

Ethics: Terrorism

SS 350-01

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Office Hours: M & W, 11am – 1pm
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Course Description and Objectives

Terrorism is not a new phenomenon. Acts of violence to illicit a response from a target group, usually a government of one kind or another, have occurred for centuries. Yet, academics and activists alike have no common definition of what terrorism is, what it consists of, or of who is or is not a terrorist. We have all heard the phrase, one person's terrorist is another person's freedom fighter. Yet, what does this really mean? We will explore the historical, ethical, religious, political, social, psychological and ideological factors influencing and surrounding the use of violence as a tool for political action. Students will use critical thinking to move outside the box of their own value system, gain a greater understanding of the myriad of factors that affect individuals and groups to partake in political violence, as well as consider the use of violence for political gain by states.

Course Requirements

The instructor believes that people learn best when they interact with information, thus creating a solid knowledge base. PowerPoints and class notes, along with discussion boards, quizzes and assignments, will be available to the student online on the bbce platform. Students are expected to check out the online content and to participate regularly on the discussion boards. It is the hope of the instructor that the online atmosphere will in many ways duplicate in-class discussions, so students will want to check back on the posts they have made to see where the discussion has gone. There will be quizzes throughout the course, and several short checkpoint and activity assignments. Students will also have one research/academic argument paper which will include a topic assignment, thesis assignment, rough draft and final draft.

The final grade breakdown is as follows:

Quizzes	25%
Research Paper (includes topic assignment, thesis assignment, rough draft and final draft)	25%
CheckPoint/Activity Assignments	25%
Online Participation	25%

Required Text and Readings

There are multiple aspects to the readings for this course. It is expected that the readings from the texts and/or other sources will be done prior to the class date for which it is assigned, enabling the students and instructor to enter into discussions reflecting information gleaned from the texts. In addition, students are expected to read the New York Times (free online at www.nyt.com – can be delivered each morning to your email address) in order to be current with events. Current Events will be an integral part of the classroom discussions, modules, presentations, and exams.

Texts:

Required: Martin, Gus. 2008. *Understanding Terrorism, third edition.* Sage Publications.

Annual Reports: Violence and Terrorism. 08/09. The McGraw-Hill Companies.

Expectations:

The instructor does not tend to allow changes in the schedule. If unforeseen circumstances deemed applicable by the instructor necessitate an extension, the student must inform the instructor before the due date of the work that is due. Late papers, checkpoints, thesis, etc., will be deducted 10% after the first day late and an additional 10% for each subsequent day late. On DQ weeks, students are expected to participate 3 separate days a week with at least two posts on each day separate from the student's posted response to the DQ.

Academic Misconduct

Plagiarism and cheating of any kind will not be tolerated and will be prosecuted according to university policy. Don't do it. This means students should be sure to submit only original work, and, when writing a paper, be sure to cite any information that is not your own thoughts or well known information, whether it is a quote or summarized information. Using blocks of words from a source without quotes and then citing the source at the bottom is also plagiarism. **I will give a failing grade to any paper or checkpoint/activity that does not cite sources in text or is plagiarized in any way.**

Disability Accommodation

Reasonable accommodations are available for students who have a documented disability. Please notify the instructor during the first week of the course of any accommodations needed for the course. Accommodations will be made according to university policy.

Course Outline

I. Defining and understanding terrorism and terrorists

Week One 8/24 – 8/30 DQ Week – Introduction to course & The Ethics of Terrorism and Counter-Terrorism. See online readings.

Week Two 8/31 – 9/6– Exploring terrorism by learning from the past, *Understanding Terrorism*, Chpt. 1. & **Reading:** “Ghosts of Our Past?” in *Violence and Terrorism*.

**** Activity #1 due.**

****All topic choices due 9/6 in assignments folder online.**

Week Three 9/7 – 9/13 DQ Week – Defining terrorism, *Understanding Terrorism*, Chpt. 2, & **Reading:** “An Essay on Terrorism” in *Violence and Terrorism*.

****Quiz #1.**

Week Four 9/14 – 9/20 Work Week – Understanding terrorists and why they act, *Understanding Terrorism*, Chpt. 3, & **Reading:** “The Origins of the New Terrorism” in *Violence and Terrorism*.

**** Activity #2 due.**

**** All theses assignments due Tuesday 9/20 via assignments folder online.**

II. Types of terrorist action

Week Five 9/21 – 9/27 DQ Week – State terrorism, *Understanding Terrorism*, Chpt. 4, & **Reading:** “Hizballah and Syria” in *Violence and Terrorism*.

****Quiz #2**

Week Six 9/28 – 10/4 Work Week – Terrorism against the state, *Understanding Terrorism*, Chpt. 5, & **Reading:** “Root Causes of Chechen Terror” in *Violence and Terrorism*.

**** Activity #3 due.**

**** Checkpoint #1 due online Thursday 10/4 in assignments folder.**

Week Seven 10/5 – 10/11 DQ Week – Religious Terrorism, *Understanding Terrorism*, Chpt. 6, & **Reading:** “Holy Orders: Religious Opposition to Modern States” in *Violence and Terrorism*.

****Quiz #3**

Week Eight 10/12 – 10/18 Work – The influence of ideology on political violence, *Understanding Terrorism*, Chpt. 7.

**** Activity #4 due.**

****Checkpoint #2 due online 10/18 in assignments folder.**

Week Nine 10/19 – 10/25 DQ Week – Terrorism beyond state boundaries, *Understanding Terrorism*, Chpt. 8, & **Reading:** “Wounded but still dangerous.” in *Violence and Terrorism*.

****Quiz #4**

Week Ten 10/26 – 11/1 Work Week – Gender-selective terrorism, *Understanding Terrorism*, Chpt. 9, & **Reading:** “Cross Regional Trends in Female Terrorism” in *Violence and Terrorism*.

**** Activity #5 due.**

**** Checkpoint #3 due online 11/1 in assignments.**

III. The organization and methods of terrorism

Week Eleven 11/2 – 11/8 DQ Week – Terrorist tactics, *Understanding Terrorism*, Chpt. 10, & **Reading:** “Paying for Terror” in *Violence and Terrorism*.

****Quiz #5**

Week Twelve 11/9 – 11/15 Work Week – The role of media in terrorism, *Understanding Terrorism*, Chpt. 11, & **Reading:** “Terror’s Server” in *Violence and Terrorism*.

**** Rough draft of papers due 11/15 via assignments folder online ****

IV. What do we do now?

Week Thirteen 11/16 – 11/22 DQ Week – Terrorism in the US, *Understanding Terrorism*, Chpt. 12, & **Reading:** “Speaking for the Animals, or the Terrorists?” in *Violence and Terrorism*.

****Quiz #6**

11/23 – 11/29

THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week Fourteen 11/30 – 12/6 Work Week – Responding to terrorism, *Understanding Terrorism*, Chpt. 13, & **Reading:** “Held Without Trial in the USA.” in *Violence and Terrorism*.

**** Activity #6 due.**

****Checkpoint #4 due online 12/6 in assignments folder.**

Week Fifteen 12/7 – 12/13 DQ – Looking to the future, *Understanding Terrorism*, Chpt. 14, & **Reading:** “The Terrorism to Come” in *Violence and Terrorism*.

****Quiz #7**

Finals Week 12/14 – 12/17 Work Week

**** Final draft of papers due 12/15 via assignments folder online.**