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**Department of Political Science and Public Administration**

**POS 339: Political Violence and Terrorism**

**Fall 2016**

**TR 12:30-1:45**

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**Course Description**:

On the morning of September 11th, 2001, 19 men boarded 4 planes in Boston, Washington and Newark, hijacked them and crashed them into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a field in Pennsylvania, killing themselves and thousands of others in the most spectacular terrorist attack in world history. Since that day, the United States has been engaged in what used to be called a “Global War on Terror.” What prompted these men to end their lives by carrying out these attacks? How and why did their organization, Al-Qaeda, form? Were the terrorists “nihilists” as many have claimed, or did the victims perish for some political or theological goal, however far-fetched? Do Al-Qaeda , ISIS and its offshoots represent a new form of political violence, or are there clear connections to the deeds and strategies of past individuals and organizations? These questions may sound routine, but they are enormously controversial, because scholars and policymakers have been unable even to agree on a consensus definition of terrorism itself. In this course, we will look at terrorism in a broader context, from ancient attackers to the more modern incarnation of global terrorism that began in earnest in the 1960s. Together we will seek to define terrorism, understand its causes and effects, and examine strategies designed to mitigate the threat.

**Goals and Philosophy:**

The course is designed to help you become conversant in the major political questions and themes that characterize public debate in the United States about terrorism. By the end of the course you will be fluent in the kinds of questions policymakers, scholars, and opinion-leaders tackle on a daily basis, by becoming immersed in the *discipline-specific* *content* of the field. To that end, we will be working toward your ability to *effectively communicate* ideas and concepts in the field of terrorism and political violence. Finally, American terrorism will be read through the framework of *social justice*, including imagining what kinds of policies, relationships and ideas would be most beneficial to the citizens of the United States and to the world.

**Required Texts**:

The following **required** texts are available for purchase in the university bookstore.

1. Gerard Chaliand and Arnaud Blin, *The History of Terrorism: From Antiquity to Al-Qaeda* (University of California Press)
2. Jessica Stern and J.M. Berger, *ISIS: The State of Terror*. (Ecco).

Other readings will be posted to Blackboard well in advance of class and will be marked on the syllabus by the symbol **{BB}.** Readings can be found under “Syllabus and Readings,” alpha by author.

**Attendance and Punctuality:**

Because of the frequency of interactive activities and presentations, your presence in class is essential to the creation and maintenance of a collaborative learning environment. Three absences are permitted, whatever the reason. Any further absences will result in the removal of three points from your final grade, per absence. Students who arrive after roll is taken will receive half-credit for that day’s attendance; Students arriving more than 15 minutes late are welcome to stay, but will receive no credit for that day’s attendance.

**Crisis Policy**

If you are experiencing difficulties with your health, personal life or any other crisis that is affecting your ability to come to class and complete the work, it is imperative that you alert me as soon as possible. The best path is to see someone at Roosevelt’s counseling center, who can then alert all your professors that you are having trouble. I can work together with the counseling center to find an appropriate course of action to help you make it through the class. *It is not acceptable to approach me at the end of the semester to tell me you’ve been having problems since August with the expectation that this will change your grade.*

**Assignments**

*Midterm Examination:* There will be one midterm exam, administered in-class on October 20th.

*Presentations/Participation*: Each week, groups will be assigned responsibility for making a presentation on a particular topic (these topics are outlined in the syllabus below). That group will also be responsible for leading a discussion of the material post-presentation. Each group in the course will make two presentations. Your presentation and participation grade is a single metric, comprised equally of your presentation evaluation (50%) and your overall contribution to the class community (50%).

*Research Sequence:* Each student will write a 3,000-3,500 word term paper, addressing course themes from the political history of Iraq. The paper will be a 3-part research sequence, comprised of a research proposal (10%), complex synthesis (30%) and judgmental synthesis/final paper (60%). The detailed research sequence is posted to Blackboard for you to review. Relevant dates are included in the syllabus.

*Final Exam:* There will be a final exam during the scheduled exam period.

*Participation Rubric:*

A: Student rarely misses class, contributes frequently with thoughtful comments clearly drawn from a careful consideration of class materials.

B: Student occasionally misses class, contributes occasionally with comments and questions that are clearly drawn from a consideration of class materials.

C: Student misses class frequently, and participates with comments that betray a lack of engagement with class materials. A C will also be assigned to students who attend class diligently but never contribute to class discussions.

D: Student misses class very often and makes contributions to the class environment that are an obvious distraction from the materials, ideas and issues under consideration OR contributes nothing at all to conversations.

F: Student rarely if ever shows up for class.

**Written assignments are due on the assigned due dates and promptly at the times specified on the assignments. Late assignments will be penalized as follows:**

* 1 min – 12 hours past due: -5%
* 12 hours to 24 hours past due: -10%
* 24 hours to 36 hours past due: -20%
* 36 hours to 48 hours past due: -30%
* 48 hours past due: Assignments not accepted (zero credit earned)

**You are responsible for sending the correct file in the correct format**. Emails without attachments, or emails containing files other than Word documents, will be regarded as not fulfilling the assignment. You may not under any circumstances:

* Claim that you saved the email in draft form but simply forgot to send it
* Claim that you sent the email to the wrong address
* Claim that you wrote the paper but simply forgot to send it to me
* Claim that you emailed me but forgot to attach the assignment
* Claim that the Internet is down where you live
* Claim that your document was lost in a catastrophic computer crash
* Claim that your document was lost, stolen or otherwise corrupted
* Email me days later with a different file claiming the file you sent me the first time was the wrong one. If you send the wrong file, you MUST realize and rectify the error within the timeframe of the due date.

**Exceptions to policies surrounding the turning in of assignments will only be granted in the case of severe illness or emergency occurring within 24 hours of the due date, which must be documented with written proof.**

**Grade percentages**

Research Sequence: 35%

Midterm Examination: 20%

Presentations/Participation: 15%

Final Exam: 30%

**The grading scale is as follows**. Grades will be rounded down below .5, and rounded up for .5-.9 – i.e. an 89.4 is an 89, but an 89.5 is a 90.

92.5 – 100% : A 86.5 – 89.4%: B+ 76.5 – 79.4%: C+ 66.5 – 69.4%: D+

89.5 – 92.4%: A- 82.5 – 86.4%: B 72.5 – 76.4%: C 59.5 – 66.4%: D

79.5 – 82.4%: B- 69.5 – 72.4%: C- 0 – 59.4%: F

**Academic** **dishonesty**: The university’s policies on issues such as plagiarism, recycling, cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty can be found in the student handbook, which is available as a link here: <http://www.roosevelt.edu/CurrentStudents.aspx> . Additional guidelines for avoiding plagiarism are available here: <http://www.roosevelt.edu/Provost/Faculty/AcademicIntegrity.aspx>

**Disability**: Roosevelt University complies fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act. Details about ADA and Roosevelt’s policies and practices are found here: <http://www.roosevelt.edu/StudentSuccess/Disability/Discrimination.aspx> If you have a condition or disability that requires special arrangements, please alert your instructor or the Academic Success Center as soon as possible, certainly before any assignment or classroom activity that requires accommodation**.** The Academic Success Center is located in AUD 128 in Chicago, and the phone number is 312-341-3818. In Schaumburg, the office is in room 125, and the phone number is 847-619-7978.

**Withdrawal** **date**: The final date for an official withdrawal from this class (meaning a “W” would appear on your transcript) is Tuesday, Oct. 27. After that, if you want to withdraw, you’ll need to petition the registrar. Petitions are granted only for non-academic reasons after the deadline. If you receive financial aid, it’s best to check with your counselor to assure that aid isn’t affected by withdrawing from a class. The complete withdrawal policy is here: <http://www.roosevelt.edu/Registrar/Registration/Drop.aspx>

**Religious holidays**: Please let your instructor know as soon as possible if you will miss class because you are observing a religious holiday. Roosevelt University policy requires written notification to to the instructor within the first two weeks of the term. Any work you miss because of a religious holiday can be made up. You can see the full policy here: <http://www.roosevelt.edu/Policies/ReligiousHolidays.aspx>

**Student Code of Conduct:** Students enrolled in the university are expected to conduct themselves in a manner compatible with the university’s function as an educational institution. <http://www.roosevelt.edu/StudentSuccess/Conduct.aspx>

**Title IX**

Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based and sex and gender are Civil Rights offenses subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, etc. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you should contact our office of Title IX compliance or visit the office in WB 1312. For more information about Title IX please visit <http://www.roosevelt.edu/About/Compliance/About.aspx>

**Writing Center**

Students who need additional assistance in writing should visit the Writing Center. Information about the center can be found at its website:

<http://www.roosevelt.edu/CAS/Programs/LIT/WritingCenter.aspx>

**University Policy on Absence to Observe Religious Holidays**

Roosevelt University respects the rights of students to observe major religious holidays and will make accommodations, upon request, for such observances. Students who wish to observe religious holidays must inform their instructors in writing within the first two weeks of the semester of their intent to observe the holiday so that alternative arrangements convenient to both students and faculty can be made at the earliest opportunity. See the student handbook for further details.

**Class Schedule**

**Note: Readings are to completed *before* the class period for which they are assigned.**

**Weeks 1 -2: What Is Terrorism?**

**Tuesday, August 30th**

Introduction, Course Outline, Expectations

**Thursday, September 1st**

In class: Discussion

Read: Mueller, John. “Six Rather Unusual Propositions About Terrorism.” *Terrorism and Political Violence* (2005). **{BB}.**

**Tuesday, September 6th**

In-class: Lecture + Discussion: Terrorism and Tactics

Read: Chaliand and Blin Chapter 2 “Terrorism as a Strategy of Insurgency.” (pp. 12-51)

**Thursday, September 8th**

In class: Discussion

Read: David Fromkin, “The Strategy of Terrorism.” *Foreign Affairs*, July 1975.

**Week 3: The Long History of Terror**

**Tuesday, September 13th**

In-class: Lecture + Discussion: Terror From Assassins to Anarchists

Read: Chaliand and Blin Chapter 3, “Zealots and Assassins”

**Thursday, September 15th**

In-Class: Discussion

Read: Chapter 4 “Manifestations of Terror Through the Ages”

**Week 4: Toward the Modern Age**

**Tuesday, September 20th**

**In-class:** Lecture + Discussion: Colonialism and Terror

**Read**: Martha Crenshaw, “The Concept of Revolutionary Terrorism.” *Journal of Conflict Resolution* (September 1972). **{BB}** Chaliand and Blin Chapter 5 “The Invention of Modern Terror,” (pp. 95-112)

**Thursday, September 22nd**

**In-class: Presentations (The IRA) + Discussion**

**Read:** Rhonda Callaway and Julie Harrelson-Stephens, “Toward a Theory of Terrorism: Human Security as a Determinant of Terrorism.” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 2006 **{BB}.**

**Week 5: Leftist Terror**

**Tuesday, September 27th**

In-class: Lecture + Discussion

Read: Chaliand and Blin “From 1968 to Radical Islam” (pp. 221-254)

**Thursday, September 29th**

In-Class: **Presentation (The Red Army Fraction**)+ Discussion

Read: Alan Rosenfeld, “Militant Democracy: The Legacy of West Germany’s War on Terror in the 1970s.” *The European Legacy*, 2014. **{BB}**

**Week 6: Afghanistan and The Rise of Islamist Terror**

**Tuesday, October 4th**

**In class: Lecture: America’s Big Adventure in Afghanistan**

Read: Andrew Hartman, “The Red Template: U.S. Policy in Soviet-Occupied Afghanistan.” *Third World Quarterly*, 2002. **{BB}.** Michael Rubin, “Who Is Responsible For the Taliban?” *Middle East Review of International Affairs*, March 2002. **{BB}**.

**Thursday, October 6th**

In class: **Presentations (The Taliban)**

Read: Luke Mogelson, “[Which Way Did the Taliban Go?](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/01/20/magazine/which-way-did-the-taliban-go.html)” *New York Times Magazine*, January 2013.

**Week 7: From the Near Enemy to the Far Enemy**

**Tuesday, October 11th**

**Mid-Term Exam**

**Thursday, October 13th**

In-Class: Lecture + Discussion: The Rise of Al-Qaeda

Read: Chaliand and Blin Chapter 13: “Al-Qaeda”Selections from Lawrence Wright’s *The Looming Tower* **{BB}**

**Week 8: Iraq**

**Tuesday, October 18th**

In-class: Lecture + Discussion: From Al-Qaeda to Iraq

Read: Stern and Berger pp. 1-51 (chapters 1-2); Andrew Phillips, “How Al-Qaeda Lost Iraq.” *Australian Journal of*

**Thursday, October 20th**

In-class: **Presentations (Al-Qaeda in Iraq)+** Discussion

Read:Weaver, Mary Anne. “The Short, Violent Life of Abu Musab Al-Zarqawi.” *The Atlantic*, June 8, 2006 **{BB}**.

**Due Saturday October 22nd at midnight: Research Sequence Part 1**

**Week 9: ISIS**

**Tuesday, October 25th**

In-class: Lecture: The ideology and rise of ISIS

Read: Stern and Berger pp. 52-125 (chapters 3-5). Paul Berman, “The Philosopher of Islamic Terror.” *New York Times Magazine*, 2002. **{BB}**

**Thursday, October 27th**

In class: **Presentation: Jabhat al-Nusra**

Read: Selections from *The Management of Savagery* **{BB}**.

**Week 10: How ISIS expands**

**Tuesday, November 1st**

In-class: Lecture + Discussion: ISIS online

Read: Stern and Berger pp. 126-175 (chapters 6 and 7)

**Thursday, November 3rd**

In class: Discussion

Read: Brendan Koerner, “[Why ISIS is winning the social media war](https://www.wired.com/2016/03/isis-winning-social-media-war-heres-beat/).” *Wired*. March 2016 **{BB}.**

**Week 11: American Terrorism**

**Tuesday, November 8th (aka Defeat the Orange Menace Day)**

In class: Lecture: Lone Wolf Terrorists

Read: Ramon Spaaij, “The Enigma of Lone Wolf Terrorism: An Assessment.” *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* (2010). {BB}. Karl Ove Knausgaard, “[The Inexplicable.”](http://www.newyorker.com/magazine/2015/05/25/the-inexplicable) The New Yorker, May 25th, 2015. **{BB}**

**Thursday, November 10th**

In class: **Presentations: Timothy McVeigh and Right Wing Terror**

Read: Gore Vidal, “[The Meaning of Timothy McVeigh](http://www.vanityfair.com/news/2001/09/mcveigh200109).” Vanity Fair, September 2001. **{BB}**

**Due Saturday November 12th at midnight: Research Sequence Part 2**

**Week 12: American Terrorism Redux**

**Tuesday, November 15th**

In class: Lecture: ISIS and global radicalization

Read: Stern and Berger pp. 178-256 (chapters 8-11)

**Thursday, November 17th**

**In class: Presentation: The Boston Marathon Bombings**

Read: Janet Reitman, “Jahar’s World.” *Rolling Stone*, July 17th, 2013.

**No class Week 13 (November 22nd and 24th), Thanksgiving Vacation**

**Week 14: Suicide Terrorism**

**Tuesday, November 29th**

In-class: Lecture: Suicide Terrorism

Martha Crenshaw, “Explaining Suicide Terrorism: A Review.” Security Studies, January 2007 **{BB}**. Robert Pape, “The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terror.” *American Political Science Review*, March 2003. **{BB}**

**Thursday, December 1st**

In class: **Presentations: the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Elam**

Read: Fabio Andres Diaz and Syed Mansoob Murshed, “Give War a Chance: All-Out War as a Means of Ending Conflict in Sri Lanka and Colombia.” *Civil Wars* (2013). **{BB}.** Jon Lee Anderson, “Death of a Tiger.” *The New Yorker*. **{BB}**

**Due Saturday, December 3rd at midnight: Research Sequence Part 3**

**Week 16: The Future of Terror**

**Tuesday, December 6th**

**In-class: Discussion**

**Read:** Steve Brill, “15 Years After 9/11, Are We Any Safer?” *The Atlantic*, August 2016 **{BB}**. Walter Laqueur, “Reflections on Terrorism.” *Foreign Affairs*, Fall 1986. **{BB}.**

**Thursday, December 8th**

In-class: Discussion: The future of terrorism and counter-terrorism + bonus field trip to secret Al-Qaeda hiding place in Waziristan.

**Final Exam: To Be Administered According to the Date Specified by the University**

**Important Notes:**

\*Students with disabilities may request special accommodations. Students must let me know **within the first week of class** if this is the case, and they also must contact Nancy Litke in the Academic Success Center (312-384-3810).

\* You must purchase or acquire the books for this class.

\*Students are required to abide by the University’s Code of Student Conduct. Students who plagiarize or cheat will at minimum receive a zero for the assignment and will be referred to the university for disciplinary action.

\*Cell phones, mp3 players and other personal electronic devices must be switched off during class. **You may use your laptop for note-taking**, but students using their laptops for personal communication during class will be asked to stop.

\***You cannot eat lunch during class**. You can imagine eating lunch but you cannot bring it into being. You can bring snacks. You may not experiment on Schroedinger’s Cat during class.

\*Enrolling in this course constitutes acceptance of these policies. I reserve the right to alter policies and scheduling on the syllabus and will give advance notice to students of any changes.