman, Daniel (1998). The logic of ethnic terrorism. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 21, Issue 2, pp. 149 – 169
- Wilkenfeld, Jonathan, Victor Asal, Carter Johnson, Amy Pate, Mary Michael (2007). The Use of Violence by Ethnopolitical Organizations in the Middle East. *Research Brief*, College Park, MD: National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism, available at: http://www.start.umd.edu/publications/research_briefs/20070202_wilkenfeld.pdf

WEEK 5 (October 6): TERRORISM FROM THE LEFT AND THE RIGHT

Required Reading:

- Reich, Chapters 3, 4 and 5
- Hudson, pp. 72-76; 97-113
- Bale, Jeffrey (2001). Terrorism, Right-Wing, in Bernard Cook, (ed.), *Europe since 1945: An Encyclopedia*. Routledge.

WEEK 6 (October 13): RELIGIOUS TERRORISM

Required Reading:

- Hoffman, Chapter 4
- Hudson, pp.133-151
- Speckhard, A. & Akhmedova, K. (2006). The Making of a Martyr: Chechen Suicide Terrorism. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 29, pp. 1-65
- Kaplan, David. (2000). Aum Shinrikyo, in Jonathan Tucker (ed.) *Toxic Terror: Assessing Terrorist Use of Chemical and Biological Weapons*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, pp. 207-226

WEEK 7 (October 20): ISLAMIST TERRORISM

Required Reading:

- Reich, Chapters 7 and 8
- Hudson, pp. 77-82; pp. 114-132
- al-Zayyat, Montazzer (2002). *The Road to al-Qaeda*, trans. Ahmed Fekry, Pluto Press, pp. 1-47
- Letters from Osama bin Laden to his supporters, *Harmony and Disharmony*, New York, West Point Academy, available at: http://ctc.usma.edu/aq/aq_003345.asp
- Bin Ladin's Declaration of Jihad Against the Americans, *Harmony and Disharmony*, New York, West Point Academy, available at: <http://ctc.usma.edu/aq/pdf/AFGP-2002-003676-Trans-Meta.pdf>
- Post, Jerrold, Sprinzak, Ehud and Denny, Laurita. (2003). The terrorists in their own words: Interviews with 35 incarcerated Middle Eastern terrorists. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, Volume 15, Number 1, pp. 171-184

Recommended Reading:

- Finel, Bernard. (2007). *The Causes of Violent Jihadism*. American Security Project, available online at: <http://www.americansecurityproject.org/files/050107SourcesofJihad.pdf>

WEEK 8 (October 27): MID-TERM EXAM

WEEK 9 (November 3): CAUSES OF TERRORISM: EVIDENCE

Required Reading:

- Reich, Chapters 13 and 14
- Hudson, pp. 43-71
- Krueger, M., & Malečková, J. (2003). Education, Poverty and Terrorism: Is There a Causal Connection? *The Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 17, pp. 119-144
- Post, Jerrold, Ruby, Keven and Shaw, Eric. (2002). The Radical Group in Context: 1&2. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 25, 2, pp. 73-126

WEEK 10 (November 10): TERRORIST ORGANIZATION AND THEORIES OF DECISIONMAKING

Required Reading:

- Reich, Chapter 9
- Hudson, pp. 34-42
- Jackson, Brian. Groups, Networks, or Movements: A Command-and-Control-Driven Approach to Classifying Terrorist Organizations and Its Application to Al Qaeda. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 29, pp. 241-262
- McCormick, Gordon H. (2003). Terrorist Decision Making. *Annual Review of Political Science*, Vol. 6, pp. 473-507
- The Sageman – Hoffman Debate
 - Hoffman, Bruce (2008). The Myth of Grass-Roots Terrorism: Why Osama bin Laden Still Matters. *Foreign Affairs*, May/June 2008
 - Sciolino, E. and Schmitt, E. (2008). A Not Very Private Feud Over Terrorism. *New York Times Week in Review*. June 8, 2008, available at: http://www.nytimes.com/2008/06/08/weekinreview/08sciolino.html?_r=1&ref=weekinreview&pagewanted=print&oref=slogin
 - Sageman, M. and Hoffman, B. (2008). Does Osama Still Call the Shots? Debating the Containment of al Qaeda's Leadership. *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 2008

Recommended Reading:

- Byman, Daniel. (2007). *Understanding Proto-Insurgencies*. RAND Corporation, available from: http://www.rand.org/pubs/occasional_papers/2007/RAND_OP178.pdf

WEEK 11 (November 17): TERRORIST TACTICS

Required Reading:

- Hoffman, Chapters 5 and 8
- Reich, Chapter 10
- IntelCenter (2007). *Jihadi Tactics and Targeting Statistics (JTATS) v1.9* IntelCenter, <http://www.intelcenter.com/JTATS-PUB-v1-9.pdf>.
- Marighella, Carlos (1969). *Minimanual Of The Urban Guerrilla*, available at: <http://www.marxists.org/archive/marighella-carlos/1969/06/minimanual-urban-guerrilla/index.htm>

WEEK 12 (November 24): TERRORISTS, MEDIA AND THE STATE: INTERTWINED STRATEGIES

Required Reading:

- Hoffman, Chapters 6 and 7
- Reich, Chapter 6
- Tsfati, Yariv and Gabriel Weimann, www.terrorism.com: Terror on the Internet. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 25, pp. 317-332
- Wilkinson, P. (1997). The Media and Terror: A Reassessment. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, pp. 51-64.

WEEK 13 (December 1): **PROFILE PRESENTATIONS**

WEEK 14 (December 8): **FUTURE IMPERFECT: HOW MUCH DO WE KNOW ABOUT TERRORIST MOTIVATIONS AND BEHAVIORS?**

Students must have viewed the documentary film *The 7/7/ Bobmbers: A Psychological Investigation*.

Required Reading:

- Hoffman, Chapter 9

FINAL ASSIGNMENTS DUE DECEMBER 16, 2008 BY 5:00 PM.