

# TERRORISM

University of Georgia  
Department of International Affairs  
Fall 2025

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## Instructor Information

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Candler Hall 220  
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Office Hours: Wednesdays, 1:30-2:30 p.m.

## Course Information

Course: INTL 8291  
Time: Wednesdays, 3:00-6:10 p.m.  
Location: Candler Hall B04

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## 1 Course Description

This course considers terrorism as a product of strategic interaction. The course therefore does not focus exclusively on terrorists and terrorist organizations, but extends the inquiry to other key actors, including governments and civilian populations. The course begins by examining the relationship between terrorists and governments, focusing on the logic and strategy of political violence in extracting policy concessions. The second part of the course focuses on the interaction between terrorists and the broader population, including issues of public opinion, recruitment and civilian targeting. The final segment of the course considers relationships *between* terrorist organizations, and especially, how and why they compete with one another. Students will have the opportunity to apply the lessons to understanding specific terrorism campaigns.

## 2 Course Texts

The following texts are **required**:

Cronin, Audrey Kurth. (2020). *Power to the People: How Open Technological Innovation is Arming Tomorrow's Terrorists*. Oxford University Press.

Conrad, Justin and William Spaniel. (2021). *Militant Competition: How Terrorists and Insurgents Advertise with Violence and How They Can Be Stopped*. Cambridge University Press.

Archer, William. (2024). *Al-Qaeda 2.0: The Upcoming Attack on the United States and Europe Unveiled*. Transatlantic Intelligence Consortium.

The following text is **recommended**:

Pherson, Randolph H, Walter Voskian, Jr and Roy Sullivan. (2017). *Analytic Briefing Guide*. Globalytica.

### 3 Evaluation

- Discussion Leadership (50 pts)
- Participation (60 pts)
- Short Papers (100 pts)
- Final Paper (100 pts)
- Final Presentation (50 pts)

TOTAL POINTS = 360

#### 3.1 Grading Scale

A	93-100
A-	90-92
B+	87-89
B	83-86
B-	80-82
C+	77-79
C	73-76
C-	70-72
D+	67-69
D	63-66
D-	60-62
F	59 and below

#### 3.2 Student Responsibilities

##### Discussion Leadership

Value: 1 x 50 PTS, 50 PTS total

Each of you will be assigned a seminar to lead. On the day preceding the seminar, you will email the class a set of discussion questions. Topics should include *both* substantive

and methodological issues. As the course progresses, we will be reading more and more empirically-based research. So in addition to your own questions, you should be prepared to lead discussion on topics such as:

- What question motivates the research?
- What is the goal of the researcher? Description, explanation, prediction?
- What is the theory? Is it clear?
- Are the concepts in the theory clearly defined?
- What is the unit of analysis?
- Are the key actors in the theory individuals, groups, states, or something else? Does it matter?
- What are the observable implications of the theory?
- Which implications does the researcher test? What is the central empirical strategy? Is it a qualitative or quantitative design? Is it cross-sectional or a time-series analysis?
- Does this strategy adequately test the theory?
- Are the theoretical concepts validly measured?
- How are the cases selected? Are they an appropriate comparison?

## **Participation**

Value: 12 x 5 PTS, 60 PTS total

All students are required to have completed the required readings for each week before class begins, and everyone should be prepared to discuss the readings during class. Intelligent participation will be highly valued throughout your professional career and you should practice this ability now. I expect you to provide evidence that you have done the readings in a thoughtful and careful manner. After each class meeting I will assign a participation grade that takes into account the frequency and quality of your contributions. While attendance is not required in this course, unexcused absences will result in a participation score of '0' for a given day. The following scale will be used for scoring your participation:

- 5: The student made a very strong contribution to the class. Comments were thoughtful and constructive.
- 3-4: The student contributed meaningfully to the course. Comments went beyond simply repeating the assigned material, but did not demonstrate strong insights.

- 1-2: The student did not contribute meaningfully. Comments were limited to repeating the assigned material rather than making connections or extensions, or were inaccurate.
- 0: The student did not speak in class/the student was absent.

### **Short Papers**

Value: 2 x 50 PTS, 100 PTS total

You will produce two short (750-1000 words) papers during the semester. In each paper, you will apply course material and concepts to contemporary terrorism issues. These papers are written in response to a set of provided questions and require you to demonstrate knowledge of weekly course material coupled with your own thoughts and interpretations. Short papers are due by 11:59 p.m., the day before class.

### **Final Paper**

Value: 1 x 100 PTS, 100 PTS total

You will produce a 10 to 15-page research design paper on a topic engaging terrorism and counterterrorism. Instructor approval of topics will be required early in the semester. You are expected to work on your paper over the course of the semester.

### **Final Presentation**

Value: 1 x 50 PTS, 50 PTS total

In the last weeks of class, you will present your papers in 10 minute presentations. We will stop after each presentation and take time to provide feedback. Grades will be based on the quality of both your presentation and your answers to questions afterward.

## **4 Administrative Policies**

### **4.1 Academic Integrity**

Each student in this course is expected to abide by UGA's Academic Honesty Policy and the university's Student Honor Code. In short, this means that cheating and plagiarism will not be tolerated. Students violating the Academic Honesty Policy in this course will receive a minimum penalty of a grade of zero for the assignment or test in question and may receive an "F" in the course and referral to the Academic Honesty Policy.

## 4.2 Use of Generative AI

Use of Generative AI (GAI) tools should be limited to providing support as you develop your thinking and knowledge base for an assignment. If you are uncertain about using a particular tool to support your work, please consult with me before using it.

Please note that you may not represent output generated by a GAI tool as your own work. Any such use of GAI output must be appropriately cited or disclosed, including quotation marks and in-line citations for direct quotes. Including anything you did not write in your assignment without proper citation will be treated as an academic misconduct case. Suspected unauthorized assistance, plagiarism, or other violations of UGAs A Culture of Honesty, will be reported to the Office of Academic Honesty. For full details on how to properly cite AI-generated work, please see the APA Style article, How to Cite ChatGPT (<https://apastyle.apa.org/blog/how-to-cite-chatgpt>). If you are unsure where the line is between collaborating with GAI and copying from GAI, I recommend that you do not have your assignment and the GAI tool open on your device at the same time. Instead, take notes in your own words while you interact with the GAI tool, then use your notes to remind you of what you've learned and to inform your work. Never copy output from GAI tools into your assignment. Instead, use your interaction with the tool as a learning experience, then close the interaction down, open your assignment, and let your assignment reflect your improved understanding. (Sidenote: This advice extends to AI assistants that are directly integrated into a composition environment or grammar modulation tool.)

Finally, GAI is highly vulnerable to inaccuracy and bias. You should assume GAI output is wrong unless you either know the answer or can verify it with another source. It is your responsibility to assess the validity and applicability of any GAI output used.

## 4.3 Prohibition on Recording Lectures

In the absence of written authorization from the UGA Disability Resource Center, students may not make a visual or audio recording of any aspect of this course. Students who have a recording accommodation agree in writing that they:

- Will use the records only for personal academic use during the specific course.
- Understand that faculty members have copyright interest in their class lectures and that they agree not to infringe on this right in any way.
- Understand that the faculty member and students in the class have privacy rights and agree not to violate those rights by using recordings for any reason other than their own personal study.

- Will not release, digitally upload, broadcast, transcribe, or otherwise share all or any part of the recordings. They also agree that they will not profit financially and will not allow others to benefit personally or financially from lecture recordings or other course materials.
- Will erase/delete all recordings at the end of the semester.
- Understand that violation of these terms may subject them to discipline under the Student Code of Conduct or subject them to liability under copyright laws.

## 4.4 UGA Well-being Resources

UGA Well-being Resources promote student success by cultivating a culture that supports a more active, healthy, and engaged student community.

Anyone needing assistance is encouraged to contact Student Care & Outreach (SCO) in the Division of Student Affairs at 706-542-8479 or visit [sco.uga.edu](http://sco.uga.edu). Student Care & Outreach helps students navigate difficult circumstances by connecting them with the most appropriate resources or services. They also administer the Embark@UGA program which supports students experiencing, or who have experienced, homelessness, foster care, or housing insecurity.

UGA provides both clinical and non-clinical options to support student well-being and mental health, any time, any place. Whether on campus, or studying from home or abroad, UGA Well-being Resources are here to help.

- Well-being Resources: [well-being.uga.edu](http://well-being.uga.edu)
- Student Care and Outreach: [sco.uga.edu](http://sco.uga.edu) Health Center: [healthcenter.uga.edu](http://healthcenter.uga.edu)
- Counseling and Psychiatric Services: [caps.uga.edu](http://caps.uga.edu) or CAPS 24/7 crisis support at 706-542-2273
- Health Promotion/ Fontaine Center: [healthpromotion.uga.edu](http://healthpromotion.uga.edu)
- Disability Resource Center and Testing Services: [drc.uga.edu](http://drc.uga.edu)

Additional information, including free digital well-being resources, can be accessed through the UGA app or by visiting <https://well-being.uga.edu>.

## 4.5 Students with Disabilities

If you plan to request accommodations for a disability, please register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). The DRC can be reached by visiting Clark Howell Hall, by calling 706-542-8719 (voice) or 706-542-8778 (TTY), or by visiting <http://drc.uga.edu>

## 5 Course Schedule

This schedule is a guide for the course and is subject to change at my discretion.

### Week 1: Course Introduction

**Readings:** Syllabus

## PART I: TERRORISTS VS. GOVERNMENTS

### Week 2: Strategy and Logic of Terrorism

**Readings:**

Huff, Connor and Kertzer, Joshua D., 2018. How the public defines terrorism. *American Journal of Political Science* 62(1): 55-71.

Crenshaw, Martha, 2007. The logic of terrorism. *Terrorism in Perspective* 24: 24-33.

Lake, David. 2002. Rational extremism: Understanding terrorism in the Twenty-first Century. *Dialog IO* Spring: 1529.

Abrahms, Max, 2012. The political effectiveness of terrorism revisited. *Comparative Political Studies* 45(3): 366-393.

Blankenship, Brian, 2018. When do states take the bait? State capacity and the provocation logic of terrorism. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 62(2): 381-409.

## **Week 3: Government Repression and Human Rights Abuses**

### **DUE: Proposed Research Question and Hypothesis**

#### **Readings:**

Walsh, James I. and Piazza, James A., 2010. Why respecting physical integrity rights reduces terrorism. *Comparative Political Studies*, 43(5), pp.551-577.

Daxecker, Ursula E. and Hess, M.L., 2013. Repression hurts: coercive government responses and the demise of terrorist campaigns. *British Journal of Political Science*, 43(3), pp.559-577.

Gaibullov, Khusrav, Piazza, James A. and Sandler, Todd, 2017. Regime types and terrorism. *International organization* 71(3): 491-522.

Tschantret, Joshua, 2018. Repression, opportunity, and innovation: The evolution of terrorism in Xinjiang, China. *Terrorism and political violence* 30(4): 569-588.

Akins, Harrison, 2020. Delegating repression?: Pro-government militias and domestic terrorism. *Dynamics of Asymmetric Conflict*: 1-20.

## **Week 4: State Terrorism and State-Sponsored Terrorism**

### **DUE: Short Paper #1**

#### **Readings:**

Berkowitz, Jeremy M., 2018. Delegating terror: Principal-agent based decision making in state sponsorship of terrorism. *International Interactions* 44(4): 709-748.

Conrad, Justin, 2011. Interstate rivalry and terrorism: An unprobed link. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 55(4), pp.529-555.

Khan, Akbar and Zhaoying, Han, 2020. Iran-Hezbollah Alliance Reconsidered: What Contributes to the Survival of State-Proxy Alliance? *Journal of Asian Security and International Affairs* 7(1): 101-123.

Blakeley, Ruth, 2009. State Terrorism in the Social Sciences: Theories, Methods and Concepts. In: Jackson, Richard and Murphy, Eamon and Poynting, Scott, eds. *Contemporary State Terrorism: Theory and Practice. Critical Terrorism Studies*. (Routledge, Abingdon, UK, 12-27).



Byman, Daniel and Kreps, Sarah E., 2010. Agents of destruction? Applying principal-agent analysis to state-sponsored terrorism. *International Studies Perspectives* 11(1): 1-18.

Pischedda, Constantino, Cheon, Andrew and Moller, Sara B., 2020. Can You Have It Both Ways? Plausible Deniability and Attribution in Anonymous Coercive Bargaining. Plausible Deniability and Attribution in Anonymous Coercive Bargaining. Unpublished manuscript.

## **PART II: TERRORISTS VS. NONCOMBATANTS**

### **Week 5: Recruitment and Radicalization**

#### **Readings:**

Cronin, Audrey Kurth, 2020. *Power to the People: How Open Technological Innovation is Arming Tomorrow's Terrorists*. Oxford University Press: Ch. 7, 171-199.

McCauley, Clark, & Moskalenko, Sophia, 2008. Mechanisms of political radicalization: Pathways toward terrorism. *Terrorism and political violence* 20(3): 415-433.

Doosje, Bertjan, Moghaddam, Fathali M., Kruglanski, Arie W., De Wolf, Arjan, Mann, Liesbeth and Feddes, Allard R., 2016. Terrorism, radicalization and de-radicalization. *Current Opinion in Psychology* 11: 79-84.

Pearson, Elizabeth, 2018. Online as the new frontline: affect, gender, and ISIS-take-down on social media. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* 41(11): 850-874.

Sardarnia, Khalil and Safizadeh, Rasoul, 2017. The internet and its potentials for networking and identity seeking: A study on ISIS. *Terrorism and Political Violence*, pp. 1-18.

Simi, Pete and Windisch, Stephen, 2020. Why radicalization fails: Barriers to mass casualty terrorism. *Terrorism and political violence* 32(4): 831-850.

### **Week 6: Public Opinion**

#### **Readings:**

Adelaja, Adesoji O., Labo, Abdullahi and Penar, Eva, 2018. Public opinion on the root causes of terrorism and objectives of terrorists: A Boko Haram case study. *Perspectives on Terrorism* 12(3): 35-49.

Schmid, Alex, 2017. Public opinion survey. Data to measure sympathy and support for Islamist terrorism. *International Centre for Counter-Terrorism-The Hague*.

Heinrich, Tobias, Kobayashi, Yoshiharu, Swanstrom, Jacob D. and Justin Conrad. 2021. Global public attention to the tactics of terror: Brutality and individual information-seeking behavior. Unpublished manuscript.

Fisk, Kerstin, Merolla, Jennifer L. and Ramos, Jennifer M., 2019. Emotions, terrorist threat, and drones: anger drives support for drone strikes. *Journal of conflict resolution* 63(4): 976-1000.

Dvir, Rotem, Geva, Nehemia and Vedlitz, Arnold, 2021. Unpacking Public Perceptions of Terrorism: Does Type of Attack Matter?. *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism*, 1-21.

Asal, Victor and Hoffman, Aaron M., 2016. Media effects: Do terrorist organizations launch foreign attacks in response to levels of press freedom or press attention?. *Conflict Management and Peace Science* 33(4):381-399.

## **Week 7: Tactical Choices and Technological Innovation I**

### **Readings:**

Huber, Laura, 2019. When civilians are attacked: gender equality and terrorist targeting. *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 63(10): 2289-2318.

Campbell, Blake and Murdie, Amanda, 2018. Keep the informants talking: The pursuit and use of CBRN weapons by terrorist organizations. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, pp.1-20.

Cronin, Audrey Kurth, 2020. *Power to the People: How Open Technological Innovation is Arming Tomorrow's Terrorists*. Oxford University Press: Introduction, Ch. 1-3, 1-93.

## **Week 8: Tactical Choices and Technological Innovation II**

### **DUE: Short Paper #2**

### **Readings:**

Cronin, Audrey Kurth, 2020. *Power to the People: How Open Technological Innovation is Arming Tomorrow's Terrorists*. Oxford University Press: Ch. 8.

Asal, Victor H., Ackerman, Gary A. and Rethemeyer, R.K., 2012. Connections can be toxic: Terrorist organizational factors and the pursuit of CBRN weapons. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 35(3), pp. 229-254.

Crenshaw, Martha, 2007. Explaining suicide terrorism: A review essay. *Security Studies*, 16(1), pp.133-162.

Benmelech, Efraim, Berrebi, Claude and Klor, Esteban F., 2012. Economic conditions and the quality of suicide terrorism. *The Journal of Politics*, 74(1), pp.113-128.

### **PART III: TERRORISTS VS. TERRORISTS**

#### **Week 9: Organization and Networking**

##### **Readings:**

Abrahms, Max and Conrad, Justin, 2017. The strategic logic of credit claiming: A new theory for anonymous terrorist attacks. *Security Studies*, 26(2), pp.279-304.

Kilberg, Joshua, 2012. A basic model explaining terrorist group organizational structure. *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism*, 35(11), pp.810-830.

Bacon, Tricia, 2014. Alliance hubs: Focal points in the international terrorist landscape. *Perspectives on Terrorism* 8(4): 4-26.

Bacon, Tricia, 2017. Hurdles to International Terrorist Alliances: Lessons From Al Qaeda's Experience. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 29(1): 79-101.

Asal, Victor and Rethemeyer, R. Karl, 2008. The nature of the beast: Organizational structures and the lethality of terrorist attacks. *The Journal of Politics* 70(2): 437-449.

Soufan Center, 2019. *White Supremacy Extremism: The Transnational Rise of the Violent White Supremacist Movement*. September.

#### **Week 10: Competitive Violence I**

##### **Readings:**

Gade, Emily K., Hafez, Mohammed M. and Gabbay, Michael, 2019. Fratricide in rebel movements: A network analysis of Syrian militant infighting. *Journal of peace research* 56(3): 321-335.

Nemeth, Stephen, 2014. The effect of competition on terrorist group operations. *Journal of Conflict Resolution*, 58(2), pp.336-362.

Conrad, Justin and Spaniel, William, 2021. *Militant Competition: How Terrorists and Insurgents Advertise with Violence and How They Can Be Stopped*. Cambridge University Press: Ch. 1-3.

## **Week 11: Competitive Violence II**

### **Readings:**

Hamming, Tore R., 2020. The Al Qaeda-Islamic State Rivalry: Competition Yes, but No Competitive Escalation. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 32(1): 20-37.

Conrad, Justin and Spaniel, William, 2021. *Militant Competition: How Terrorists and Insurgents Advertise with Violence and How They Can Be Stopped*. Cambridge University Press: Ch. 4-6.

Hafez, Mohammed M., 2000. Armed Islamist movements and political violence in Algeria. *The Middle East Journal*: 572-591.

Hafez, Mohammed M., 2020. Fratricidal rebels: Ideological extremity and warring factionalism in civil wars. *Terrorism and Political Violence* 32(3): 604-629.

## **PART IV: THE FUTURE OF TERRORISM**

## **Week 12: The Future of Terrorism and AI**

### **Readings:**

Cronin, Audrey Kurth, 2020. *Power to the People: How Open Technological Innovation is Arming Tomorrow's Terrorists*. Oxford University Press: Ch.9 and Conclusion.

Weimann, Gabriel, et al. Generating Terror: The Risks of Generative AI Exploitation. *CTC Sentinel* 16(5): 1724.

United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism. 2021. *Algorithms and Terrorism: The Malicious Use of Artificial Intelligence for Terrorist Purposes*. New York: United Nations Office of Counter-Terrorism.

### **Week 13: The Future of Al Qaeda**

#### **Readings:**

Cronin, Audrey Kurth. 2009. *How Terrorism Ends* (Princeton University Press), Chapter 7 (pg. 167-197).

Archer, William. 2024. *Al-Qaeda 2.0: The Upcoming Attack on the United States and Europe Unveiled*. Transatlantic Intelligence Consortium.

### **Week 14: Final Presentations**

### **Week 15: Final Presentations**

**FINAL PAPERS DUE: WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 3**

## **6 Syllabus Changes**

The policies, assignments and readings contained in this syllabus are subject to change with advance notice.