

COURSE SYLLABUS
PLS 428: Global Terrorism
University of North Carolina Wilmington
Department of Public & International Affairs
Summer Session 2, 2009

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Course Description:

Since 9/11 terrorism has come to dominate the national and global security agenda, and even though the 9/11 attacks and their progeny in Britain, Spain, Bali, and India have subsided to some degree, the discourse over how to respond to terrorism remains the dominant national security topic in the U.S and the world.

This course is designed to facilitate an understanding of this rather malicious form of political behavior. Over the course of this summer session you will learn about terrorism and counterterrorism with an emphasis on three important areas of evaluation. The first section is on terrorist action. Here we will review the definitional dilemmas related to terrorism, learn about the different forms of terrorism in the world and the relative threat related to these different forms, and evaluate the terrorist strategy. In the second section we begin analyzing why terrorism occurs. Causes for terrorism are many. To simplify this picture we will focus on two relevant topics: the individual terrorist, and the operational environment for terrorist activity. Finally we will explore different areas of counterterrorist response. Counterterrorism requires a multipronged response. As such we will evaluate the roles of the media, domestic counterterrorism, international counterterrorism and intelligence.

Throughout the course you will build a case profile on a terrorist group. The details are listed below. This project will give you skills in information gathering from public sources, and teach you how to assess a terrorist threat and evaluate current counterterrorist policies designed to eliminate the terrorist threat from society.

Course Objectives:

By the end of this course you will be able to...

1. Provide a working definition of terrorism and evaluate the nature of terrorist threats globally
2. Analyze the terrorist strategy and its weaknesses, and Evaluate different causes for terrorism
3. Analyze and apply different aspects of a counterterrorist strategy

Required Text(s):

- Masters, D. *Understanding Terrorist Action and Response*. Unpublished Manuscript, (This book will be emailed to you).
- Other readings on reserve in Randall Library

Course Requirements: During the semester you will be evaluated by the way of three criteria. These criteria include: Exams, Analysis paper on Terrorism in Film, and a counterterrorism project

1. *Exams:* During the summer session students will take three in-class essay exams. All exams will be announced in class. All exams will include several potential questions. Students are required to answer 2-3 questions. Topics for the exams follow the course outline listed below and include the following: Understanding Terrorist Action (100 points), Causes of Terrorism (100 points), and Understanding Counterterrorist Responses (100 points).
2. *Analysis Paper:* During this course you will see two movies that relate to aspects on the causes of terrorism. These films are: *Paradise Now* and *The Terrorist*. After we have completed the lectures on causes for terrorism, and watched the films you will provide an analysis and evaluation of the films drawing on the relevant concepts from the course lectures and readings and apply them to the films. The paper is limited to 5 pages in length. This assignment is worth 100 points.
3. *Counterterrorism Project:* (100 points) During the semester you will select one terrorist group and provide a background report on that group and ultimately build up an evaluation of ongoing counterterrorist policies related to that group and offer any suggests as to how best to alter those strategies in order to eliminate the terrorist threat. This project is multi-phased and different parts of it correspond to the three primary sections of the class (see course outline below). There are some special rules regarding this assignment. First you **CANNOT** select al-Qaeda as your group for this assignment. While this group is very popular in the news media right now, you will **not** learn much about terrorism by studying this group. Al-Qaeda is an aberration as far terrorist groups go. You will learn much more about terrorism and al-Qaeda by studying other groups than you will learn about terrorism by studying al-Qaeda. **This rule is absolute.** In addition to this you may not select historical terrorist groups like the Anarchists, Sicarii/Zelots, the Assassins, Narodnaya Volya, or the Thugs. Your group must be a contemporary terrorist group. There are hundreds of available terrorist groups so choosing one will not be a problem. An additional note in this regard. Given the cease fires in the recent years, the IRA (and all related groups like PIRA, CIRA, RIRA) are off the table for selection. The goal of this project is to address a current terrorist threat. The historical groups no longer represent the direct threat they once did. To begin this project you should visit the START (the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Response to Terrorism at the University of Maryland) website at <http://www.start.umd.edu/start/> go to the TOPs (Terrorist Organizations Profile) link at <http://www.start.umd.edu/start/data/tops/> and select a terrorist group. You may select by region/country of the world, or by ideology. Be sure that when you begin to narrow you choices on the group you ultimately select a terrorist group that you can find information on. You do not want to spend a lot of time researching only to discover the group you have selected is so unknown you cannot find any information. Once you have selected your group, you will present it to the class for final approval. You must select a group by Thursday, June 25.

Part 1: Building the Profile: Using your approved terrorist group and relying only on readily available public sources of information, build a profile of the terrorist organization.

Include the following: Full name of the organization; location of operations; type of group [ethno-national, right-wing/religious, left-wing](remember some groups fall into more than one category); strategic theater of operations [domestic or international]; list of grievances given by the group; brief history of the campaign; characteristics of tactics [mode of operations]; a personal assessment on the validity of grievances—backed by various sources of information [including neutral and sympathetic sources]. All information must be fully cited within the document and referenced at the end of the document. In addition assess the strategy of the terrorist group based upon the information in Chapter 3. (This portion of the profile should be about 1-3 pages).

Part 2: Extending the Profile: Provide a profile of the group's components. Talk about the individuals that make up the group (any relevant background on leaders, militants, and supporters is useful). Evaluate, as much as possible, recruitment strategies including reference point definition, micromobilization, resources used to induce consumer rebels, and an assessment if the organization is comprised primarily of consumer or investor rebels. Finally, and this portion should comprise the bulk of the project, analyze the operational environment along the lines laid out in Chapter 5 (physical, political, security, resource, and organization). All information must be fully cited within the document and referenced at the end of the document. (This portion of the profile should be about 2-3 pages).

Part 3: The Counterterrorist Campaign (Media) A terrorist attack has taken place and it is assumed your group is responsible for the attack. You are asked to manage the media campaign on this incident. What is your immediate concern following the attack and the media? How do you balance the "right to know" with the investigation into the attack? Assuming it is your group that is responsible for this attack, what kind of message do you want to counter with? Remember to speak to the multiple audiences involved in this terrorist attack. Keep in mind the media response is part of the Psyops (Psychological Operations) part of counterterrorism. All information must be fully cited within the document and referenced at the end of the document. (This portion of the counterterrorist campaign should be about 2-3 pages).

Part 4: The Counterterrorist Campaign (Strategies) You are asked for advice on a counterterrorist campaign concerning your group. First provide a review of the current strategies used against the group, and analysis of their relative success. Next provide advice on how the campaign may be altered or changed to better address the threat. Always remember to consider all tools you have at your disposal and keep it thoroughly entrenched in your mind the level and type of threat you face, plus the tolerance and willingness of the target community to accept different parts of your proposed campaign. Where do you begin in planning this campaign? How does intelligence fit into your Plan, and how needed is accurate intelligence at this point? What tools do you rely on most here—police, military, or paramilitary units. Remember to balance this decision against the degree of long-term threat. What social and political policies do you suggest in response to this campaign? Keep in mind all the information gathered in exercise 2 as you plan policies. All information must be fully cited within the document and referenced at the end of the document. (This portion of the profile should be about 4-5 pages).

Course Evaluation:

Undergraduate Students: The sum of all course requirements is 500 possible points for each student during the semester: three exams (300 pts) + Film paper (100pts.) = Counterterrorism Project (100 points)= 500 pts. The grading scale is a standard 10% scale with 90% or > resulting in an "A."

Scale: A =450-500pts.; B=400-449pts.; C=350-399pts.; D= 300-349pts.; F=299 or lower

You can track your points through the semester as exams and assignments are handed back. If at any time you wish to compare your tracking with the instructors records feel free to do so. I encourage students to keep track of their records, including absences. Mistakes do happen when recording final grades and if one is made against you, be sure to address it quickly. Protecting your Grade Point Average is your responsibility.

Course Outline: Below you will find a list of all topics for the course plus all assigned readings for every topic.

Topic: Understanding Terrorist Action

1. What is Terrorism
2. Forms of Terrorism
3. The Terrorist Strategy

Reading Assignment:

- Chapter 1
Chapter 2
Chapter 3

Exam ITopic: Understanding Terrorist Mobilization

1. The Individual Terrorist
2. The Operational Environment

Reading Assignment:

- Chapter 4
Chapter 5

Analysis of Terrorist MobilizationTopic: Understanding Counterterrorist Responses

1. Media and Terrorism
2. Domestic Counterterrorism
3. International Counterterrorism
4. Intelligence

Reading Assignment:

- Chapter 6
Chapter 7
Wardlaw, Chapter 11
Wardlaw, Chapter 12

Counterterrorism Project (Last Day of Class)**Final Exam****Miscellaneous:**

Make-up exams and late papers: The pace of the course is always in flux. Class discussions and time needed to address study guides and the paper assignment will inevitably take time during the course. As such, exam dates are announced in class (with the exception of the final exam). If a student misses class it is his or her responsibility to get all information from class on the day missed. This includes notes and announcements regarding quizzes and exams. If a student misses

class and subsequently misses an exam due to the absence, this does not constitute an excuse for a make up exam, or late paper. Make-up quizzes and exams are allowed for excused absences only. An excused absence is one where the student informs the instructor prior to class that he or she will not be in class on a particular day, or a university excused absence. It is always in your interest, as a student, to inform the instructor before class that you will not be in class on a particular day.

Students with Disabilities: The instructor does recognize and will work with students with various disabilities. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing accommodations of any type in order to participate in this class, please notify Disability Services (Westside Hall, 962-7555), provide the necessary documentation of the disability and arrange for the appropriate authorized accommodations. Once these accommodations are approved, any and all accommodations will be implemented as needed during the duration of this course.

Tardiness and Absences: Students must attend all classes scheduled during the semester. The only allowable absences are: a) University excused; b) university holidays; c) pre-approved absences where the student has contacted and informed the instructor of a need to miss class. Students should make any and all efforts (within reason) to be in class at the beginning of the class session everyday. Tardiness is generally disruptive to the flow of the course and is discourteous to your fellow students. If tardiness cannot be avoided, please enter the class quietly and try not to draw attention to yourself. Exercise judgment as well. If you are significantly late to a class, please do not enter. Speak with the instructor afterwards

Cell Phones, Pagers, other communication devices: Please turn off all communications devices before entering the class room. Only emergency personnel and individuals with outside emergency situations are allowed to keep communications devices on during class, and the device should be set to vibrate in order to avoid any unnecessary disruption during class. Since communications devices can become a vehicle for cheating during exams, any and all devices must be turned off during exams, unless the above mentioned conditions apply. If an approved communication device is on during an exam, the instructor will confiscate it until the end of the exam. This policy applies to any iPods or MP3 players as well.