

**Political Science 991: Terrorist Organizations: Operations and Strategy  
Spring 2011**

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Office Hours:  
Wed 9-12  
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Time and Location:  
M 7:05-9:55  
WA 230

**Course Description:**

This course focuses on a nascent field in political science – terrorism – and particularly concentrates on research questions in terrorism research that have, up to this time, remained largely overlooked. For our purposes, this means a particular focus on topics such as radicalization, organizational structure and maintenance, factionalization, competition, target choice, and insurgency. Our readings provide an array of viewpoints for why these behaviors and outcomes occur. Along with this diversity of explanations, the works also employ a wide variety of methodologies – formal modeling, quantitative analyses, and case studies. Lastly, this course will also focus on how we study this emerging field in a quantitative manner, and most weeks we will discuss some of the extant data sources on terrorism. Finally, this class should provide a framework that allows you to develop your own research agenda and interests.

This is a graduate seminar and as such, classes are geared around discussion of the readings. As an emerging field, there is a lack of consensus over what motivates these activities and processes. Consequently, it is important that you critically engage both the theoretical and empirical aspects of the readings. In addition, a graduate course implies that you have an interest in the field above that of undergrads – that being said, the work and the expectations are increased. Your preparedness for class, participation, and work should reflect more than just a basic consumption of the material.

**Readings:**

The following readings are required for the course:

Davis, Paul and Kim Cragin, eds. 2009. *Social Science for Counterterrorism: Putting the Pieces Together*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation

Weinstein, Jeremy. 2006. *Inside Rebellion: The Politics of Insurgent Violence*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

*Recommended:*

Oots, Kent. 1986. *A Political Organization Approach to Transnational Terrorism*. New York: Greenwood Press.

Articles presented in the course outline are available on JSTOR. Readings that are not available via JSTOR or are not part of assigned books are posted to k-state online. I also reserve the right to

change reading (articles, not books) at my discretion.

### **Course Requirements:**

**Participation.** Each student is expected to attend class, complete all required readings, and *significantly contribute* to discussion each week. Significant contribution includes being prepared for each course with thoughtful comments and questions based on the readings, as well as potential ideas for your own research projects. In addition, each week a few students will sign up to lead discussion. These individuals will write discussion papers and questions before the class, and will play and significant role in directing and shaping discussion. If there is no discussion, I will direct it and I will call upon people. Participation (and not merely attendance) is essential for your success in this class. This comprises 20% of your grade.

**Discussion Papers and Leadership.** You will write 4 discussion papers (3-4 pages). We will determine who is writing for each week in the first class meeting. Students who are assigned a discussion paper for each day are also charged with leading discussion. This means discussing main ideas and points of contention. This is not to be a recitation of what you have read but a way to provoke discussion amongst your fellow classmates. Your ability to distill the readings, raise issues, and engender debate will form the basis of the grade.

Discussion papers should not be a simple summary of what you have read. Instead, they should be a critical response to the work. You may focus on one reading or on the collective whole. Approaches can include: 1) criticisms and suggestions for improvement in the theory, methods, or conclusions of specific papers; 2) extensions or research questions that come from the readings; or 3) theoretical or methodological inconsistencies between articles from the same week or from previous weeks. Documents that may help (including one that I used in grad school) will be handed out during the first class and posted to k-state online. Of course, this is not an exhaustive list of what you can write about. If you have any questions about what you wish to write, please let me know.

In addition to the paper, students will also provide three questions to be discussed by the class. The papers and questions should be sent via email to the rest of the class and the instructor by 4:00pm on the Sunday prior to our class meeting. Students not writing for the week should still read and be ready to discuss the points and the questions raised by the discussion papers.

The discussion paper, questions, and leadership during the class period will comprise 40% of your grade (10% for each discussion).

**Research Proposal.** You will write a 20 page empirical research proposal on a topic of your choice that relates to the literature discussed in class. This project will be due on the 12<sup>th</sup> of May. The purpose of this proposal is to provide you with the experience of producing graduate level research as well as to (potentially) provide the basis for your future academic research and interests. Each proposal has to follow the pattern of all standard political science work: 1.) a statement of the research question. 2.) a review of pertinent and existing literature connected to the research question. 3.) your theoretical argument. 4.) a set of hypotheses that logically follow from the theoretical argument. 5.) a discussion of how you would set about evaluating your hypotheses, the data set you would use, and the variables you will consider. 6.) a conclusion about your work's relevance to the existing literature on the topic and, more broadly, to the study of international security. This is 40% of your grade.

In order to help you, I have established several dates by which I would like to see certain elements of your research proposal. These are due prior to class. I will not grade the individual components (with the exception of the presentation). Instead, this is to allow you plenty of time to complete the project and for me to provide you with feedback:

February 28<sup>th</sup>: A one to two sentence statement of your topic. Academic journals (or the works cited by the authors read) are good places to start looking for ideas.

March 28<sup>th</sup>: A one to two sentence statement of your specific research question.

April 11<sup>th</sup>: An annotated bibliography with at least 10 sources

April 25<sup>th</sup>: A statement of your theoretical argument and your hypotheses. Provide a couple of paragraphs to explain your theory and a few sentences to explain the hypotheses.

May 12<sup>th</sup>: Project due by 5:00pm (Email to me). In your paper, you should address questions and comments that I have raised.

**Note:**

Please feel free to see me if you have any questions or concerns. Concerns about grades are much easier to rectify early in the semester than late.

**University Policies:**

**Academic Honesty**

The following is taken verbatim from <http://www.k-state.edu/honor/faculty/syllabusstate.htm>:

Kansas State University has an Honor & Integrity System based on personal integrity which is presumed to be sufficient assurance in academic matters one's work is performed honestly and without unauthorized assistance. Undergraduate and graduate students, by registration, acknowledge the jurisdiction of the Honor & Integrity System. The policies and procedures of the Honor System apply to all full and part-time students enrolled in undergraduate and graduate courses on-campus, off-campus, and via distance learning.

A component vital to the Honor & Integrity System is the inclusion of the [Honor Pledge](#) which applies to all assignments, examinations, or other course work undertaken by students. The Honor Pledge is implied, *whether or not* it is stated: "**On my honor, as a student, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid on this academic work.**"

The default in this class is that ALL work will be accomplished individually, UNLESS my permission is given in advance of an assignment/quiz/exam/take-home exam/final. If you are in doubt, please ask

A grade of **XF** can result from a breach of academic honesty. The F indicates failure in the course; the X indicates the reason is an Honor Pledge violation.

For more information, visit the Honor & Integrity System home web page at: <http://www.ksu.edu/honor>

## **Classroom Conduct**

The following is taken verbatim from <http://www.k-state.edu/provost/policies/course.htm>:

“All student activities in the University, including this course, are governed by the Student Judicial Conduct Code as outlined in the Student Governing Association By Laws, Article VI, Section 3, number 2. Students who engage in behavior that disrupts the learning environment may be asked to leave the class. “

## **Disability Services**

The following is taken verbatim from <http://www.k-state.edu/provost/resources/teaching/course.htm>:

"Any student with a disability who needs a classroom accommodation, access to technology or other academic assistance in this course should contact Disability Support Services (dss@k-state.edu) and/or the instructor. DSS serves students with a wide range of disabilities including, but not limited to, physical disabilities, sensory impairments, learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, depression, and anxiety."

## **Course Outline**

### ***Week 1 (January 24, 2011) – Review Syllabus***

I highly recommend that you read one (or both) of the following for some background:

Crenshaw, Martha. 1981. The Causes of Terrorism. *Comparative Politics* 13(4): 379-399.

Noricks, Darcy. 2009. "The Root Causes of Terrorism," in Davis, Paul and Kim Cragin (eds.) *Social Science for Counterterrorism: Putting the Pieces Together*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation. Pgs 13-70.

### ***Week 2 (January 31, 2011) – Why Join?***

McPhail, Clark. 1971. Civil Disorder Participation: A Critical Examination of Recent Research. *American Sociological Review* 36(6): 1058-1073

Clark, R.P. 1983. Patterns in the Lives of ETA Members. *Terrorism: An International Journal* 6(3): 423-454.

De La Roche, Roberta. 2001. Why is Collective Violence Collective? *Sociological Theory* 19(2): 126-144.

Helmus, Todd. 2009. "Why and How Some People Become Terrorists," in Davis, Paul and Kim Cragin (eds.) *Social Science for Counterterrorism: Putting the Pieces Together*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation. Pgs 79-111.

Data Feature- Global Terrorism Dataset (GTD). Available at: <http://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>

### ***Week 3 (February 7, 2011) – Recruitment***

McAdam, Douglas. 1986. Recruitment to High-Risk Activism: The Case of Freedom Summer. *American Journal of Sociology* 92(1): 64-90

Hassan, Nasra. 2001. Letter from Gaza: An Arsenal of Believers. *The New Yorker*, November 19, 2001.

Post, Jerrold, Ehud Sprinzak, and Laurita Denny. 2003. The Terrorists in Their Own Words: Interviews with 35 Incarcerated Middle Eastern Terrorists. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 15(1): 171-184

Weinstein, Jeremy. 2005. Resources and the Information Problem in Rebel Recruitment. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49(4):598-624.

Data Feature – Terrorist Organizational Profiles (TOPs). Available at:

[http://www.start.umd.edu/start/data\\_collections/tops/](http://www.start.umd.edu/start/data_collections/tops/)

#### **Week 4 (February 14, 2011) – Organizational Structure and Outcomes**

Wolf, John. 1978. Organization and Management Practices of Urban Terrorist Groups. *Terrorism: An International Journal* 1(2): 169-186.

Zawodny, J.A. 1983. "Infrastructures of Terrorist Organizations," in Freedman, Lawrence and Yonah Alexander (eds.) *Perspectives on Terrorism*. Wilmington: Scholarly Resources, Inc.

Crenshaw, Martha. 1985. An Organizational Approach to the Analysis of Political Terrorism. *Orbis* 29(3): 465-489.

Oots, Kent. 1989. Organizational Perspectives on the Formation and Disintegration of Terrorist Groups. *Terrorism* 12(3): 139-152

Asal, Victor. 2008. The Nature of the Beast: Organizational Structures and the Lethality of Terrorist Attacks. *Journal of Politics* 70(2): 437-449

Data Feature – Big Allied and Dangerous Dataset (BAAD). Available at:

[http://www.albany.edu/pvc/current\\_projects.shtml](http://www.albany.edu/pvc/current_projects.shtml)

#### **Week 5 (February 21, 2011) – Organizational Decision Making**

McCormick, Gordon. 2003. Terrorist Decision Making. *Annual Review of Political Science* 6: 473-507.

Abrahms, Max. 2008. What Terrorists Really Want. *International Security* 32(4): 78-105.

Jackson, Brian. 2009. "Organizational Decisionmaking by Terrorist Groups," in Davis, Paul and Kim Cragin (eds.) *Social Science for Counterterrorism: Putting the Pieces Together*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation. Pgs 209-255.

Data Feature – International Terrorism: Attributes of Terrorist Events (ITERATE). Available on k-state online

#### **Week 6 (February 28, 2011) – Internal Operations and Dynamics I**

Weinstein, Jeremy. 2007. *Inside Rebellion*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

**Week 7 (March 7, 2011) – Internal Operations and Dynamics II**

Crelinsten, Ronald. 2001. "The Internal Dynamics of the FLQ During the October Crisis of 1970," in Rapoport, David (ed.) *Inside Terrorist Organizations*. London: Frank Cass.

Olcott, Martha and Bakhtiyar Babajanov. 2003. The Terrorist Notebooks. *Foreign Policy* 135: 30-40.

Cullison, Alan. 2004. Inside Al-Qaeda's Hard Drive. *The Atlantic Monthly* 294: 55-65.

Bueno de Mesquita, Ethan. 2005. The Quality of Terror. *American Journal of Political Science* 49(3): 515-530.

Benmelech, Efraim and Claude Berrebi. 2007. Human Capital and the Productivity of Suicide Bombers. *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 21(3): 223-238.

Data Feature – Chicago Project on Security and Terrorism (CPOST). Available at: <http://cpost.uchicago.edu/index.php>

**Week 8 (March 14, 2011) – Organizational Maintenance and Public Support**

Ross, Jeffrey and Ted Robert Gurr. 1989. Why Terrorism Subsides: A Comparative Study of Canada and the United States. *Comparative Politics* 21(4): 405-426.

Kalpakian, Jack. 2005. Building the Human Bomb: The Case of the 16 May 2003 Attacks in Casablanca. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 28(2): 113-127.

Haddad, Simon. 2006. The Origins of Popular Support for Lebanon's Hezbollah. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29(1): 21-34.

Bueno de Mesquita, Ethan and Eric Dickson. 2007. The Propaganda of the Deed: Terrorism, Counterterrorism, and Mobilization. *American Journal of Political Science* 51(2): 364-381.

Al Jazeera. 2009. "Taliban Issues Code of Conduct." July 28.  
<http://english.aljazeera.net/news/asia/2009/07/20097278348124813.html>

Data Feature – RAND Database of Worldwide Terrorism Incidents (RDWTI). Available at: <http://www.rand.org/nsrd/projects/terrorism-incidents.html>

**Week 9 (March 21, 2011) – Spring Break – No Class**

**Week 10 (March 28, 2011) – Funding & Sponsorship**

Byman, Daniel, Peter Chalk, Bruce Hoffman, William Rosenau, and David Brennan. 2001. *Trends in Outside Support for Insurgent Movements*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation. Chapters 2-3  
Available at: [http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph\\_reports/2007/MR1405.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/monograph_reports/2007/MR1405.pdf)

Looney, Robert. The Business of Insurgency: The Expansion of Iraq's Shadow Economy. *The National*

*Interest*. Fall: 1-6

Shapiro, Jacob and David Siegel. 2007. Underfunding in Terrorist Organizations. *International Studies Quarterly*. 51(2): 405-429.

Asal, Victor, Brian Nussbaum, and William Harrington. 2007. Terrorist Transnational Activist Networks. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 30(1): 15-39

*Data Feature – Terrorism in Western Europe: Events Data (TWEED)*. Available at: <http://folk.uib.no/sspje/tweed.htm>

### **Week 11 (April 4, 2011) – Strategy**

Price, H. Edward. 1977. The Strategy and Tactics of Revolutionary Terrorism. *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 19(1): 52-66.

Merari, Ariel. 1993. Terrorism as a Strategy of Insurgency. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 5(4): 213–251.

Ortiz, Roman. 2002. Insurgent Strategies in the Post–Cold War: The Case of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 25(2): 127–143.

Pape, Robert. 2003. The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism. *American Political Science Review* 97(3): 343-361.

Kydd, Andrew and Barbara Walter. 2006. The Strategies of Terrorism. *International Security* 31(1): 49-80.

*Data Feature – High Casualty Terrorist Bombings, 1992-2010 (HCTB)*. Available at: <http://www.systemicpeace.org/inscr/inscr.htm>

### **Week 12 (April 11, 2011) – Tactics**

Miller, Reuben. 1993. Negotiating with Terrorists: A Comparative Analysis of Three Cases. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 5(3): 78-105.

Brophy-Baermann, Bryan and John Conybeare. 1994. Retaliating Against Terrorism: Rational Expectations and the Optimality of Rules Versus Discretion. *American Journal of Political Science* 38(1): 196-210.

Wilson, Margaret. 2000. Towards a Model of Terrorist Behavior in Hostage-Taking Incidents. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 44(4): 403-424.

Jackson, Brian. 2005. "The Provisional Irish Republican Army," in Jackson, Brian, John Baker, Kim Cragin, John Parachini, Horacio Trujillo, and Peter Chalk (eds.) *Aptitude for Destruction, Volume 2: Case Studies of Organizational Learning in Five Terrorist Groups*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation. Available at: [http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2005/RAND\\_MG332.pdf](http://www.rand.org/pubs/monographs/2005/RAND_MG332.pdf)

Kulikov, Sergey and Robert Love. 2003. Insurgent Groups in Chechnya. *Military Review* November-

December: 21-30.

*Data Feature – Minorities at Risk Organizational Behavior (MAROB)*. Available at: <http://www.cidcm.umd.edu/mar/data.asp#marob>

***Week 13 (April 18, 2011) – Targeting***

Drake, CJM. 1993. The Role of Ideology in Terrorists' Target Selection. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 5(4): 253-265.

Kalyvas, Stathis. 2004. The Paradox of Terrorism in Civil War. *Journal of Ethics* 8(1): 97-138.

Goodwin, Jeff. 2006. A Theory of Categorical Terrorism. *Social Forces* 84(4): 2027-2046.

Libicki, Martin, Peter Chalk, and Melanie Sisson. 2007. *Exploring Terrorist Targeting Preferences*. Santa Monica: RAND Corporation. Chapters 2-3. Available at: [http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2007/RAND\\_MG483.pdf](http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2007/RAND_MG483.pdf)

***Week 14 (April 25, 2011) – Networks, Factions, and Terror***

Krebs, Valdis. 2002. Mapping Networks of Terrorist Cells. *Connections* 24(3): 43-52.

Mishal, Shaul, and Zev Maoz. 2005. Al Qaeda as a Dune Organization: Toward a Typology of Islamic Terrorist Organizations. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 28(4): 275-93.

Jackson, Brian. 2006. Groups, Networks, or Movements: A Command-and-Control-Driven Approach to Classifying Terrorist Organizations and its Application to Al Qaeda. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 29(3): 241-262.

Desouza, Kevin, and Tobin Hensgen. 2007. Connectivity among Terrorist Groups: A Two Models Business Maturity Approach. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 30(7): 593-613.

***Week 15 (May 2, 2011) – Insurgency***

Metz, Steven. 2007. *Rethinking Insurgency*. Carlisle: Strategic Studies Institute. Available at: <http://www.dtic.mil/cgi-bin/GetTRDoc?AD=ADA468470&Location=U2&doc=GetTRDoc.pdf>

Lyall, Jason. 2010. Are Co-Ethnics More Effective Counter-Insurgents? Evidence from the Second Chechen War. *American Political Science Review* 104(1): 1-20.