

# IR 386: Terrorism and Counterterrorism

Dr. Caroline M. Brandt

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E-mail: [cbrandt@usc.edu](mailto:cbrandt@usc.edu)

Web: [www.carolinembrandt.com](http://www.carolinembrandt.com)

Office Hours Sign Up:

<http://calendly.com/cmbrandt/oh>

Office Hours: Wednesdays 12:30-2:00pm

Office: VKC 312

Class Hours:

Mondays and Wednesday, 5:00-6:20pm

Class Room: VKC152

## Course Description

Change in the strategies and targets of terrorism have redefined modern international relations. The first half of the course outlines the strategies of terrorism. In the course students will analyze the motivations behind terrorism, including psychological and rationalist explanations. The course will examine terrorism as a strategy for achieving political objectives. Students will assess the effectiveness and costs of different strategies, including the internationalization of terror, the use of suicide bombing, and the use of weapons of mass destruction, and accepting state sponsorship. The second half of the course focuses on counterinsurgency strategies. Students will learn about a diverse set of tactics used to eliminate terrorist groups, as well as the material and ethnical consequences of each tactic. Students should leave the course with an in-depth understanding of terrorism as a political strategy and the complexities inherent in combating it.

## Learning Objectives

By the end of this course:

- Students should be able to explain and compare rationalist and psychological explanations for why individuals and organizations use terrorism. Students should also understand the role of religion in explaining individuals' and organizations' rationales for using terrorism.
- Students should be able to describe the strategies of terrorism. Students should understand why organizations internationalize their campaigns, conduct suicide missions and the role the media plays in obtaining their objectives.
- Students should be able to make a comparative assessment different counterterrorism strategies, including the rationale behind the strategy, the effectiveness of the strategy, and the costs.

## Assessments and Grading

Students' grades final grades will be composed of:

Midterm I: 25%

Midterm II: 30%

Attendance and participation: 15%

Research paper: 30%

## Midterm Exams

There will be two midterm exams. The second exam is cumulative. The tests are a combination of multiple choice, short answer, and essay. Some material in the reading will not be discussed in lecture. Some material in lecture is not covered in the reading, but is fair game for the examine. I will not be providing a review session, students are encouraged to organize their own with other students.

## Participation

This class works best when students are present and engaged. I expect that you will have read all assigned material and bring a thoughtful question for each piece of reading. If you are absent, you will need to get the notes from a classmate.

You are permitted 2 absences for whatever reason. No explanation is needed. Whether you are sick or extending your Thanksgiving break, how you chose to use these two absences is up to you. Use them wisely. For each additional absence (3 or more), points will be deducted from the student's participation grade. Serious matters or extenuating circumstances beyond your control should be discussed privately with the professor at the earliest possible opportunity. Students will be required to provide documentation under these circumstances.

## Final Paper

For the final paper, you will choose a defeated terrorist group, as well as a current terrorist group. Al Qaeda and the Islamic State are not available, as they are covered in class. You will summarize how and why they engage in violence. You will analyze the strategies that were used to defeat the first terrorist organize. You will then assess the reasons a similar strategy would or would not prove effective against the existing group. If appropriate, explain the rationale for whether another strategy would prove more effective. You will be expected to conduct original research as well as draw on the readings from class.

Paper are expected to be 9-11 pages in length. Papers should have 12 point font, Times New Roman, and 1 inch margins.

You must use the APA style for your references. A guide on how to use this format can be found at: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/560/01>.

## Policies

### Course Schedule

The reading schedule outlined below is subject to change with advanced notice. Changes may come in class or may come via e-mail. You are responsible for all such communications.

### Technology

Classes will be divided into lectures and discussions. Taking notes on a laptop or tablet is fine. During discussions, students will be required to close the lid of any laptops and flip tablets over. Your phone should be out of sight for the entirety of class. If there are reasons why you require your phone or other technology to be out, for the semester or only one class, please speak with me in person.

### Academic Integrity

USC seeks to maintain an optimal learning environment. General principles of academic honesty include the concept of respect for the intellectual property of others, the expectation that individual work will be submitted unless otherwise allowed by an instructor, and the obligations both to protect one's own academic work from misuse by others as well as to avoid using another's work as one's own. All students

are expected to understand and abide by these principles. Scampus, the Student Guidebook, contains the Student Conduct Code in Section 11, while the recommended sanctions are located in Appendix A: <http://www.usc.edu/dept/publications/SCAMPUS/gov/>. Students will be referred to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs and Community Standards for further review, should there be any suspicion of academic dishonesty. The Review process can be found at: <http://www.usc.edu/student-affairs/SJACS/>.

## **Students with Disabilities**

Any student requesting academic accommodations based on a disability is required to register with Disability Services and Programs (DSP) each semester. A letter of verification for approved accommodations can be obtained from DSP. Please be sure the letter is delivered to me as early in the semester as possible and before any exams. DSP is located in STU 301 and is open 8:30 a.m.–5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday. The phone number for DSP is (213) 740-0776.

## **Grading**

If you have questions or concerns about a grade(s) and believe I should review them, you should submit a written request over email to me describing your concern in detail. You must take 24 hours to reflect on the grade before contacting me, but you must submit the request within one week of the date that grades for that assignment are disseminated.

## **Communication**

I will occasionally send messages to your university email. Students are responsible for the contents of these messages. I will respond to email within 24 hours during the week and within 48 hours on the weekend unless otherwise special in advance.

## **Make-Up Exams**

In an extraordinary circumstance, a make-up test can be scheduled. To qualify for a make-up, the student must notify me by email in advance of the absence and provide documentation. You will receive a 0 for unexcused absence from an exam. Examples of extraordinary circumstances include, but are not limited to: medical problems that require bed care or surgery (including yourself and immediate family members), subpoena for court or jury duty, or in-service training. Oversleeping and other personal events do not qualify. I reserve the right to exercise my discretion on this matter.

## **Late Assignments**

For every day that the final paper is late, I will deduct 5%. After four days, I will not accept late papers.

## **Childcare**

If you care for a child, and your regular child care unexpectedly becomes unavailable, you are welcome to bring your child to class. This should not be a permanent solution, but I understand that things happen. Please sit close to the door and take the child outside if they begin to disturb the class.

## **Office Hours**

Office hours are from 12:30 to 2 on Wednesdays. They are held in my office, VKC 312. You can sign up for an office hours appointment at this link: <https://calendly.com/cmbrandt/oh>. You can sign up for one 15 minute spot, or two 15 minute spots (30 minutes total).

You are welcome to sign up for an empty spot at any time - even at 11:58 am for a noon spot. You are also welcome to stop by between 12:30 and 2 on Wednesday without an appointment, however, students with appoints will be given priority. If you cannot make anytime between 12:30 and 2 on Wednesdays but need

to discuss something, please send me an email.

Office hours are set times dedicated to all of you. This means that I will be in my office during these times, and you are encouraged to come in with whatever questions you may have. This is the best and easiest way to find me outside of class and the best chance for discussing class material and concerns.

## Course Readings

### Textbooks

Bruce Hoffman (2006). *Inside Terrorism*. Columbia University Press

Daniel Byman (2005). *Deadly Connections: States That Sponsor Terrorism*. Cambridge University Press

### August 28 - No Class

Annual Meeting of the American Political Science Association

### September 2 - No Class

Labor Day

### September 4 - Defining Terrorism

Chapter 1, Hoffman. (42 pages)

### September 9 - Psychological Explanations of Terrorism

Jeff Victoroff (2005). "The Mind of the Terrorist: A Review and Critique of Psychological Approaches". *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 49.1, pp. 3–42

### September 11 - Rationalist Explanation of Terrorism

David A. Lake (2002). "Rational Extremism: Understanding Terrorism in the Twenty-First Century". *Dialogue IO* 1.1, pp. 15–28 (13 pages)

Erin M. Kearns, Brendan Conlon, and Joseph K. Young (2014). "Lying about Terrorism". *Studies in Conflict & Terrorism* 37.5, pp. 422–439 (16 pages)

### September 16 - Rationalist Explanation of Terrorism

Max Abrahms (2008). "What Terrorists Really Want: Terrorist Motives and Counterterrorism Strategy". *International Security* 32.4, pp. 78–105 (27 pages)

Erica Chenoweth et al. (2009). "What Makes Terrorists Tick". *International Security* 33.4, pp. 180–202 (22 page)

### September 18 - The Strategies of Terrorism

Chapter 2, Hoffman. (19 pages)

Andrew H. Kydd and Barbara F. Walter (2006). "The Strategies of Terrorism". *International Security* 31.1, pp. 49–80 (32 pages)

## **September 23 - The Internationalization of Terror**

Chapter 3, Hoffman (17 pages)

Thomas Hegghammer (2013). “Should I Stay or Should I Go? Explaining Variation in Western Jihadists’ Choice between Domestic and Foreign Fighting”. *American Political Science Review* 107.1, pp. 1–15 (15 pages)

Weiyi Cai and Simone Landon (Apr. 3, 2019). “Attacks by White Extremists Are Growing. So Are Their Connections.” *The New York Times*. *World*. URL: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/03/world/white-extremist-terrorism-christchurch.html>,%20<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2019/04/03/world/white-extremist-terrorism-christchurch.html>

## **September 25 - Domestic Terrorism**

Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca and Luis De la Calle (2009). “Domestic Terrorism: The Hidden Side of Political Violence”. *Annual Review of Political Science* 12, pp. 31–49

Christopher Hewitt (2000). “The Political Context of Terrorism in America: Ignoring Extremists or Pandering to Them?” *Terrorism and Political Violence* 12.3-4, pp. 325–344

## **September 30 - Midterm I**

### **October 2 - Terrorism and the Media**

Chapter 6, Hoffman. (23 pages)

Chapter 7, Hoffman. (31 pages)

### **October 7 - Religion and Terrorism**

Chapter 4, Hoffman. (49 pages)

### **October 9 - The Looming Tower**

The Looming Tower, specific episodes TBD

### **October 14 - Religion and Terrorism**

Martha Crenshaw (2017). “Transnational Jihadism & Civil Wars”. *Daedalus* 146.4, pp. 59–70

Eli Berman and David D. Laitin (2008). “Religion, Terrorism and Public Goods: Testing the Club Model”. *Journal of Public Economics* 92.10-11, pp. 1942–1967

### **October 16 - Suicide Terrorism**

Chapter 5, Hoffman (41 pages)

### **October 21 - Suicide Terrorism**

Robert A. Pape (2003). “The Strategic Logic of Suicide Terrorism”. *American Political Science Review* 97.3, pp. 343–361 (18 pages)

Stathis Kalyvas and Ignacio Sánchez-Cuenca (2005). “Killing without Dying: The Absence of Suicide Missions”. In: *Making Sense of Suicide Missions*, pp. 209–232

## **October 23 - State Sponsored Terrorism**

Chapters 1 and 2, Byman. (total 52 pages)

## **October 28- State Sponsored Terrorism**

Chapter 3, Byman. (26 pages)

## **October 30 - Weapons of Mass Destruction**

Chapter 8, Hoffman. (27 pages)

## **November 4 - Midterm II**

## **November 6 - Al-Qaeda and The Islamic State**

Daniel Byman and Jennifer Williams (Feb. 24, 2015). *ISIS vs. Al Qaeda: Jihadism's Global Civil War*. URL: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/isis-vs-al-qaeda-jihadisms-global-civil-war/> (couple pages)

Barak Mendelsohn (2011). "Al-Qaeda's Franchising Strategy". *Survival* 53.3, pp. 29–50 (22 pages)

Audrey Kurth Cronin (2015). "ISIS Is Not a Terrorist Group: Why Counterterrorism Won't Stop the Latest Jihadist Threat". *Foreign Affairs* 94, p. 87

## **November 11 - Counterterrorism**

Audrey Kurth Cronin (2006). "How Al-Qaida Ends: The Decline and Demise of Terrorist Groups". *International Security* 31.1, pp. 7–48. URL: <http://www.mitpressjournals.org/doi/abs/10.1162/isec.2006.31.1.7> (41 pages)

## **November 13 - CVE**

Martha Crenshaw (1991). "How Terrorism Declines". *Terrorism and Political Violence* 3.1, pp. 69–87 (13 pages)

Chapters 9 and 10, Byman. (54 pages)

## **November 18 - Organizational Financing**

Virginia Page Fortna, Nicholas J. Lotito, and Michael A. Rubin (2018). "Don't Bite the Hand That Feeds: Rebel Funding Sources and the Use of Terrorism in Civil Wars". *International Studies Quarterly* 62.4, pp. 782–794 (12 pages)

Loretta Napoleoni (2004). "The New Economy of Terror: How Terrorism Is Financed". In: *Forum on Crime and Society*. Vol. 4, pp. 31–48

Zack Beauchamp (Oct. 7, 2015). *These Leaked Records Cast Light on How ISIS Makes Its Money*. URL: <https://www.vox.com/2015/10/7/9466633/isis-financial-records>

## **November 20 - Leadership Decapitation**

Jenna Jordan (2009). "When Heads Roll: Assessing the Effectiveness of Leadership Decapitation". *Security Studies* 18.4, pp. 719–755

Patrick B. Johnston (2012). "Does Decapitation Work? Assessing the Effectiveness of Leadership Targeting in Counterinsurgency Campaigns". *International Security* 36.4, pp. 47–79

## **November 25 - Drones**

Azmat Khan and Anand Gopal (Nov. 16, 2017). "The Uncounted". *The New York Times Magazine*. URL: <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/11/16/magazine/uncounted-civilian-casualties-iraq-airstrikes.html>, %20<https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/11/16/magazine/uncounted-civilian-casualties-iraq-airstrikes.html>

Daniel Byman (2013). "Why Drones Work: The Case for Washington's Weapon of Choice". *Foreign Affairs* 92.4, pp. 32–43

Audrey Kurth Cronin (2013). "Why Drones Fail: When Tactics Drive Strategy". *Foreign Affairs* 92, p. 44

## **November 27**

No class - Thanksgiving

## **December 2 - The Future of Terrorism**

Chapter 9, Hoffman. (39 pages)

## **December 4 - The Future of Terrorism Research**

Mia Bloom (2011). "Bombshells: Women and Terror". *Gender Issues* 28.1-2, pp. 1–21

James P. Farwell (2014). "The Media Strategy of ISIS". *Survival* 56.6, pp. 49–55

Nazli Avdan and Clayton Webb (2019). "Not in My Back Yard: Public Perceptions and Terrorism". *Political Research Quarterly* 72.1, pp. 90–103