INSTRUCTOR:
Dr. Amanda Murdie  
Professor and Department Head, Department of International Affairs  
Email: murdie@uga.edu  
Online Office Hours: Zoom - https://zoom.us/my/murdie - 2:00 to 4:00 on Tuesdays and by appointment  
Phone Office Hours: Zoom - +1 929 205 6099 US (New York) Meeting ID: 390 425 1852 - 2:00 to 4:00 on Tuesdays and by appointment

Course Description and Objectives

What motivates a terrorist? When are people likely to rebel? Are counterterrorism or repression efforts successful? This course focuses on the social scientific study of terrorism. We will focus on scientific explanations for rebellion, the rise of terrorist organizations, political and economic explanations for terrorist attacks, and the effects of efforts to combat terrorism. After this class, you will have not only an understanding of the major players and factors influencing terrorism, but a base understanding of the social scientific processes which govern political violence and rebellion more generally. As such, this class is not a history class or a class on current events. Though current and historical events will be discussed, your grade will not depend on your rote memorization of these events. Instead, the focus will be on understanding the underlying interests of important actors for international security, the arenas in which these actors interact, and the rules which govern their interactions. This focus on the basic principles will provide you with a rich practical knowledge of the study of terrorism.

This course will be divided into four major sections: (1) terrorism basics, (2) what motivates terrorists, (3) the logic of terrorism, and (4) the consequences of terrorism and counterterrorism. At the end of the course, you should be able to convey an advanced understanding of terrorism and insurgency research to prospective employers, including government security and intelligence agencies, risk analyst organizations, and think tanks.

Online Course Format

This course is completely online! All materials are available online through UGA’s eLearning Commons (ELC) portal. The course is asynchronous; you can work on the materials at your own scheduled time throughout the week.

The course consists of four modules, one module for every week of the four-week course. Each module consists of four topics. Each topic will include:

1. A reading of current or canonical academic research on topic;
2. A short video (around 5-10 minutes) of me explaining the key concepts of the day;
3. A longer set of slides for you to go through at your own pace;

4. A set of additional materials/video links you could explore for further information on the topic.

You will have to complete a module a week. With the exception of the last week, the module assignments will be due by Sunday night at 11:59 pm (Eastern Standard Time). One way to complete the course would be to focus on a topic a day throughout the five-day work week. You could then spend the final day of the work week taking the quiz and contributing to the discussion board. Or, you could wait until the weekend and complete two topics a day on Saturday and Sunday and then take the quiz and contribute to the discussion board on Sunday evenings. For the last week, due to the shortened schedule, the module will be due at 11:59 pm on July 31st. You are welcome to work ahead.

Any way you want to tackle the work of the week is fine with me! As long as each module is completed before the weekly deadline, you can work whenever and wherever works for you best!

I'm here to help however I can. Please feel free to email at any time. I strive to answer all emails within 24 hours. I'll also have weekly sessions in Zoom. I'm also happy to schedule a time to chat on the phone or over video.

Grading

Your course grade is calculated from the following components:

- 40% - Four quizzes (one for each module) - Due by Sunday at 11:59 pm (EST) each week except for final week of the course when it is due on Friday, July 31st by 11:59 pm (EST)

- 40% - Four discussion board contributions (one for each module) - Due by Sunday at 11:59 pm (EST) each week except for final week of the course when it is due on Friday, July 31st by 11:59 pm (EST)

- 20% - Final paper (5-10 pages, double spaced) on a terrorist event or organization - Uploaded to eLC by Thursday, July 30th by 11:59 pm (EST)

Quizzes

At the end of each module, there will be a short (around 10 questions) multiple choice quiz for you to complete. These quizzes will be graded automatically within eLC. Doing the reading, watching the short video, and going over the longer set of slides for each of the module’s four topics should prepare you for each quiz.

Discussion Board Contributions

There will be a discussion board for each module. I will start off the discussion board with some question about the topics for that week. For each module, you will contribute at least one thoughtful response to the discussion board question that references the course materials. I will grade these contributions after the module closes at the end of the week. A rubric can be found on eLC.

Final Paper

As much as it is necessary to have a broad understanding of the dynamics and logic of terrorism, it is also important to have an in-depth knowledge of certain terrorist events or groups. On a group or event of your choosing, please write a 5-10 page paper (double spaced) on one of the following topics covered in the course:
(1) Group grievances - Why is this group fighting?

(2) Group leadership and recruitment - Who is in charge of the group? How does the group get its members?

(3) Group funding and attention - How does this group get its funds? How does the group get media attention?

(4) Group attacks - What type of attacks has the group carried out? Why were these attacks carried out?

(5) Counterterrorism efforts - What efforts have countries taken to stop this group and its activities? Were these efforts successful?

In your paper, you will outline the information you have found on this topic and how your findings relate to the readings we have covered in the course. A rubric for this assignment is available on the UGA eLC page for this course. This paper is due on July 30th by 11:59 pm. I am happy to discuss the group/event of your choosing and offer suggestions over email.

Grading Scale

Your final grade will be calculated on the following scale. Please note that I do not round grades.

- 94 to 100 - A
- 90 to 93 - A-
- 87 to 89 - B+
- 84 to 87 - B
- 80 to 83 - B-
- 77 to 79 - C+
- 74 to 77 - C
- 70 to 73 - C-
- 67 to 69 - D+
- 64 to 67 - D
- 60 to 63 - D-
- 59 and below - F

Useful Information and University Policies

University Honor Code and Academic Honesty Policy

The following is taken verbatim from https://curriculumsystems.uga.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus

UGA Student Honor Code: "I will be academically honest in all of my academic work and will not tolerate academic dishonesty of others." A Culture of Honesty, the University's policy and procedures for handling cases of suspected dishonesty, can be found at www.uga.edu/ovpi.

I expect that the Student Honor Code will guide your efforts in this course. A lack of knowledge of the academic honesty policy does not explain a violation. Please direct any questions to Dr. Murdie.
Changes to the Syllabus Could Occur

The following is taken verbatim from https://curriculumsystems.uga.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus:
“The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.”

Disability Services

The following is taken verbatim from https://drc.uga.edu/content_page/sample-access-statements:
“If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center. They can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting http://drc.uga.edu
The following is taken verbatim from https://online.uga.edu/documents/ugasyllabusguidelines.pdf:
“Students with disabilities who require reasonable accommodations in order to participate in course activities or meet course requirements should contact the instructor or designate during regular office hours or by appointment.”
I want to help all students succeed in this course!

Mental Health and Wellness Resources

The following is taken verbatim from https://curriculumsystems.uga.edu/curriculum/courses/syllabus:
“If you or someone you know needs assistance, you are encouraged to contact Student Care and Outreach in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-7774 or visit https://sco.uga.edu. They will help you navigate any difficult circumstances you may be facing by connecting you with the appropriate resources or services.
UGA has several resources for a student seeking mental health services (https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga) or crisis support (https://www.uhs.uga.edu/info/emergencies). If you need help managing stress anxiety, relationships, etc., please visit BeWellUGA (https://www.uhs.uga.edu/bewelluga/bewelluga) for a list of FREE workshops, classes, mentoring, and health coaching led by licensed clinicians and health educators in the University Health Center. Additional resources can be accessed through the UGA App.”
Some material in this course contains references to violence. I urge you to take your mental health seriously. There are campus resources to help

Course Readings

No textbook is necessary for this class. All of the readings come from academic journal articles and book chapters. These readings can all be found on the eLC page for this course. I would plan on reading the assigned reading before watching the video for the day. When doing all of your readings, it works best to identify each reading’s research question, theory, hypotheses, empirical analysis, and conclusion. Also, try to identify one or two problems or questions you have with the work. I remember readings best when I’ve actually taken the time to write out some notes; it might work for you, too. If nothing else, it will definitely help in preparing for the quizzes.
Course Outline

Module 1: Terrorism Basics

Topic 1: Intro to Course
- **Required Reading:** Syllabus
- **Video:** Topic 1: Introduction to the course
- **Slides:** Topic 1: Introduction to the course
- **Recommended Readings/Links:** None

Topic 2: Intro to Social Science and Defining Terrorism
- **Video:** Topic 2: Defining terrorism
- **Slides:** Topic 2: Reviewing social science basics and defining terrorism
- **Recommended Readings/Links:**
  - Video: Terrorism Research Before and After 9/11, Gary LaFree - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f24TfnQeIJG](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=f24TfnQeIJG)
  - Blogpost: Inspired or Directed? Why This Distinction Matters in Recent Terrorist Attack in Orlando - [https://www.huffpost.com/entry/inspired-or-directed-why-this-distinction-matters_b_57616631e4b07d4d0a418153](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/inspired-or-directed-why-this-distinction-matters_b_57616631e4b07d4d0a418153)

Topic 3: History of Terrorism & Common Ideologies of Terrorists.
- **Video:** Topic 3: History of terrorism in 10 minutes
- **Slides:** Topic 3: History of terrorism & common ideologies of terrorists
- **Recommended Readings/Links:**
Topic 4: Mobilization for Violence.


- **Video:** Topic 4: How to mobilize an insurgency

- **Slides:** Topic 4: Mobilization for Violence

- **Recommended Readings/Links:**
  - Video: The rise of ISIS, explained in 6 minutes - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pzmO6RWy1v8

Module 2: What Motivates Terrorists

Topic 5: Terrorism Truisms to Remember and Strategies of Terrorism.


- **Video:** Topic 5: Terrorism truisms and strategies of terrorism

- **Slides:** Topic 5: Terrorism Truisms to Remember and Strategies of Terrorism

- **Recommended Readings/Links:**

Topic 6: Causes/Goals of Terrorism 1: Psychological Theories of Terrorism & The Role of Religion.


- **Video:** Topic 6: Causes of terrorism - looking at religion and psychology

- **Slides:** Topic 6: Causes/Goals of Terrorism 1: Psychological Theories of Terrorism & The Role of Religion

- **Recommended Readings/Links:**


**Topic 7: Causes/Goals of Terrorism 2: Poverty & Belonging/Brotherhood.**

- **Video:** Topic 7: Causes of terrorism - poverty and belonging
- **Slides:** Topic 7: Causes/Goals of Terrorism 2: Poverty & Belonging/Brotherhood
- **Recommended Readings/Links:**
  - Blogpost: Today’s Highly Educated Terrorists - https://nationalinterest.org/blog/bruce-hoffman/todays-highly-educated-terrorists-4080?page=0%2C1

**Topic 8: Female Terrorists.**

- **Video:** Topic 8: Female terrorists
- **Slides:** Topic 8: Female Terrorists
- **Recommended Readings/Links:**
  - Video: TEDxPSU - Mia Bloom - Seeing the New Face of Terrorism - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KOTyVE

**Module 3: The Logic of Terrorism**

**Topic 9: Suicide Terrorism.**

**Video:** Topic 9: Why suicide terrorism can be logical

**Slides:** Topic 9: Suicide Terrorism

**Recommended Readings/Links:**

**Topic 10: Terrorism and the Media.**


**Video:** Topic 10: How the media can help terrorism

**Slides:** Topic 10: Terrorism and the Media

**Recommended Readings/Links:**
- Video: Terrorism and the media | Ariela Marcus-Sells - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2YwDeRFy9D4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2YwDeRFy9D4)

**Topic 11: Terrorists and Money/Sponsorship.**


**Video:** Topic 11: How to get the money necessary for terrorism

**Slides:** Topic 11: Terrorists and Money/Sponsorship

**Recommended Readings/Links:**
- Video: Which Countries Are Accused of Supporting Terrorism? - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nF0D36sSbDw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nF0D36sSbDw)
- Video: How fake handbags fund terrorism and organized crime | Alastair Gray - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5UH7uTqTay4](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5UH7uTqTay4)
Topic 12: “New” Forms of Terrorism: CBRN and Cyberterrorism.


- **Video:** Topic 12: “New” methods of terrorism

- **Slides:** Topic 12: “New” Forms of Terrorism: CBRN and Cyberterrorism

- **Recommended Readings/Links:**
  - Video: Governments don’t understand cyber warfare. We need hackers | Rodrigo Bijou - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DP-tn0nh2jE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DP-tn0nh2jE)
  - Video: Forensic Files - Season 7, Ep 8: Bio-Attack - [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DP-tn0nh2jE](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DP-tn0nh2jE)

Module 4: The Consequences of Terrorism and Counterterrorism

Topic 13: Consequences of Terrorism - Psychological & Political.


- **Video:** Topic 13: What happens after an attack

- **Slides:** Topic 13: Consequences of Terrorism

- **Recommended Readings/Links:**

Topic 14: Counterterrorism Options and Strategy 1 - Harden Targets and Hearts and Minds.


- **Video:** Topic 14: The tools to fight terrorism
• Slides: Topic 14: Counterterrorism Options and Strategy 1 - Harden Targets and Hearts and Minds

• Recommended Readings / Links:


• Video: Topic 15: Why Torture May Not Reduce Terrorism

• Slides: Topic 15: Counterterrorism Options and Strategy 2 - Human Rights Abuses

• Recommended Readings/Links:
  - Video: Torture to Combat Terrorism? It Doesn’t Work, but Good Cop Bad Cop Does | Juliet Kayyem - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=It8gmezMEafQ&t=21s

Topic 16: Counterterrorism Options and Strategy 3 - How Terrorism Ends.

• Required Reading: Barrelle, Kate. 2015. "Pro-Integration: Disengagement from and Life after Extremism." Behavioral Sciences of Terrorism and Political Aggression 7(2): 129-142.

• Video: Topic 16: Why Its Hard to Leave A Terrorist Organization

• Slides: Topic 16: Counterterrorism Options and Strategy 3 - How Terrorism Ends

• Recommended Readings/Links:
  - Video: How Christmas lights helped guerrillas put down their guns - https://www.ted.com/talks/jose_miguel_sokolo_how_christmas_lights_helped_guerrillas_put_down_their_guns?language=en