CCJ 3840-080: Terrorism

Winter 2024

On-Line ASYN: 1/4 – 1/24

Instructor Information

Professor: Dr. Jason R. Silva
Office Location: Raubinger Hall - RM 422
Office Hours: By email appointment
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Course Description

This course introduces the study of terrorism from the perspectives of sociology and criminology. Through an overview of international and domestic terrorism and case studies, the course will first examine controversies in defining terrorism and in distinguishing it from other forms of political violence, and provide a typology for understanding the breadth of terrorist organizations. It then explores the historical and sociological roots of terrorism, examines terrorist motivations as well as their organization, strategies, tactics and the effects of these actions. Counterterrorism—both military and law enforcement responses to terrorism—is critically assessed. Last, the class analyzes the framing of terrorism within political, media, and popular discourses.

This course will involve asynchronous learning via the Blackboard Ultra platform. This means learning occurs daily during the students own time - to accommodate work schedules, other classes, etc. Learning will primarily occur through YouTube.com lectures, readings, films, and PowerPoints. Assessment will occur through writing assignments, discussion board comments, a research paper and a final exam. This is an intensive 3-week course, which means students should allocate a few hours each day (M-F) for reading, watching YouTube lectures and films, and finalizing assignments. You need to be self-motivated and make sure to follow the guidelines each day.

Prerequisite(s): CCJ 2610

Required Text

Nacos, B. L. (2019). *Terrorism and Counterterrorism* (6th Edition).

Additional Articles/ Reading Requirements

During the semester, I will be adding academic articles and course information to Blackboard. Students are given fair notice of any additions to the syllabus; however, it is your responsibility to keep check Blackboard every day.

Course Objectives

a. Acquaint the students with the contentious concept of terrorism and commonly accepted legal definitions from US law enforcement and those of international organizations.

b. Understand typologies of terrorism, including varying ideological foundations for terrorism, including ideological, religious, nationalist/separatist, narcoterrorism, and issue-specific terrorism.
c. Familiarize students with the historical use of terrorism and its evolution as a tactic.
d. Understand the varying motivations for terrorism and the social, historical, and political circumstances that can produce terrorism.
e. Assess ethical and practical ramifications of counterterrorist strategies.
f. Communicate informed opinions on current issues and events related to terrorism using knowledge and theoretical tools cultivated within the class.
g. Explore media and political discourse about terrorism to cultivate understanding of latent meanings and ideological biases

Student Learning Outcomes

After successfully completing the course, students should be able to:

a. Explain why the concept of terrorism is controversial and define accepted legal descriptions of terrorism from US law enforcement and international organizations.
b. Describe typologies of terrorism and their ideological foundations.
c. Explain the historical use of terrorism and its evolution as a tactic.
d. Analyze the varying motivations for terrorism and the social, historical, and political circumstances that can produce terrorism.
e. Clarify ethical and practical ramifications of counterterrorist strategies.
f. Present informed opinions on current issues and events related to terrorism using knowledge and theoretical tools cultivated within the class.
g. Evaluate the latent meanings and ideological biases of media and public discourse about terrorism.

General Policies

Class Participation & Conduct

Students are expected to conduct themselves appropriately at all times. Academic and virtual classroom misconduct will not be tolerated. Any speech intended to degrade, intimidate, or incite violence or prejudicial action against someone based on race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, sexual orientation, or disability is strictly prohibited and will not be tolerated in this class.

Email & Virtual Meetings

Students who wish to meet and talk about course related issues are asked to make an appointment**. Students should feel free to contact me via WPU email.** I check my email on a daily basis and this is the best way to reach me. Students are asked to send emails from a William Paterson email account (the College's spam blocker may reject an "unusual" email address). If sending an email, **please include "CCJ 3840 – Terrorism" in the subject heading.** I will not reply to anonymous emails. If you do not hear from me, assume that I have not received your email. I do not accept claims that emails were sent if I have not received it. In order to reply to as many emails as possible, I tend to keep my responses brief.

Accommodations

The College is committed to ensuring full access to its programs for all students. If you have special needs, please let me know at the beginning of the semester and I will ensure that you have full access to all materials and programs. This matter will be held in strict confidence.

Academic Success Center: Raubinger Hall (lower level), 973-720-3324/2563

Writing Center: Preakness 124, 973-720-2633

Academic Integrity

As a member of the William Paterson University community you are not to engage in any academic dishonesty. You are responsible for adhering to basic academic standards of honesty and integrity as outlined in the University Policy on Academic Integrity for Undergraduate and Graduate Students. Your academic work should be the result of your own individual effort, you should not allow other students to use your work, and you are required to recognize and reference any material that is not your own. Violations of the university's policy will result in appropriate action, ranging from failure of the assignment / course to a discipline referral to the University Administration. You should also review the *Sociology Department Handbook* for the Department's policy on cheating and plagiarism. The first offense will result in failing the course; the second offense will result in failing the course and expulsion from the sociology major (or a prohibition of becoming a major).

Assignments and Grading

Assignments must be typed in Times New Roman, double spaced utilizing a 12-point font size. Grammatical errors will lower your grade, so proof read your assignments before submitting them. Students are encouraged to consult the Writing Center in Atrium 128 for assistance with assignments in this and other courses. The Writing Center provides one-on-one tutoring to students working on any kind of writing in any stage of development.

All assignments must be submitted on or before the due date/time. Late assignments will decrease a letter grade a day until turned in without exception. Policy for make-up exams/missed or late assignments: Students will receive an "F" for missed exams. There are **No make-up exams without a documented, verifiable medical excusal or emergency excusal on the day of the exam**. You must inform me prior to the exam to explain as well as present verifiable documentation upon return.

I will not change any student's grade unless there is a calculation error on my part. Do not email the Professor requesting extra time to complete the assignments. You will have plenty of time to do so during the semester and I will only say no if asked.

Grading Protocol **-** Individual performance will be measured by the following:

       Discussion Board Posts x5………..…………....25% (5% each)
       Writing Assignments x3...…………………........30% (10% each)
       Research Paper…………….....….………………..20%
       Final………………………………………….....25%

Grading Scale **-** The numerical values of the grades are as follows:

A Excellent 4.0 93.0–100.0	**A–** 3.7 90.0–92.9
B+ 3.3 87.1–89.9	**B** Good 3.0 83.0–87.0
B– 2.7 80.0–82.9	**C+** 2.3 77.1–79.9
C Satisfactory 2.0 73.0–77.0	**C–** 1.7 70.0–72.9
D+ 1.3 67.1–69.9	**D Passing** 1.0 63.0–67.0
D– 0.7 60.0–62.9	**F Failure**
	Unsuccessful/0.0 Below 60.0

Course Calendar and Reading Assignments

Please Note: The instructor reserves the right to modify the course format, assignments and other related policies at any time or as circumstances may dictate.

Week	Date	Topic	Reading / Film	Assignment
1	1/4	Course Introduction		
	1/5	Defining Terrorism	Nacos (Chapters 1 & 2)	DBP #1
2	1/8	Terrorist Typologies I: Far-Right & Far Left	Nacos (Chapters 4)	DBP #2
	1/9		Duran (Blackboard) Film: Oklahoma City	Writing Assignment #1
	1/10		Silva (Blackboard) Film: The Weather Underground	Writing Assignment #2
	1/11	Terrorist Typologies II: Jihadist-Inspired	Nacos (Chapter 5)	Research Paper Outline
	1/12			DBP #3
3	1/15	Making of Terrorists: Causes and Conditions	Nacos (Chapter 6)	DBP#4
	1/16	Researching Terrorism	Silke (Blackboard)	DBP #5
	1/17	Media and Myths	Silva (Blackboard) Nacos (Chapter 14)	
	1/18	Countering Terrorism	Nacos (Chapters 10 & 12)	Research Paper
	1/19		Film: Ghosts of Abu Ghraib	Writing Assignment #3
4	1/22	Final Exam Review		
	1/23	Final Exam		Final Exam
	1/24	Last Chance		

Please feel free to discuss any concerns you have during the course. I want this to be an enjoyable and productive learning experience for you.