

## **Terrorism & Counterterrorism**

### **1 INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION**

Erin M. Kearns  
Skype: KearnsEM

### **2 COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The course addresses terrorism as a criminally violent tactic used to achieve political or social goals. We will compare different theories that attempt to explain why, how and when the opposition uses terror tactics to pursue their goals. Different research strategies of studying terrorism will be considered throughout with emphasis placed on developing a project related to increasing scholarly understanding of terrorism. We will examine individuals and groups, their motives and tactics, and how government and law enforcement has responded through investigation, prosecution, and punishment. We conclude by examining the ways that states counter terror, and the choices states face when confronting terrorism both domestically and internationally.

### **3 COURSE GOALS**

Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to:

- Define and analyze terrorism and counterterrorism
- Examine the historical foundations of terrorism domestically and globally
- Critique and interpret early and contemporary counterterrorism missions
- Develop knowledge of terrorist groups, extremist, hate and militia movements
- Identify and investigate single or special interest terrorist networks
- Analyze and evaluate domestic and international policies on counterterrorism
- Analyze current research on terrorism and counterterrorism

### **4 TEACHING METHOD**

The course is structured to examine various theoretical approaches to the study of terrorism and counterterrorism. We will draw from literature across disciplines, including criminal justice, political science, sociology, psychology, and economics. Research has shown that students learn best when they actively participate in class discussion and projects. I believe that the role of an instructor is to facilitate an active learning environment through a combination of brief lectures, productive classroom discourse, teamwork, and creative thinking. As such, the course will engage in a variety of activities in addition to lectures, including writing exercises, group work, class discussions, simulations, debates, et cetera. I value your opinions about the course, and will solicit feedback periodically. To be successful in the course, you are required to read all assignments, come to class prepared, and engage fully in discussions and other course activities.

## 5 COURSE EXPECTATIONS, REQUIREMENTS & GRADING

### 5.1 ASSESSMENT

**Attendance and Participation (20%):** This class works best when students are present and engaged. I expect that you will have read all assigned material and bring a thoughtful question for each piece of reading. You should bring one-page total of notes for all of the readings each week in hard copy this may be used for activities or quizzes, which will contribute to your weekly participation grade. Each day, small groups of students will be responsible for posing discussion questions, which must be emailed to me by the start of class. I expect all other students to ask and respond to at least one question this is key for your grade. Additionally, since we only meet once a week, I expect that you will not miss class. See attendance policy for more details.

**Exams (50%):** There will be one midterm exam and a final exam (each 25% of the final grade), which will be cumulative. The tests are a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay. Some material in the reading will not be discussed in lecture, some material in lecture is not covered in the reading. All is fair game.

#### **Research Paper (30%):**

**Option 1:** The primary goal of this paper is to produce an original argument about either a) a particular terrorist group and how to combat their activity using theoretical justifications or b) a particular counterterrorism policy, how it has been implemented, and the impact of the policy using theories from class. The other aim of this paper is to build your research and writing skills to produce a paper that can be used as a writing sample for graduate school. Requirements for the paper: between 10 and 12 pages, not including the title or reference pages; be in 12 pt Times New Roman font with 1 inch margins.

**Option 2:** The primary goal of this paper is to practice writing policy memos about either a) a particular terrorist group and how to combat their activity using theoretical justifications or b) a particular counterterrorism policy, how it has been implemented, and the impact of the policy using theories from class. The other aim of this paper is to build your writing skills specifically the ability to convey your point succinctly to produce memos that can be used as a writing sample for job applications. Requirements for the paper: you will write 3 memos on the SAME group/counterterrorism policy/question of your choosing, but for different hypothetical audiences. The first memo is for a policy group and has a 1,500-word limit. The second memo is for the head of a law enforcement agency and has a 1,000-word limit. The third memo is for the president and has a 300-word limit.

**Paper Components:** I encourage you to think about which option will serve you better in the future. We will engage in writing workshops to provide feedback and guidance on the paper. Prior to the writing workshops, you are required to watch the presentation on academic integrity and take the associated quiz by Week 3, which is worth 1% of your final paper grade. You will be **required** to bring a portion of your paper to the writing workshops. You must decide between these options by the first writing workshop in Week 4. You will bring your research question and abstract to the first writing workshop in Week 4, which is worth 1% of your final paper grade. You will then bring a working draft to the second writing workshop in Week 9, which is worth 3% of your final paper grade. A complete rough draft is due in Week 11 and will be returned with comments (that should be incorporated into your final paper!). The rough draft is worth 20% of the final

paper grade. **If you fail to turn in any of these components, I will not grade your final paper, which is worth the remaining 75% of the final paper grade and is due in Week 13.** The rough draft and final paper will be graded using a strict rubric, which is available on Blackboard. Please consult this document (different versions for each option). **All assignments are due to Blackboard by the start of class with your last name as the first word of the file.**

### Grading

A = 95-100	A- = 90-94	
B+ = 87-89	B = 83-86	B- = 80-82
C+ = 77-79	C = 73-76	C- = 70-72
D+ = 67-69	D = 63-66	D- = 60-62
F = 59 or below		

If you have questions or concerns about a grade(s) and believe I should review them, you should submit a written request over email to me describing your concern in detail. You must take 24 hours to reflect on the grade before contacting me, but you must submit the request within one week of the date that grades for that assignment are disseminated. The exception is an addition error, which should be pointed out immediately.

Unless otherwise stated in class, there are no extra credit assignments for this class. Assignments will be graded on accuracy, depth of expression, grammar, neatness, punctuation, quality, spelling, and thoroughness. Rubrics are available on BlackBoard for all graded assignments. Please note that Blackboard shows unweighted grades.

As per the Family Educational Rights Privacy Act (FERPA), grades will not be posted, given out over the phone or email, or released to anyone other than the student.

## 5.2 COMMUNICATION

### Email

I will send emails on a regular basis to remind students about upcoming events, due dates, important news, et cetera. These messages will come to your official university email. Students are responsible for the contents of these messages. I will respond to email within 24 hours during the week and within 48 hours on the weekend unless otherwise specified in advance.

### Skype

I will hold office hours once a week online at a mutually agreed upon time. If you cannot make this time, I can also be on Skype by appointment. If multiple students would like to speak with me simultaneously, we can use Google Hangout. If students have questions about class, they will be encouraged to ask them via the class discussion board on Piazza, as other students may have the same question and would benefit from the answers.

### Professionalism

Recently, my colleagues and I have noticed that some (by no means all) students email us using language and format more appropriate for friendly emails, not professional ones. I will only respond to emails that include: a subject, a salutation (Dear, Hello, etc.), a closing (at least your name), and proper grammar (no text speak). Additionally, if your question is about a due date, what the

reading is for next week, or something else that is found in the syllabus or grading rubrics, I will not respond to your email. This is not to be harsh, but I want to make sure that all students are in the habit of corresponding professionally, which is what will be required of you in your future careers or in graduate school.

### 5.3 COURSE POLICIES

#### **Student Copyright Authorization**

For the benefit of future students, work in this course may be used for educational critique, demonstration, samples, presentations, and verification. Outside of these uses, work shall not be sold, copied, broadcast, or distributed for profit without student consent. Items submitted for this course also may be submitted to TurnItIn.com for analysis.

#### **The Miscellaneous Calamity Clause**

As you may know, each class is required to meet for a specified number of hours in a semester. When class is cancelled due to snow/ice/hurricane/plague/zombies, these hours need to be made up. Instead making up hours at the end of the semester when you are very busy, we will simply hold class online for any week in which class is cancelled. If this happens, I record the lecture on Panopto and post the video on Friday for that week. Since we would not know of a cancellation in advance, the timeframe will shift slightly. You will have until Sunday at 11:59 p.m. to post your discussion question and until Tuesday at 11:59 p.m. to respond to the questions posed by your classmates. Everything else will remain the same as it would in a typical online week. Additionally, I am occasionally required to be out of town for professional conferences. I will give you as much advanced notice as possible and we will simply move the class online for that week.

#### **Make-up Exams, Assignments, and Notes**

Copies of the PowerPoints will be available on Blackboard AFTER class. Handouts and returned assignments will be brought to class and distributed only once. Students who miss such items must schedule a time to pick them up. If you are absent, you will need to get the notes from a classmate, so find a reliable source now.

All assignments are due by the beginning of class on the date indicated and will receive a 0 if not provided at that time. I WILL NOT accept late papers or papers submitted in hard copy or email. Papers MUST be submitted to Blackboard. Make hard copies of your papers as you go! No excuses will be accepted.

In an extraordinary circumstance, a make-up test can be scheduled. To qualify for a make-up, the student must notify me by email in advance of the absence and provide documentation. The make-up exam must be scheduled within a week of the original test date. You will receive a 0 for unexcused absence from an exam. Examples of extraordinary circumstances include, but are not limited to: medical problems that require bed care or surgery (including yourself and immediate family members), subpoena for court or jury duty, or in-service training. Oversleeping and other personal events do not qualify. The instructor reserves the right to exercise discretion in this matter so that individual predicaments may be considered.

#### **Classroom Courtesy**

Classroom courtesy is essential for learning. All students have the right to learn without unneeded

distractions such as: cell phones, talking out of turn, reading, falling asleep, entering and leaving the classroom, etc. If you need cell phone for emergency purposes, it must remain on vibrate. All other use of cell phones is prohibited. Laptop and tablet use is restricted. Laptops and tablets may only be used if you have a documented learning need. It is your responsibility to arrive on time and stay for the entire class period. If you need to leave early, tell the instructor beforehand. Repeated disruptions will lead to a reduction in your final grade.

Most importantly, as the topics addressed in this class can lead to strong feelings and heated discussion, please remember that class discussion must be respectful and scholarly at all times.

Scholarly Comments:

- are respectful of diverse opinions and open to follow up questions and/or disagreement
- are related to class and/or the course material
- are focused on advancing the discussion about issues related to the course and/or course material rather than personal beliefs
- are delivered in normal tones and a non-aggressive manner

Unacceptable Comments:

- are personal in nature (this includes attacks on a persons appearance, demeanor, or political beliefs)
- include interrupting the instructor or other students
- often use the discussion to argue for political positions and/or beliefs. If political discussions arise in the context of the research discussed, they must be discussed in a scholarly way
- may include using raised tones, yelling, engaging in arguments with other students and being threatening in any manner
- include ignoring the instructor's authority to maintain the integrity of the classroom

## 6 REQUIRED TEXTS

### REQUIRED BOOK

Hoffman, B. (2013). *Inside Terrorism*. Columbia University Press. ISBN-13: 978-0231126991.

### ADDITIONAL READINGS

Mandatory readings will be posted to Blackboard. Students are required to do all the assigned reading. Due to the topical nature of the course material, additional reading will come from newspapers, magazines, et cetera. You are expected to read a newspaper daily. You can choose any paper you would like, but I would recommend one with good international coverage, such as the New York Times [www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com). If you are particularly interested in this topic and would like to do further reading on it, feel free to ask me for suggestions.

## 7 COURSE SCHEDULE

This syllabus is a guide for the course. It is subject to change with advanced notice. Changes may come in class or may come via e-mail. You are responsible for all such communications.

Week	Topic	Assignments
1	Terrorism: definitions and history	Hoffman, Chapter 1; Reading Packet Week 1
2	Rational Theories of Terrorism	Reading Packet Week 2
3	Psychological Theories of Terrorism <b>Online</b>	Reading Packet Week 3 <b>Writing Workshop 1: Topic &amp; Abstract</b>
4	Sociological Theories of Terrorism	Hoffman, Chapter 4; Reading Packet Week 4 <b>Academic Integrity Quiz Due</b>
5	Terrorism around the World	Hoffman, Chapter 2; Reading Packet Week 5
6	Transnational Terrorism	Hoffman, Chapter 3; Reading Packet Week 6
7		<b>Midterm Exam</b>
8	Suicide Terrorism	Hoffman, Chapter 5; Reading Packet Week 8
9	Domestic Terrorism	Reading Packet Week 9 <b>Writing Workshop 2: Working Draft</b>
10	Introduction to Homeland Security	Reading Packet Week 10
11	Law Enforcement & Counterterrorism	Reading Packet Week 11 <b>Rough Draft Due</b>
12	Homeland Security & the Constitution	Reading Packet Week 12
13	Human Rights and Counterterrorism	Reading Packet Week 13
14	Security, Terrorism, and the Future	Hoffman, Chapter 9; Reading Packet Week 14 <b>Final Paper due</b>
		<b>Final Exam</b>