

Terrorism
PSCI 4348
Spring 2024
Monday: 7:00pm - 9:45pm
Room: FO 1.202

Professor: Rebecca Cordell **Teaching Assistant:** Minh Dao
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Online Student Hours: [Mon 4pm-5pm](#) **Online Student Hours:** [Weds 1pm-2pm](#)
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Course Description

What is terrorism? What causes individuals and groups to engage in terrorism tactics? How can governments effectively counter terror? This course explores the domestic and international dynamics of terrorism in a scientific and rigorous way. Students will gain an understanding of how to ask and answer questions on the causes and consequences of terrorism and counter-terrorism from a social science perspective.

We begin the course by exploring the concepts, patterns and trends of terrorism, and transition to an overview of what factors causes individuals and groups to engage in terrorist tactics. We proceed to consider major issues related to the causes of terrorism and state-sponsored terrorism including psychological, strategic, organizational, political, social and economic explanations. We then explore how governments can effectively counter terrorism at the local, domestic, regional and international level. The course concludes by exploring public opinion on terrorism and a discussion of what the future holds for terrorism and counter-terrorism.

This course's goal is to teach undergraduates the major theories and explanations of the causes, consequences and dynamics of terrorism and counter-terrorism in different countries and in different time periods. The readings for this course survey major explanations on the cause and effect of terrorism and counter-terrorism. Students will be exposed to theoretically driven as well as empirical research.

Student Learning Objectives and Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should:

- Gain familiarity with the major theories of the causes of terrorism, state-sponsored terrorism and counter-terrorism.
- Gain understanding with concepts and contemporary debates in terrorism and counter-terrorism research.
- Be able to apply explanations of terrorism and counter-terrorism to the explanation and understanding of real-world scenarios.
- Be able to explain historical cases in light of the theories presented in class.
- Be able to read and understand empirical research in the social sciences.

Assignments & Academic Calendar

WEEK/ DATES	TOPIC/LECTURE	READING	ASSESSMENT / ACTIVITY	DUE DATE
1	Martin Luther King Jr. Day: No Class			
2	Introduction	Ritchie et al. (2019) Miller (2019)		
3	Concepts and Definitions	Crenshaw (2011) Ch. 1-3 Young (2016)		
4	Patterns and Trends in Terrorism	Chenoweth (2013) Lafree et al. (2014) Ch. 4		
5	The Psychology of Terrorism	McCormick (2003) McCauley and Moskalenko (2008)		
6	The Political Economy of Terrorism	Piazza (2011) Sánchez-Cuenca and de la Calle (2009)		
7	Religion, Ideology and Terrorism	Martin (2017) Ch. 6 and 7		

WEEK/ DATES	TOPIC/LECTURE	READING	ASSESSMENT / ACTIVITY	DUE DATE
8	First Online Exam		First Online Exam	Monday, March 04 @ 11:59pm
9	Spring Break: No Classes			
10	Civil Wars and Terrorism	Fortna (2015) Stanton (2013)		
11	Terrorist Groups	Polo (2020a) Kydd and Walter (2006)		
12	State-sponsored Terrorism	Martin (2017) Ch. 4 Carter (2012)		
13	Transnational Dynamics of Terrorism	Polo (2020b) Braithwaite and Li (2007)	Case Study Paper	Sunday April 14 @ 11:59pm
14	Counter-terrorism	Crenshaw and LaFree (2017) Ch. 2 and 6		
15	Public Opinion and Terrorism	Kearns et al. (2019) Huff and Kertzer (2018)		
16	Second Online Exam		Second Online Exam	Monday April 29 @ 11:59pm

Required Textbooks and Materials

Regular completion of the course readings is essential to your success in this class. During class, there will be activities designed to assess your comprehension of the weekly readings.

All book chapters and journal articles are available to students free of charge. They can be accessed via the eLearning course homepage.

Braithwaite, Alex, and Quan Li. 2007. "Transnational Terrorism Hot-spots: Identification and Impact Evaluation." *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 24 (4): 281-96.

Carter, David. 2012. "A Blessing or a Curse? State Support for Terrorist Groups." *International Organization* 66(1).

Chenoweth, Erica. 2013. "Terrorism and Democracy." *Annual Review of Political Science* 16: 355-378.

Cordell, Rebecca. 2020. "The Political Costs of Abusing Human Rights: International Cooperation in Extraordinary Rendition." *Journal of Conflict Resolution*. Conditional Acceptance.

Crenshaw, Martha and LaFree, Gary. 2017. *Countering Terrorism*. Brookings Institution Press.

Crenshaw, Martha. 2011. *Explaining Terrorism*. Routledge.

Fortna, Virginia Page. 2015. "Do Terrorists Win? Rebels' Use of Terrorism and Civil War Outcomes." *International Organization* 69(3): 519-556.

Huff, Connor, and Joshua D. Kertzer. 2018. "How the Public Defines Terrorism." *American Journal of Political Science* 62(1): 55-71.

Kearns, Erin M., Allison E. Betus, and Anthony F. Lemieux. 2019. "Why Do Some Terrorist Attacks Receive More Media Attention Than Others?" *Justice Quarterly* 36(6): 985-1022.

Kydd, Andrew, and Barbara Walter. 2006. "The Strategies of Terrorism." *International Security* 31(1): 49-79.

LaFree, Gary, Laura Dugan and Erin Miller. 2014. *Putting Terrorism in Context: Lessons Learned from Global Data*. Taylor and Francis.

Martin, Gus. 2017. *Understanding Terrorism: Challenges, Perspectives, and Issues*. 6th ed. Sage Publications.

McCauley, Clark and Sophia Moskalenko. 2008. "Mechanisms of Political Radicalization: Pathways Toward Terrorism." *Terrorism and Political Violence* 07: 415-433.

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

Miller, Erin. 2019. "Global Terrorism Overview: Terrorism in 2019." Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START). Available at: https://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/START_GTD_GlobalTerrorismOverview2019_July2020.pdf

Piazza, James A. 2011. "Poverty, Minority Economic Discrimination, and Domestic Terrorism." Journal of Peace Research 48(3): 339-353.

Piazza, James A. and James Igoe Walsh. 2009. "Transnational Terror and Human Rights. International Studies Quarterly 53(1): 125-148.

Polo, Sara. 2020a. "The Quality of Terrorist Violence: Explaining the Logic of Terrorist Target Choice." Journal of Peace Research 57(2): 235-250.

Polo, Sara. 2020b. "How Terrorism Spreads: Emulation and the Diffusion of Ethnic and Ethnoreligious Terrorism." Journal of Conflict Resolution: 1-27.

Ritchie, Hannah, Joe Hasell, Cameron Appel and Max Roser. 2019. "Terrorism." Our World in Data. Available at: <https://ourworldindata.org/terrorism>

Sánchez-Cuenca, Ignacio, and Luis de la Calle. 2009. "Domestic Terrorism: The Hidden Side of Political Violence." American Political Science Review. 12: 31-49.

Stanton, Jessica A. 2013. "Terrorism in the Context of Civil War." The Journal of Politics 75:4: 1009-1022.

Young, Joseph. 2016. "Measuring Terrorism." Terrorism and Political Violence 31(2): 323-345.

Grading Policy

Assignments and Exams

Active Participation (20% of your grade): Students will be evaluated on 1) completion of class exercises 2) contributions to class discussions.

Case Study Paper (30% of your grade): 7 pages (12-point font, 1-inch margin, double spaced). Write a research paper that applies the theories explored in the course to a terrorist group. The group you choose must be included in the Global Terrorism Database. Search for the group first before writing your paper: <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/search/Results.aspx?search=&sa.x=54&sa.y=3>

In the paper you should describe 1) Why you chose this terrorist group 2) the political, social and economic situation in the country that they operate in 3) the goals and strategies of the group 4) what caused the group to adopt terrorist tactics. **Your paper must include ample references for all facts presented pertaining to the country or terrorist group and any theories discussed.** Students should discuss their case selection with the Teaching Assistant at least two weeks prior to the due date for this assignment. **Paper due: Sunday, April 14 at 11:59pm via eLearning.**

First Online Exam (25% of your grade): The first exam will cover material in the first half of the semester. The exam will contain multiple choice questions only. **Exam: Monday, March 04 open 12am-11:59pm via eLearning.**

Second Online Exam (25% of your grade): The second exam will cover material in the second half of the semester. The exam will contain multiple choice questions only. **Exam: Monday, April 29 open 12am-11:59pm via eLearning.**

Exam Format: The exams will be open book, with 25 multiple choice questions in total per exam. You can take the exam any time between the dates provided. The exam will be timed, giving students 50 minutes to complete the exam (two minutes per question). The exam must be completed in a single sitting. The questions and answers will be randomized so that no student takes the same version of the exam. The Exam Review will be posted in each Exams folder in advance.

Grading Scale:

A+ = 97-100%
A = 94-96%
A- = 90-93%
B+ = 87-89%
B = 84-86%
B- = 80-83%
C+ = 77-79%
C = 74-76%
C- = 70-73%
D+ = 67-69%
D = 64-66%
D- = 60-63%
F = 0-59%

Course & Instructor Policies

Attendance and Participation: Regular attendance and participation in class is essential to your success in this course. Students are expected to arrive in class

before the start of the class period. Student participation will be assessed on the quantity and quality of contributions to class discussions and class group exercises.

Late assignments and missed exams: Written assignments are due on the date assigned, in the form specified. Late assignments will not be accepted. If you require an extension, you must email the Professor 48 hours before the deadline. The Professor reserves the right to make exceptions to this policy as circumstances warrant, usually only with prior approval or under instances of extreme emergency or serious illness. Appropriate documentation might be required in some cases.

Generative AI: Cheating includes using unauthorized materials to complete an assignment (UTD Student Code of Conduct - [source](#)). AI-generated content including text, tables, code, analysis, or images should not be presented as your own work. TurnItIn or other methods may be used to detect the use of AI. Under UTD rules about due process, referrals may be made to the Office of Community Standards and Conduct. Inappropriate use of AI may result in penalties, including a 0 on an assignment.

Grade disputes: If you have questions or concerns regarding your grade, you must wait 48 hours after your assignment/exam has been returned to you before contacting the Teaching Assistant or Professor. You should always email the Teaching Assistant before the Professor to discuss your grade as they will have graded your assignment/exam and are in the best position to provide you with the reasons for your grade. In your email, you must provide an argument explaining why you believe your grade should be changed. If your conversation with the Teaching Assistant has not resolved the issue, you can request that I regrade the entire assignment/exam. I reserve the right to raise your grade or lower it on any part of the assignment/exam.

Email Communication: The best way to get in touch with the Professor and Teaching Assistant outside of the class sessions and student hours is to contact us via email. We will try to respond to your email within 3 business days. When you contact the Professor or Teaching Assistant, you should communicate professionally and avoid informal salutations and unprofessional or casual language. The appropriate salutations in emails to the Professor are “Dr. Rebecca Cordell” or “Professor Cordell”. Your email should be clear and concise, state what course you are taking, and end with a signature e.g., “Yours Sincerely, Student”. You should always consult the syllabus and course materials on eLearning before emailing the Professor or Teaching Assistant to see if the answer to your question can be found there. The ability to write effective emails is an important job skill that will help you to succeed in your future career.

Student Hours: Students are strongly encouraged to meet with the Professor and Teaching Assistant during student hours via MS Teams. We are committed

to answering your questions and concerns. If you would like the Professor or Teaching Assistant to provide specific feedback on your work during student hours, you should send via email the relevant materials 24 hours in advance. Student hours provide an excellent opportunity for you to gain feedback on ideas for your assignments and for us to get to know you. This is especially helpful if you require a reference letter for graduate school, a professional college, or job at a later date.

Academic misconduct: Students are expected to do their own assignments, and not in collaboration or consultation with others. The Professor will follow all UTD rules and processes regarding academic dishonesty including plagiarism, collusion, cheating and fabrication. For more information see: <https://conduct.utdallas.edu/dishonesty/>.

Classroom conduct: Classroom discussion should be civilized and respectful to everyone and relevant to the topic we are discussing. All students are expected to be courteous and considerate of their classmates. Disrespectful language and personal attacks will not be tolerated. Students whose behavior is disruptive and/or threatening either to the Professor, Teaching Assistant or other students will be asked to refrain from such behavior or, in severe cases, to leave the classroom.

Technology in the classroom: Students are allowed to use laptop computers to take class notes or when instructed to do so by the Professor. All other technology must be turned off and stowed away. Students violating this rule will be asked to leave the class for that day.

Diversity in the classroom: It is the Professor's intention to create a learning environment that is intentionally inclusive and appreciative of diversity in all its forms including ethnicity, race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, socioeconomic status, religion and culture. Students may share their preferred names and pronouns to the class or privately to the Professor. These gender identities and expressions should be honored by the Professor, Teaching Assistant and students.

If you need help: There are many issues that you might be dealing with in your college career or personal life that can prevent you from succeeding on this course. At UTD, you are not alone. There are many free resources available on campus to help support you during times of struggle, including the Student Success Center, the Student Wellness Center, and Student Counselling Center. For more information, see here: <https://studentwellness.utdallas.edu/>.

Sexual misconduct: UTD prohibits sexual misconduct as defined in the University Policy Statement. The University will promptly discipline any individuals or organizations within its control who violate this Policy. If you or

someone you know has been sexually assaulted, harassed, or been a victim of relationship violence or stalking, you can find the appropriate resources here: <https://institutional-initiatives.utdallas.edu/title-ix/>. Students considering sharing personal information in email, in person, or within assignments or exams should be aware that faculty members and teaching associates/assistants and graduate/research assistants are required by UTD policy to report information about sexual misconduct to the UTD Title IX Coordinator. Per university policy, Sexual Misconduct Policy - UTDBP3102, faculty have been informed that they must identify the student to the UTD Title IX Coordinator. Students who wish to have confidential discussions of incidents related to sexual harassment or sexual misconduct should contact the Student Counseling Center (972-883-2575 or the 24/7 Crisis Hotline at 972-UTD-TALK or 972-883-8255), the, a health care provider in the Student Health Center (972-883-2747), a clergyperson (or other legally recognized religious advisor) of their choice, or an off-campus resource (e.g., rape crisis center, doctor, psychologist). Students who are sexually assaulted, harassed, or are victims of sexual misconduct, domestic violence, or stalking, are encouraged to directly report these incidents to the UTD Police Department at 972-883-2222 or to the Title IX Coordinator at 972-883-5202. Additional information and resources may be found at <https://institutional-initiatives.utdallas.edu/title-ix/>.

Accommodations for persons with disabilities: It is the policy and practice of UTD to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need academic accommodations for this class, you are encouraged to register with the Office of Student AccessAbility (OSA). Some aspects of the course, the assignments, the in-class activities, and the way the course is typically taught may be accommodated to facilitate your participation and progress. OSA will assist you in determining academic accommodations that are appropriate for your situation. Any information you provide is private and confidential and will be treated as such. To avoid any delay, please contact OSA as soon as possible. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and disability accommodations cannot be provided until an OSA Letter of Accommodation has been given to the instructor. Students who have questions about receiving accommodations, or those who have, or think they may have, a disability (mobility, sensory, health, psychological, learning, etc.) are invited to contact OSA for a confidential discussion. OSA is located in the Student Services Building, AD 2.224 They can be reached by phone at 972-883-2098, or by email at studentaccess@utdallas.edu.

Course website: The syllabus, all announcements, information on assignments, and other materials related to the course will be available on the eLearning course homepage.

Class Materials

The instructor may provide class materials that will be made available to all students registered for this class as they are intended to supplement the classroom experience. These materials may be downloaded during the course, however, these materials are for registered students' use only. Classroom materials may not be reproduced or shared with those not in class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Class Recordings

Students are expected to follow appropriate University policies and maintain the security of passwords used to access recorded lectures. Unless the Office of Student AccessAbility has approved the student to record the instruction, students are expressly prohibited from recording any part of this course. Recordings may not be published, reproduced, or shared with those not in the class, or uploaded to other online environments except to implement an approved Office of Student AccessAbility accommodation. Failure to comply with these University requirements is a violation of the [Student Code of Conduct](#).

Comet Creed

This creed was voted on by the UT Dallas student body in 2014. It is a standard that Comets choose to live by and encourage others to do the same:

“As a Comet, I pledge honesty, integrity, and service in all that I do.”

Academic Support Resources

The information contained in the following link lists the University's academic support resources for all students.

Please see <http://go.utdallas.edu/academic-support-resources>.

UT Dallas Syllabus Policies and Procedures

The information contained in the following link constitutes the University's policies and procedures segment of the course syllabus. Please review the catalog sections regarding the [credit/no credit](#) or [pass/fail](#) grading option and withdrawal from class.

Please go to <http://go.utdallas.edu/syllabus-policies> for these policies.

The descriptions and timelines contained in this syllabus are subject to change at the discretion of the Professor.